



COMMITTEE ON FORESTRY

TWENTY-FIFTH SESSION

5 - 9 October 2020

REPORT ON PROGRESS INCLUDING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE UN STRATEGIC PLAN FOR FORESTS

Executive Summary

This report presents the progress made in implementing the UN Strategic Plan for Forests (UNSPF) and the recommendations of the 24th Session of the Committee, including the related Council and Conference recommendations. Document COFO/2020/8.3 on 'Dialogue with Statutory Bodies in Forestry' provides further details on these recommendations.

In describing activities carried out since the last session of the Committee, the report provides information on the work accomplished in selected major programmes in Forestry.

The Committee may wish to note that highlights of the forestry programme's achievements are presented in miscellaneous document *Moving forward: Moving Forward: Selected Achievements of the FAO Forestry Programme in 2018-2019*.

Suggested actions by the Committee on Forestry

The Committee may wish to consider appropriate ways to strengthen collaboration with the United Nations Forum of Forests (UNFF) as recommended by COFO.

The Committee may wish to request FAO to:

- continue supporting the implementation of the UNSPF;
- establish clear links between its activities and the UN Strategic Plan for Forests and report on implementation accordingly;
- continue its leadership role in the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF);
- continue supporting the work of the major programmes in Forestry.

Queries on the substantive content of the document may be addressed to:

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I. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE UN STRATEGIC PLAN FOR FORESTS

A. Background

1. Consideration of developments in the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) and support to the implementation of the UN Forest Instrument¹, to the UN Strategic Plan for Forests 2017-2030 (UNSPF)² including the achievement of the Global Forest Goals and their associated targets has become a regular agenda item for both the Regional Forestry Commissions and the Committee on Forestry (COFO). Supporting work in this regard is also a main task for FAO, which Members repeatedly requested during recent sessions.
2. The 24th Session of COFO, taking into consideration also the recommendations of the Regional Forestry Commissions, requested FAO to continue to support the implementation of the UNSPF and its Quadrennial Programme of Work (4PoW) and align its programme of work in Forestry accordingly. COFO further requested that these activities be recognized as core functions for forestry and reflected in the Medium Term Plan and the Programme of Work and Budget³ of FAO.
3. COFO also considered broader opportunities for cooperation with and support to UNFF and invited the Forum to collaborate with FAO closely on its areas of expertise⁴. The Committee noted in this context the potential contribution of major analytical products, including the State of the World's Forests (SOFO) and the Global Forest Resources Assessments to UNFF's review function and invited their use⁵.
4. Special attention has been given by COFO to the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF), a voluntary alliance of 15 UN and non-UN organizations, processes and instruments. FAO has a dual role in the CPF, both as its member and chair. Members repeatedly recognized the role of FAO in the CPF and stressed the importance of the work of the CPF in supporting the implementation of the UNSPF and other global forest-relevant instruments. They further requested FAO to continue and strengthen its leadership role in the CPF and initiate new activities. Among these, Members identified, inter alia, forest education and support to small-holders as very important directions.

B. FAO's contributions to the implementation of the UNSPF

5. FAO provides important contributions to the UNSPF in two capacities: as a UN system organization and as a CPF member. In an analysis conducted for the CPF on capacities to address the "Indicative Thematic Areas for Action" associated with the Global Forest Goals and targets of the UNSPF, as contained in its Appendix⁶, FAO concluded that it has capacities on all of the over 100 areas. FAO's activities in Forestry are directly relevant for the 6 Global Forest Goals and their associated targets.
6. Accordingly, FAO's activities provide direct contributions to all of the Goals and their associated targets. In order to make these linkages more obvious and visible, as well as for planning

¹ https://www.un.org/esa/forests/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/UN_Forest_Instrument.pdf

² <https://undocs.org/A/RES/71/285> and https://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=E/RES/2017/4

³ COFO/2018/REP paragraph 36.

⁴ COFO/2018/REP paragraph 9. c) .(i), 10., 35. b)

⁵ COFO/2016/REP paragraph 53. a)

⁶ E/RES/2017/4 Pages 15-20

future contributions, it appears beneficial if recommendations for FAO's work in forestry would be mapped against the GFGs, similar to how it is done currently for the FAO Strategic Objectives.

7. FAO's contribution to the implementation of the UNSPF within the framework of the CPF is represented mostly by the Joint Initiatives. Of the ten Initiatives currently running or completed in this reporting period, FAO is leading or co-leading five of them and is a partner in the other five initiatives. Reporting only on the Initiatives under FAO's leadership, the following results deserve attention.

CPF Communicators Network: Following the recommendation of the Network to UNFF14 the topic of forests and biodiversity was celebrated during the International Day of Forests 2020.

Wangari Maathai Award: The presentation of the 2019 edition of the award took place on 30 September 2019 at the IUFRO World Congress in Curitiba, Brazil. Detailed information is available at <http://www.cpfweb.org/95257/en/>.

Streamlining forest-related reporting: major work has been accomplished and results, in particular the Global Core Set of Forest-related Indicators, were presented to UNFF and COFO. COFO "acknowledged the progress made on the Global Core Set of Forest Related Indicators and invited UNFF and the governing bodies of CPF member organizations to consider the use of Tier 1 and Tier 2 indicators in their reporting processes"⁷. It further requested FAO to continue working with CPF members on further development of the "Tier 2", "Tier 3" and "candidate" indicators of the Global Core Set and requested FAO to continue to report on progress⁸. As a next step an expert group meeting was held in collaboration with the UNFF Secretariat and other members of the CPF on 22-24 October 2019 in FAO headquarters, to enhance work on Tier 2 and 3 indicators and advise the CPF Task Force in this regard.

8. The *International Conference on Working across Sectors to Halt Deforestation and Increase Forest Area - From Aspiration to Action*, organized by FAO in collaboration with CPF in 2018, made recommendations to UNFF and through it to the High-level Political Forum (HLPF) on how to accelerate progress towards the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 15 (SDG 15), in particular target 15.2, to promote the implementation of sustainable management of all types of forests, halt deforestation, restore degraded forests and substantially increase afforestation and reforestation globally by 2020.

9. The FAO *State of the World's Forests 2018* report, which focused on the linkages between forests and the SDGs, was launched on the occasion of the HLPF in New York, during the special forestry event organized by the UNFF Secretariat. The FAO *State of the World's Forests 2020* examines contributions of forests and of the people who use and manage them, to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. These inputs, together with the written submission of the Chairperson of COFO on the Committee's work in relation to SDG 4, 8, 10, 13 and 16, constituted important contributions to the work of the HLPF, where ministers committed to, among others, "the implementation of sustainable management of all types of forests, halting deforestation, restoring degraded forests and substantially increasing afforestation and reforestation globally by 2020"⁹.

10. FAO and partners, notably the Centre for International Forestry Research (CIFOR) and the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO), also achieved major progress through the Sustainable Wood for a Sustainable World initiative which was launched at UNFF13 in 2018. This initiative aims to strengthen sustainable wood value chains to enhance their social, economic and environmental benefits from production to consumption, and move towards improved policy, incentives and institutional frameworks to increase sustainable production and consumption of wood and leveraging its contribution to the bioeconomy and circular economy. Major accomplishments

⁷ COFO/2018/REP paragraph 10

⁸ Ibid paragraph 12. g)

⁹ E/HLS/2018/1 paragraph 27

include raising awareness of the role of wood products in sustainable development, and helping to promote an integrated approach to forest finance, reconciling conservation, climate and production within forest finance strategies, thereby making a direct contribution to the Global Forest Finance Facilitation Network.

C. Collaboration with UNFF

11. In addition to requesting FAO to support the work of UNFF, Members repeatedly invited UNFF to consider collaboration with FAO bodies, in particular the Regional Forestry Commissions, in the context of strengthening global-regional interaction and activities on the regional level.

12. The related UNFF Expert Meeting¹⁰, held in Nairobi in 2017, noted that while many regional forest-related processes do not have the opportunity to attend UNFF sessions, they are regularly participating in the Regional Forestry Commission meetings, which they considered a good opportunity to enhance regional-global interaction.

13. The 13th Session of UNFF considered this recommendation inconclusively and invited COFO to provide an update at the Forum's 14th session on the potential offered by the Regional Forestry Commissions, as appropriate, for enhancing regional/subregional involvement¹¹.

14. COFO discussed the subject on the basis of document COFO/2018/7.2 and concluded by recommending "deeper collaboration between Regional Forestry Commissions and the Forum through its regional dimension and suggested that this collaboration be flexible and fit to different regional circumstances"¹². COFO's recommendation, endorsed also by the FAO Council, has been brought to the attention of UNFF in the Note by the Secretariat on enhanced cooperation, coordination and engagement on forest-related issues¹³ and through the related panel during the session¹⁴. The next policy session of UNFF may wish to consider the proposal.

15. An excellent example of one possible method of collaboration is presented by the Asia Pacific Forestry Week, where the UNFF secretariat was a co-leader of Stream 5 "Innovating Governance and Institutions" and organized four sessions under this stream. The involvement of the UNFF secretariat was based on FAO's invitation and appeared very beneficial for both parties. Similarly, Regional Forestry Commissions could be invited to consider UNFF-related topics and provide feedback to the Forum.

II. REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE 24TH SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE

16. A full report on actions taken in response to the recommendations of the Committee's 24th Session, the Regional Forestry Commissions as well as other FAO Governing Bodies is contained in miscellaneous document: *Progress report 2018-2019*.

17. To highlight progress in specific activities, the Committee is provided with summary reports from major programmes and activities conducted or hosted by FAO, in particular:

- Collaborative Partnership on Sustainable Wildlife Management (CPW) Secretariat
- Forest and Farm Facility (FFF)
- EU FAO Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) Programme
- Forest and Landscape Restoration Mechanism (FLRM)

¹⁰ Expert Meeting on Regional and Sub-regional input to the United Nations Forum on Forests

¹¹ E/2018/42 paragraph 25 of Resolution 13/1

¹² COFO/2018/REP paragraph 35. d)

¹³ E/CN.18/2019/6 paragraph 71

¹⁴ UNFF14 Cahir's Summary, paragraph 35

- Intergovernmental Technical Working Group on Forest Genetic Resources (ITWG-FGR)
- Mountain Partnership
- REDD+ Programme

A. Collaborative Partnership on Sustainable Wildlife Management

Background

18. The CPW is a voluntary partnership of fourteen international organizations¹⁵ with substantive mandates and programmes for the sustainable use and conservation of wildlife resources, including FAO. The FAO Forestry Division serves as the CPW Secretariat.

19. Established in 2013 in response to the Decision XI/25¹⁶ of the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the CPW's mission is to increase cooperation and coordination among its members and other interested parties on sustainable wildlife management to promote the sustainable use and conservation of terrestrial vertebrate wildlife, contributing to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, and the improvement of food security and livelihoods.

Major areas of work and progress made

20. The second Wildlife Forum, with the overarching theme '*Sustainable Use for Conservation and Livelihoods*', was organized by the CPW and the African Union Commission (AUC), on 21 November 2018, on the sidelines of the UN Biodiversity Conference (CBD COP14), in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt.

21. At the Forum, FAO launched the CPW animation video¹⁷, addressing the role the CPW can have in tackling key issues on wildlife management. CIFOR and the Secretariat of the CBD launched the technical report¹⁸, which supplemented the voluntary guidance for a sustainable wild meat sector, welcomed by the COP in its Decision CBD/COP/DEC/14/7. The outcomes of the Forum are available as an Information Document CBD/COP/14/INF/51¹⁹ and provided in the IISD Wildlife Forum Bulletin²⁰.

22. To develop a better understanding on how wildlife management issues can be integrated into the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) of the CBD, the CPW organized a Consultative Workshop on Sustainable Wildlife Management Beyond 2020, on 25-26 June 2019, in Cambridge, UK. The report of this workshop was brought to the attention of the eighteenth meeting of the COP to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) (CITES COP18 Inf. 64²¹), and to the first meeting of the CBD Open-Ended Working Group on the post-2020 GBF (CBD/WG2020/1/INF/3²²).

¹⁵ The members include the Secretariats of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD); the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES); the Convention on Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS); the Centre for International Forestry Research (CIFOR); the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO); the International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation (CIC); the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED); the International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity (IIFB); the International Trade Centre (ITC); the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN); the International Union of Forest Research Organisations (IUFRO); the wildlife trade monitoring network (TRAFFIC); the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP); and the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE).

¹⁶ <https://www.cbd.int/doc/decisions/cop-11/cop-11-dec-25-en.pdf>

¹⁷ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7kb724JEzrw>

¹⁸ <https://www.cbd.int/doc/c/8ca9/8f95/d06a6f4d99339baebd13648a/cop-14-inf-07-en.pdf>

¹⁹ <https://www.cbd.int/doc/c/f724/2dd9/af2683d6ad20ee6fd77c7ce9/cop-14-inf-51-en.pdf>

²⁰ <http://enb.iisd.org/download/pdf/sd/enbplus88num15e.pdf>

²¹ <https://cites.org/sites/default/files/eng/cop/18/inf/E-CoP18-Inf-064.pdf>

²² <https://www.cbd.int/doc/c/2d1f/ab01/681ae86a81ab601e585ecfe0/wg2020-01-inf-03-en.pdf>

23. During the 23rd meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) of the CBD, in Montreal, the CPW Secretariat delivered a keynote presentation about CPW and its relevant initiatives. It also contributed to the deliberations on the implementation of COP decision 14/7 and on the post-2020 global biodiversity framework.

24. On 19-20 March 2020, the CPW and other key organizations carried out a virtual workshop to discuss and develop a suite of targets and indicators relevant to sustainable harvest, use and trade in wildlife and to identify key existing and needed datasets to measure progress towards sustainable use targets, with the aim of informing the CBD Post-2020 GBF. The progress made will be reported at the next meeting of the SBSTTA of the CBD.

B. Forests and Farm Facility (FFF)

Background

25. The report below shows the progress made in reference to the thematic priority area for FAO's work in forestry in 2018-2021 on the need for a complementary and integrated approach for agriculture and forests and the relevant SDGs. The FFF achievements below also contribute to Global Forest Goal 5 "Promote governance frameworks to implement sustainable forest management, including through the UN Forest Instrument, and enhance the contribution of forests to the 2030 Agenda", and Global Forest Goal 6 "Enhance cooperation, coordination, coherence and synergies on forest-related issues at all levels, including within the UN System and across Collaborative Partnership on Forests member organizations, as well as across sectors and relevant stakeholders".

Major areas of work and progress made

26. Since 2018, FFF is making substantial progress against SDGs 1, 2 and 15 as well as COFO priorities 4, 5 and 8 in terms of policy level impacts. For example, in Ecuador FFF supported the Ministry of Environment's "Ministerial Agreement 034" to promote policies of bio-enterprises by Forest and Farm Producers Organizations in Ecuador, which creates enabling conditions for sustainable production at a landscape scale.

27. In Nepal active advocacy supported by FFF provided inputs into formation and improvements in the Forest Act 2019 and in Zambia FFF continues to provide inputs to the new Charcoal Regulations.

28. Work is also progressing to support enterprises, link them to markets and finance and establish business incubation capacity (SDGs 1,5,8,12), including a national team in Ghana consisting of Forest and Farm Producer Organization's (FFPOs) representatives from each of three ecological zones working on developing a portfolio of businesses around baskets of products.

29. Efforts to increase the role of FFPOs in climate resilience (SDGs 2,13,15) are gradually bearing fruit with over 77,000 hectares of forest and farm production systems clearly increasing mitigation and adaptation results.

30. The work of increasing access to social and cultural services (SDGs 3,10), though slower to yield large scale impacts, is building the capacity of many FFPOs to access or provide more services to their members. In 2019, 4 FFPOs have also developed outreach and communication plans around issues of importance to their members. For example, the Federation of Community Producers Organization of Nepal organized a national 16-day campaign against gender based violence.

31. In the course of 2019-20, FFF provided support through key apex Forest and Farm Producer Organizations and to smaller FFPOs in each of the nine countries. FFF thereby reached 400 forest and farm producer organizations with direct support to over 350,000 members of which at least 30 percent were women and 30,000 youth (in Ghana alone) and with indirect support to an aggregate of 25 million members. Three regional and one global FFPO (with over 25 million members in total) have

been supported to strengthen the role of women, youth and agroforestry systems in almost 30 additional countries. FFPO partners of the FFF are collectively managing significantly more than 12.3 million hectares of natural forests and farm forestry plantations.

C. FAO-EU Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) Programme

Background

32. The FAO-EU FLEGT Programme is one of the EU's flagship initiatives to support the implementation of the EU FLEGT Action Plan – to tackle illegal logging, promote trade in legal timber products and ultimately contribute to Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) and poverty reduction. The Programme provides technical and financial support to governments, civil society and private sector organizations by channelling resources to nationally led initiatives through grants on a demand-driven basis. Starting in 2008, the Programme is now in its third phase, with funding provided by the European Commission, UK and Sweden. Over 280 projects accounting for USD 22.7 million have been funded and implemented in 25 countries during Phase III of the programme.

33. Through the work implemented during Phase III, more recognition is being given to the central role that forests play in achieving the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda. To this end, the programme seeks to improve forest governance as an enabling component of all initiatives to address climate change issues; reduce trends towards forest degradation and deforestation; and continue to support the fundamental role that forests play in improving rural livelihoods and poverty alleviation.

Major areas of work and progress made

34. There are a number of support streams through the FAO-EU FLEGT Programme that have improved governance and created the enabling environment:

- **Strengthen private sector capacity** to increase legal timber in domestic trade: micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) are often disadvantaged compared to large international producers to demonstrate compliance with demand side legal timber production requirements, due to capacity, knowledge, or cost-related gaps. Nearly 39 percent of the projects funded in the programme support local businesses to close these gaps. In particular, the Programme has delivered targeted trainings to increase the MSMEs associations' capacity to adopt tools for legal timber sourcing and product tracking. By channelling support through national associations, the Programme has reached a large number of MSMEs operating in the forest sector, providing access not only to training but also to business management support.
- **Systems development for governments:** Under the EU FLEGT Action Plan, countries are encouraged to improve national timber tracking and control systems to monitor timber products along the supply chain. Programme assistance is key to building on national verification, certification and legality assurance systems addressing compliance with national legislation, which is the technical area where support is most in demand. In Honduras, a modular approach to implementing such a system (called SIRMA) is being applied to address specific segments of the supply chain by building on existing information management procedures. Similar systems approaches are being tested in Cameroon, Guatemala and Colombia. The Programme is also exploring the potential to develop an open source timber traceability software to be adapted by users as needed.
- **Enhancing multi-stakeholder processes to improve transparency:** Independent forest monitoring, usually carried out by civil society and involving forest communities, verifies compliance of operators with forest sector legislations. In the Congo Basin (Cameroon, DRC and CAR), independent forest monitoring has led to official investigations and in some cases has triggered revisions to legal frameworks. In Peru, eight indigenous peoples forest

“veedurías” were recognized by the Regional Environmental Authority as custodians of the forest.

D. Forest and Landscape Restoration Mechanism (FLRM)

Background

35. The Forest and Landscape Restoration Mechanism (FLR Mechanism) was established in 2014 at FAO.

Major areas of work and progress made

36. To date, eighteen countries have received direct support to develop strong enabling conditions for wide scale restoration programmes. Pilot field restoration investments have also been funded to demonstrate the types of restoration suitable to country conditions and the different approaches needed to foster multi-stakeholder involvement and address socio-economic issues as well as environmental objectives. The solid results achieved so far have built strong interest from new resource partners, leading to the rapid expansion of the project portfolio led by the FLR Mechanism that is now managing a total amount of \$40 million. The FLR Mechanism has also secured additional financial resources for the period 2021-2025 with several new Global Environmental Facility (GEF) projects (\$25 million in Guinea, Madagascar, Kenya) approved at the last GEF Council in early June 2020 and several new project proposals in the final pipeline with multiple bilateral/multilateral donors (\$15 million from Korea, Germany and GEF).

E. Intergovernmental Technical Working Group on Forest Genetic Resources (ITWG-FGR)

Background

37. In 2009, the FAO Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (CGRFA) established the Intergovernmental Technical Working Group on Forest Genetic Resources (ITWG-FGR)²³ to review issues related to genetic resources in the forest sector, and to advise and make recommendations to the CGRFA. The Secretariat of the ITWG-FGR lies within the Forestry Division.

Major areas of work and progress made

- **Seventeenth Regular Session of the CGRFA**

In February 2019, the CGRFA took note of the First Report on the implementation of the Global Plan of Action for the Conservation, Sustainable Use and Development of Forest Genetic Resources²⁴. It invited countries to continue implementing this action plan and encouraged them to address the findings of the report. The CGRFA adopted a funding strategy for the implementation of the Global Plan of Action for the Conservation, Sustainable Use and Development of Forest Genetic Resources (Global Plan of Action)²⁵, and endorsed voluntary guidelines for preparing a national strategy for forest genetic resources²⁶. It further requested FAO to continue coordinating and supporting the implementation of the Global Plan of Action, in collaboration with regional networks on forest genetic resources and relevant international organizations.

Concerning the preparation of *The Second Report on the State of the World's Forest Genetic Resources* (to be released in 2023), the CGRFA adopted the outline of the Second Report and

²³ <http://www.fao.org/forest-genetic-resources/working-group/en/>

²⁴ CGRFA-17/19/10.2/Inf.1

²⁵ CGRFA-17/19/Report, Appendix D.

²⁶ CGRFA-17/19/10.2/Inf.3

its preparatory process²⁷, as well as guidelines for preparing country reports²⁸. It encouraged countries to initiate the collection of information and data for the preparation of these reports and called upon them to submit the reports by 30 June 2020. The CGRFA also requested FAO to initiate the development of a new global information system on forest genetic resources, subject to the availability of extra-budgetary resources, to make the collected data easily accessible and useable.

In June 2019, FAO invited countries to update, by 31 August 2019, the nominations for National Focal Points on forest genetic resources and to submit the country reports by 30 June 2020. The list of the nominated National Focal Points is available on the FAO website on forest genetic resources²⁹. Subject to the availability of extra-budgetary resources, FAO will organize regional training workshops in 2020 for the National Focal Points to support the finalization of the country reports. Furthermore, FAO is currently preparing a project for the development of the new global information system on forest genetic resources.

- **Sixth Session of the ITWG-FGR**

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Sixth Session of the ITWG-FGR was postponed to a later date. The meeting was originally scheduled to take place in Rome, Italy on 12-14 May 2020.

F. Mountain Partnership

Background

38. The Mountain Partnership (MP) is the only UN voluntary alliance dedicated to improving the lives of mountain peoples and protecting mountain environments. The MP currently has more than 400 members, including 60 governments, several UN organizations and many civil society organizations. It is supported by a Secretariat, which is funded by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation; the Federal Office of Agriculture of Switzerland; the Ministry of Environment, Agriculture and Sustainability of Andorra; and FAO. The FAO Forestry Division hosts the Mountain Partnership Secretariat (MPS).

Major areas of work and progress made

39. The MP's work is organized into four pillars: advocacy, capacity development, joint action and communications. Here are some of its achievements since the 24th session of COFO in July 2018.

- **Advocacy:** The past two years have entailed high-profile advocacy efforts at the global level to ensure the mainstreaming of mountain issues in the international processes. In July 2018, 2019 and 2020 the MPS organized events at the High-Level Political Forum, New York, USA. In October 2018, the MPS participated in the fourth World Mountain Forum, held in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan. In December 2018 and 2019, during UNFCCC COPs 24 and 25, MP members held side events to raise awareness about climate change consequences on mountains. The [UN Secretary-General's Report on Sustainable Mountain Development](#) prepared by FAO and the Mountain Partnership Secretariat, in collaboration with governments, relevant agencies of the United Nations system and other organizations forms the basis of the subsequent [Resolution 74/227](#) on sustainable mountain development.
- **Capacity development:** The MPS prioritizes capacity development in the sustainable management of mountains. Established in 2008, the International Programme on Research and Training on Sustainable Management of Mountain Areas (IPROMO) summer school is held

²⁷ CGRFA-17/19/10.3

²⁸ CGRFA-17/19/10.3/Inf.1

²⁹ <http://www.fao.org/forest-genetic-resources/background/national-focal-points/en/>

every year and is organized by the MPS, FAO, the University of Turin and the University of Tuscia. In 2018 and 2019, IPROMO courses were focused respectively on Bioeconomy and the Landscape approach. In 2018, the Summer School GROW - Agrobiodiversity in a Changing Climate was launched. Organized with the Sapienza University of Rome and Bioversity International, it is held annually. The MPS is responsible with FAO for the Mountain Green Cover Index – the SDG indicator for the target 15.4.2 and holds trainings on the methodology to monitor global land use and cover.

- **Joint Action:** The MP has forged over the past years new alliances to support mountain people and their environments. Key global partners include international non-governmental organizations like Slow Food International, IFOAM – OI, the private sector company NaturaSì, the Sapienza University of Rome, the University of Queensland, Bioversity International, the University of Turin, Sustainable Travel International, the Global Island Partnership and the Institute for Ethical and Environmental Certification. The Mountain Partnership Products (MPP) initiative, which focuses on improving the livelihoods of small holders in mountains by shortening value chains, was selected as one of 25 best practices from around the world for Expo 2020 Dubai. In 2018, the MP and the Global Island Partnership formed the Coalition of Fragile Ecosystems, a new global alliance of vulnerable communities living in fragile ecosystems that advocates globally for the protection of mountain and island ecosystems and the resilience of their populations. Through the Mountain Biodiversity for REDD+ project the MPS has supported Papua New Guinea to integrate biodiversity assessment in its National Forest Inventory.
- **Communications:** The MP disseminates sustainable mountain development news, data and information through its website, social media, newsletter, databases and media outreach. In 2019, the MP published a report on Mountain Vulnerability to Food Security and Land Degradation Neutrality. Every year, the MPS produces a global communication campaign for the International Mountain Day (IMD).

G. REDD+ Programme

Background

40. The contribution of reducing deforestation to addressing climate change has been recognized in international climate policy and in the Paris Agreement. A framework called “Reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, and the role of the conservation, sustainable management of forests, and enhancement of forest carbon stocks” (REDD+) was agreed under the UNFCCC.

41. REDD+ enables developing countries to access funding for verified results for reduced emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, and for the sustainable management of forests, as well as their conservation and enhancement. The UNFCCC framework for REDD+ includes identification of drivers of deforestation, development of REDD+ strategies and action plans, establishment of sound national forest monitoring systems (NFMS) as well as social and environmental safeguards, recognizing the roles of indigenous peoples and local communities, and emphasizing the importance of biodiversity.

42. More than 30 countries have developed national REDD+ strategies, and 54 countries have included REDD+ in their NDCs.

Major areas of work and progress made

43. FAO has supported countries in REDD+ through various global, regional and national initiatives with multiple resource partners including the UN-REDD Programme, the Central African Forest Initiative (CAFI), the World Bank, the Green Climate Fund (GCF), the GEF and many bi-lateral initiatives.

44. The UN-REDD Programme is a flagship collaborative programme of FAO, UNDP and UNEP, supporting nationally led REDD+ processes. Since its creation in 2008, it has supported REDD+ readiness efforts in 65 countries. The Programme has evolved with a focus on advancing Articles 5 and 6 of the Paris Agreement, supporting implementation of policies and strategies, enabling access to climate finance and forging partnerships to address climate, biodiversity and livelihoods goals simultaneously. The UN-REDD Programme has been catalytic in mobilizing resources for REDD+ implementation, of which FAO's current portfolio is estimated at USD 140 million.
45. As of early 2020, FAO has supported 37 of the 50 (70%) country submissions of Forest Reference Emission Level and/or Forest Reference Level (FREL/FRL)³⁰.
46. Eleven countries submitted REDD+ results for a total of 8.85 billion tCO₂. By May 2020, four countries have received Results Based Payments (RBPs) under the GCF Results Based Payments Pilot Programme, including the FAO-supported project in Chile (USD 63 million).
47. Nineteen countries (Argentina, Benin, DRC, Honduras, Mexico, Ecuador, Colombia, Kenya, Madagascar, Cote d'Ivoire, Nepal, Guatemala, Peru, Malawi, Paraguay, Panama, Vietnam, Pakistan and Zambia) have been supported to review REDD+ policy and legal frameworks.
48. FAO supported ground and satellite data processing for REDD+ through the Open Foris suite of free open-source tools applied in land monitoring, collecting data, biomass surveys, forest restoration monitoring, map validation and socio-economic surveys. With over 20 000 installations, the tools have been applied in 25 National Forests Inventories.
49. SEPAL, FAO's cloud-based computing data platform for satellite based forest monitoring, has reached more than 4 000 active users from 160 countries and its platform supports forest monitoring used for REDD+.

³⁰ <https://redd.unfccc.int/>