



联合国
粮食及
农业组织

Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations

Organisation des Nations
Unies pour l'alimentation
et l'agriculture

Продовольственная и
сельскохозяйственная организация
Объединенных Наций

Organización de las
Naciones Unidas para la
Alimentación y la Agricultura

منظمة
الغذية والزراعة
للأمم المتحدة

COMMITTEE ON FORESTRY

TWENTY-FOURTH SESSION

Rome, 16 - 20 July 2018

FAO's PROGRAMME OF WORK IN FORESTRY UNDER THE STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

I. INTRODUCTION

1. FAO's reviewed Strategic Framework¹, its Medium Term Plan (MTP) 2018-21 and Programme of Work and Budget (PWB) 2018-19 (MTP-PWB)² were approved by the FAO Conference in its 40th session in July 2017, Rome. The Conference appreciated the close alignment of FAO's Strategic Objectives with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

2. The reviewed Strategic Framework was developed through a consultative strategic thinking process during 2016, taking into account the strong and consistent support expressed by the FAO governing bodies for progress in the strategic direction of the Organization. This process involved identification of global trends expected to frame agricultural development over the medium term³, and sectoral (including forestry) and regional trends arising from regional strategic reviews and deliberations of the FAO regional conferences⁴ and technical committees;⁵ derivation of main challenges expected to be faced by countries and development actors in food and agriculture (including forestry) in the coming years; analysis of main global developments setting the overall context in which FAO operates; and the implications of these challenges and developments for FAO's Strategic Objectives in the context of FAO's basic attributes and core functions. The review took into account the major global developments that occurred in 2015-2016, most importantly, the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and entry into force of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change.

3. The reviewed Strategic Framework provided the basis for fine-tuning the conceptual framework and theory of change of FAO's five Strategic Objectives (SOs) within the context of the

¹ C 2017/7 (www.fao.org/pwb)

² C 2017/3 (www.fao.org/pwb)

³ FAO 2016. *The future of food and agriculture – Trends and challenges*. Rome.

⁴ C 2017/14, C 2017/15, C 2017/16, C 2017/17, C 2017/18, C 2017/LIM/1

⁵ C 2017/21, C 2017/22, C 2017/23, C 2017/24

Organization's vision, attributes and core functions. The MTP-PWB set out the programmatic framework and resources for planning, implementing and monitoring results through indicators and targets, including the contribution of FAO's work toward 40 SDG targets. *Web-Annex 1* provides an overview of FAO's Strategic Programmes including alignment with the SDGs.

4. In this context, the present document first provides a brief overview of FAO's achievements in forestry facilitated through the Strategic Programmes (SPs) in the 2016-17 biennium. It then outlines key global and sector specific developments and trends, which will influence FAO's future work in forestry. Taking into account these and the specific recommendations from the Regional Forestry Commissions the last section lays out the priority areas of FAO's work in forestry during 2018-19 and beyond.

II. ACHIEVEMENTS IN FAO'S WORK IN FORESTRY IN 2016-17

5. In the 2016-17 biennium, FAO aligned its work on forests to the organization's Strategic Objectives and to the SDGs, taking into account the recommendations of the 23rd Session of the Committee on Forestry (COFO). A detailed description of the achievements of FAO's work in forestry in the 2016-17 biennium is presented in document COFO/2018/6.2, complemented by the FAO report *Moving Forward: Selected achievements of the FAO Forestry Programme 2016-17*. Some key achievements are highlighted below.

6. FAO's work to *reduce rural poverty and improve food security* (SO1, SO3; SDG1, SDG2) achieved important outcomes with the Forest and Farm Facility directly supporting 947 forest and farm producer organizations representing more than 30 million small forest and farm producers. FAO has also supported the development of policies aimed at increasing the role of forests in ensuring food security and nutrition. For the first time ever, the Committee on World Food Security (CFS), made recommendations on strengthening the role of forests in food security and nutrition at its 44th Session. Additionally, FAO undertook cross-sectoral forestry and food-security policy assessments in seven countries to help integrate food security and nutrition objectives into forest policies.

7. To *strengthen the provision of key forestry information* (SO2; SDG15) FAO has developed a range of innovative, open-source technical tools, to assist countries in their efforts to measure, monitor and report on their forests and land use. The System for Earth Observation Data Access, Processing and Analysis for Land Monitoring (SEPAL) is an easy-to-use platform for processing and interpreting satellite data and is already used by 224 organizations in 84 countries. FAO's Global Forest Resources Assessment (FRA) has established an innovative online platform for improving reporting for FRA 2020 and FAO has developed specialized modules for national surveys that help measure the socio-economic benefits of forests.

8. FAO promoted the *sustainable use of biodiversity, especially wildlife* (SO2; SDG15, SDG 2), through a field project in Central Africa, the outcomes of which served as the foundation for a large, multi-million Dollar project in Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific to reduce wildlife hunting in countries to sustainable level, conserve biodiversity and secure food sources for forest-dependent communities.

9. FAO started a new initiative on *sustainable wood value chains* (SO4; SDG12, SDG15) jointly with partners from the Collaborative Partnership on Forests and beyond. The "Sustainable Wood for a Sustainable World (SW4SW)" initiative is an outcome of an international conference convened by FAO with partners in 2017. It is closely linked with an initiative to help improve the sustainability of forest concessions in tropical countries as part of the value chain, which involved a wide range of actors in Africa, Latin America and Asia.

10. On *climate change* (SO2, SO5; SDG13; SDG 15), in line with FAO's new corporate policy, FAO has been supporting countries both on mitigation and adaptation measures. Through its Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing

Countries (REDD+), 34 countries have submitted their Forest Reference Emission Level/Forest Reference Level (FREL/FRLs) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). On adaptation, FAO has been developing a framework methodology for climate change vulnerability assessments of forests and forest dependent people to assist countries in their adaptation planning. FAO has been providing direct support to eight countries to integrate the agricultural sectors into their National Adaptation Plans.

11. To restore degraded forest land and increase resilience of ecosystems and communities (SO2, SO5; SDG15, SDG1), FAO has assisted communities in the Sahelian region of Africa to restore 12,000 hectares of degraded dryland forests and, through the Forest and Landscape Restoration Mechanism, has directly supported seven countries to develop strong enabling conditions for wide scale restoration through cross-sectoral institutional coordination and improved policy coherence and legal frameworks. FAO has also partnered with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to address the multisectoral challenges and risks associated with forest resources in acute and protracted refugee crises, particularly in Eastern Africa.

12. On forest governance (SO2, SO4; SDG15, SDG16), the European Union (EU) FAO Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) programme has supported 25 countries, with a new focus on private sector engagement, improving national timber-tracking and control systems to monitor timber products along the supply chain and strengthening independent monitoring efforts by civil-society organizations (CSOs) to produce reliable information that supports the detection and punishment of forest infractions. At country level, the REDD+ and FLEGT programmes are increasingly coordinating their activities for increased synergies and better outcomes.

III. GLOBAL DEVELOPMENTS WITH IMPLICATIONS FOR FAO'S WORK ON FORESTS

13. A number of recent global developments have direct significance for forests and will continue to influence FAO's future work in forestry. These include the 2030 Agenda, the Paris Agreement, the **UN Strategic Plan for Forests 2017-2030** (UNSPF), the Aichi Biodiversity Targets set out in the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, and commitments pledged under the Bonn Challenge and New York Declaration on Forests. It is worthwhile to recall that items 4, 5.1-5.4, 6.5 and 7.2 of the draft agenda of the 24th Session discuss several of these developments in details and could provide substantive input to the Committee's considerations.

a) 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

14. In July 2018 – nearly three years into implementing the 2030 Agenda -- the High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) will review progress at the global level on six SDGs, including SDG15 (Life on land)⁶ to “protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification and halt and reverse land degradation, and halt biodiversity loss”. This review is an opportunity to evaluate progress made and identify further actions needed to achieve sustainable forest management (SFM) and demonstrate the vital contribution of SFM and the forest sector to achieving other SDGs in the cluster.

15. As some of the targets of SDG15 are to be achieved by 2020, making progress is urgent. A key message to the HLPF review in 2018 from the International Conference on “*Working across Sectors to Halt Deforestation and Increase Forest Area – from Aspiration to Action*” (February 2018, Rome) is highly relevant in this regard: “Achieving SDG15, especially halting deforestation and

⁶ Also under review: SDG6 (water), SDG7 (energy), SDG11 (cities), SDG 12 (consumption/ production) and SDG 17 (means of implementation – reviewed by HLPF annually)

restoring degraded forests by 2020, requires urgent action now. Best practices and tools are available but their application must be upscaled and progress accelerated.”⁷

16. While the 2030 Agenda clearly states that the SDGs are “integrated and indivisible”⁸, this has not yet been fully recognized in practice. Future efforts need to recognize and take into account the interlinkages among SDGs, including the often crucial role that healthy and productive forests play in advancing many of the SDGs. FAO’s 2018 edition of *The State of the World’s Forests* (SOFO 2018)⁹ provides concrete evidence of the multiple contributions of forests to achieving the SDGs, highlights the interlinkages and outlines a way forward to strengthening these.

b) Paris Agreement

17. Under Article 4 of the Paris Agreement, each party commits, *inter alia*, to prepare, communicate and maintain successive “nationally determined contributions” (NDCs) that it intends to achieve to help advance the goals of the Agreement, including “holding the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2 degrees C above pre-industrial levels”. Parties are to communicate their NDCs to the UNFCCC Secretariat every five years, beginning in 2020. It has already become clear that the current NDCs will be insufficient to achieve the climate targets and that ambitions have to be increased.

18. Many countries have already identified forest-related actions in their NDCs¹⁰. Increasing ambition therefore also means that more ambitious forest-related actions, including domestic mitigation measures, will need to feature prominently in future NDCs if the aims of the Agreement are to be met.

c) UN Strategic Plan for Forests 2017-2030

19. In 2017, the UN General Assembly adopted the first ever UN Strategic Plan on Forests (2017-2030) with six Global Forest Goals (GFGs) and 29 associated targets. The GFGs and targets are closely linked to the SDGs and other international commitments related to forests such as the climate objectives under the Paris Agreement and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets. One notable target is to increase global forest cover by three percent by 2030 (Target 1.1). Others relate to resilience and improvements of livelihoods and the contribution of forests and trees to food security, governance and sustainability of forest products and services, increased finance and improved coordination and cooperation, among others. FAO as a UN system organization with an important mandate on forests and as member and chair of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests should provide significant contributions to the achievement of the GFGs and support countries in their efforts in this regard.

d) Aichi Biodiversity Targets

20. In November 2018, the 14th Conference of Parties (COP14) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) will review progress in achieving the Aichi Biodiversity Targets (including Target 7¹¹), and on that basis consider the post-2020 global biodiversity framework and follow up to the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020. A key focus of the new framework is expected to be mainstreaming biodiversity across sectors (agriculture, energy, mining, health, etc.). This could help stimulate enhanced cross-sectoral actions which foster the conservation and sustainable use of forest biodiversity while achieving other sector goals. The post-2020 framework also provides an

⁷ <http://www.cpfweb.org/47129-080cab460fd2563e8b388f642b811133.pdf>

⁸ Paragraph 55

⁹ See also COFO/2018/4

¹⁰ See also COFO/2018/6.4

¹¹ “By 2020 areas under agriculture, aquaculture and forestry are managed sustainably, ensuring conservation of biodiversity”

opportunity to more closely align the forest-related Aichi Biodiversity Targets with targets under SDG15 and the GFGs.

e) Bonn Challenge and New York Declaration on Forests

21. FAO's Global Forest Resources Assessment 2015 showed that, while deforestation rates are decreasing globally, forest degradation is increasing. The Bonn Challenge¹² commits to restore 150 million ha of the "world's deforested lands" by 2020. The New York Declaration on Forests¹³ commits, *inter alia*, to restore 150 million ha of "degraded landscapes and forestlands" by 2020 and an additional 200 million ha by 2030, as well as to halve the rate of loss of natural forests globally by 2020 and end the loss by 2030. The land degradation neutrality (LDN) targets of UNCCD are relevant in this context as well. These commitments demonstrate clear political will on the part of participants but progress to date has been modest. Forward-looking solutions are needed to translate aspirations to restore degraded forests into concrete actions on the ground.

IV. PRIORITY AREAS OF FAO'S WORK IN FORESTRY IN 2018-19 AND BEYOND

22. The foregoing developments indicate that efforts on forests and forestry over the next 10-12 years should be aligned with the GFGs and reflect in an integrated way the forest-related commitments and contributions to the SDGs, Paris Agreement, the emerging post-2020 global biodiversity framework and pledges to restore degraded lands. Because these commitments were agreed at different times and in different fora, they vary somewhat in form, focus, scope and context. Looking across the various goals and targets and considering the suggestions made by the Regional Forestry Commissions¹⁴, eight interrelated thematic priority areas or "themes" can be identified for forward-looking and solutions-oriented work by FAO under the umbrella of its cross-cutting Strategic Framework:

- 1) Halting deforestation globally, particularly from agriculture
- 2) Addressing forest degradation and promoting sustainable forest management
- 3) Increasing forest cover through restoration, reforestation and afforestation
- 4) Improving forest-based livelihoods, prosperity and human well-being
- 5) Mitigation of and adaptation to climate change and strengthening resilience of ecosystems and communities to climate change through forests
- 6) Policy coherence. i.e. mainstreaming forests through cross-sectoral and interagency approaches at all levels
- 7) Increased means of implementation from all sources
- 8) Good governance frameworks at all levels.

23. The following table shows how these priority thematic areas link to FAO's Strategic Objectives and to existing internationally agreed forest-related commitments.

Thematic priority area	Strategic Objective	GFG	SDG	Paris Agreement	ABT ¹⁵
1. Halting deforestation globally, particularly from agriculture	SO2	1, 3	13, 15	✓	5
2. Addressing forest degradation and promoting SFM	SO2	1, 2	6, 12 13 14, 15	✓	7, 8, 9 11, 15

¹² Launched in 2011 by Germany and IUCN in collaboration with the GPFLR

¹³ Launched by a coalition of 179 national and subnational governments, companies and nongovernmental organizations in the context of the New York Climate Summit of 2014

¹⁴ Miscellaneous document: Recommendations of the Regional Forestry Commissions

¹⁵ ABT = Aichi Biodiversity Targets. The current Aichi Biodiversity Targets have a 2020 target date.

3. Increasing forest cover through restoration, reforestation and afforestation	SO2	1, 3	6, 13	✓	14, 15
4. Improving forest-based livelihoods, prosperity and human well-being	SO1, SO3, SO4	2	1, 4, 7, 8, 9, 12		4, 14, 16, 18
5. Mitigation of and adaptation to climate change and strengthening resilience of ecosystems and communities to climate change through forests	SO2, SO5	1	1, 13, 15	✓	5, 7, 15
6. Mainstreaming forests and trees through cross-sectoral and inter-agency approaches at all levels	SO1-SO5	2, 5, 6	2, 3, 5, 17	✓	2, 3
7. Increasing means of implementation from all sources	SO1-SO5	4	12, 17	✓	20
8. Strengthening governance frameworks at all levels	SO2	5, 6	1, 5, 16	✓	18

24. Based on these considerations the priorities for FAO's work under the general thematic areas for 2018-19 and beyond are as follows.

25. FAO support to halting deforestation globally, particularly from agriculture will include promoting stronger collaboration across agricultural sectors at country level towards sustainable food and agriculture. It will also include assisting countries to establish diversified agricultural systems utilizing agroforestry and silvo-pastoral approaches to increase agricultural productivity and resilience, food security and local incomes. A third pillar will be closer liaison with the private sector in support of deforestation-free commodities and inclusive and sustainable value chains in agriculture and forestry.

26. Addressing forest degradation and promoting SFM implies that FAO will continue to raise awareness and provide evidence of the benefits of SFM and the impacts and causes of forest degradation and advocating ways to address both. It will also involve support to countries in monitoring, assessing, reporting on forest conditions and the extent and causes of degradation as well as disseminating information. Promoting the implementation of the recently published guidelines for forest concessions in the tropics and continued efforts to mainstream biodiversity in forest management will be key aspects of this work. Building on the momentum generated on urban forestry in 2018, especially through the Global Forum on Urban Forests to be held in November, advocating for urban forestry through innovative partnerships with city planners and architects will be a new focus area in the biennium and beyond.

27. To support the expansion of forest cover through restoration, reforestation and afforestation FAO will upscale the work of the Forest and Landscape Restoration (FLR) Mechanism as well as its support to the Great Green Wall Initiative in Africa through new projects developed for the Green Climate Fund (GCF). Normative products to be developed include costs and benefits of restoration, assessment of restoration potentials as well as technical guidance on reforestation and afforestation in the context of landscape restoration efforts.

28. Improving forest-based livelihoods, prosperity and human well-being will include upscaling the work of the Forest and Farm Facility with forest and farm producer organizations, increasing their access to financial services and integration into value chains and markets (Phase II of the programme), and strengthening the links with REDD+, FLEGT and FLR initiatives. The new initiative on "Sustainable Wood for a Sustainable World" will focus on strengthening the contributions of sustainable wood value chains to sustainable development and climate change mitigation, in collaboration with international partners. This includes awareness raising and advocacy of the benefits of sustainable wood products, building capacity for sustainable wood value chains in the context of the bioeconomy and facilitating access to finance and markets. Based on the outcomes of the 44th Session of the CFS, the 24th Session of COFO and the 26th Session of the Committee on Agriculture (COAG), FAO will continue highlighting and strengthening the role of forests for food security and nutrition.

29. Mitigation of and adaptation to climate change and strengthening resilience of ecosystems and communities to climate change through forests will continue to be a strong focus area of FAO's work in forestry. FAO will support countries directly and indirectly in achieving their NDCs related to forests as well as in the future review and revision of NDCs. Support on REDD+ will shift from readiness to implementation and thus from strengthening country capacity for monitoring to implementing safeguards and sustainably managing forests as well as promoting more positive interactions between agriculture and forestry. FAO will assist countries to ensure that forest sector strategies and plans underpinning SFM are harmonized with climate change strategies and that both 'adaptation for forests' and 'forests for adaptation', i.e. using forests to help society strengthen resilience to climate change and to support livelihood strategies, are included in National Adaptation Plans (NAPs). Work on resilience will also include support to countries on forest health issues and forest fire.

30. Mainstreaming forests and trees into cross-sectoral and inter-agency approaches at all levels will lead to policies that create opportunities for mutual benefit across sectors and promote integrated production systems that can be implemented at scale. FAO will support countries in applying the five principles of sustainable food and agriculture that were developed in the context of its strategic framework. More specifically, it will help countries to raise the profile of forests and trees across sectors and ministries; to integrate forests into national sustainable development plans and poverty reduction strategies, as well as subnational and local initiatives. FAO will engage government agencies, partners and stakeholders outside the forest sector in finding solutions to minimize damage to forests and optimize the contribution of forest to achieving the SDGs.

31. Increasing means of implementation from all sources implies not only financial resources but includes also human resource capacity. On finance, FAO will develop knowledge products related to forest investment planning and will work with Global Environment Facility (GEF), GCF, the Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network (GFFFN) of the United Nations Forum on Forests and other relevant mechanisms to help countries increase access to finance for forests. A major part of FAO's work will continue to focus on strengthening country capacity for sustainable forest management in all its dimensions in the context of increasing capacity to achieve globally agreed goals and targets on forests. Capacity development also implies strengthening work on forest education at all levels.

32. Strengthening governance frameworks at all levels is needed for achieving the SDGs, the GFGs and all forest-related targets. The EU FAO FLEGT Programme will continue its new focus on promoting legality of private sector operations in forestry, including support to small enterprises and forest producers. In addition, future support will also include supporting countries in strengthening their forest governance frameworks. In this context, the coherence and synergies with REDD+ will be further strengthened. Furthermore, FAO will continue supporting countries in forest tenure reform and in participatory, multi-stakeholder processes and partnerships to inform decision-making, foster solutions and empower civil society, especially women and youth, as agents of change for promoting SFM.

V. POINTS FOR CONSIDERATION

33. The Committee may wish to consider to:

- take note of the accomplishments in FAO's work in forestry in the 2016-17 biennium including the alignment with the SDGs
- review and advise on the global developments and their implications for the forest sector;
- provide guidance on the main priorities for FAO's work in forestry being undertaken in 2018-19 and for preparing the Programme of Work and Budget 2020-21.