

# FAO STRATEGY FOR FORESTS AND FORESTRY

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## THE CHALLENGES AHEAD

The forest sector continues to be affected by the rapid pace of global changes. Globalization, through rapid expansion of trade, increased transnational investments, and world-wide introduction of improved information and communication technology, is presenting new opportunities and challenges. Forestry has become more people-centered, and society's perceptions of forests have undergone significant changes with increasing emphasis on the environmental, social and cultural values of forests.

Interactions between the forest sector and other sectors are increasingly understood to be the source of both problems and opportunities. In addition, the critical roles that forests and trees outside forests play in climate change mitigation and adaptation and as a source of bio-energy are increasingly recognized, requiring careful consideration in national and international decision-making.

There is rising commitment to enhancing the contribution of sustainable forest management to sustainable development. More than ever, there is greater appreciation for the significant contributions of forests and trees to sustainable livelihoods and eradication of hunger and poverty. There is growing recognition of the linkages of forestry with agriculture, energy and water. However, progress towards sustainable forest management remains uneven and cross-sectoral, integrated management and landscape approaches are often underutilized.

The continuing loss of forests and forest degradation in many developing countries, especially in tropical regions, pose a critical challenge. Rural livelihoods often depend on productive forests that support employment and income, thus reducing poverty. Increasing demand for food, fibre and fuel can trigger substantial unplanned land use changes, including large-scale forest clearance.

In many economically developed countries, conservation of the environmental and recreational benefits and services of forests is the dominant concern. In all areas of the world, the demand for ecosystem services from forests is increasing.

To ensure the health and productivity of forests, countries, international institutions and partners need to more strategically optimize their capacity to help to mitigate climate change, conserve biodiversity, safeguard wildlife habitat and protect land and watersheds.

A significant minority of countries are managing their forests in a sustainable manner; the challenge for FAO is to help more countries improve the management of their forests so that this minority becomes a majority within the next decade. As the quantity of and access to information about forests and forestry continue to rapidly expand, the need to share and manage knowledge more effectively is becoming more urgent.

FAO recognizes that the expectations of its members are changing. Countries encourage FAO to work more effectively to respond to a rapidly changing environment, reach outside the traditional forest sector, engage in partnerships with new stakeholders, and serve as a global leader in international forest affairs.

In this strategy, the role that FAO will play in addressing these challenges is described in the following sections, in particular in the discussion of the "core functions of FAO in forestry" and in the "Organizational Results" to be achieved by FAO in the medium-term. FAO stands ready to make a significant contribution to strengthen country capacities and to overcome the obstacles to sustainable forest management by providing reliable information, policy advice, and technical assistance.



## **A BROAD VIEW OF FORESTRY**

In this strategy, forestry is considered to be a broad, multi-disciplinary concept that encompasses social, economic and environmental aspects. Forestry is about people. Forestry includes social issues, policies and institutions, the production of goods and services and the jobs associated with them, and livelihoods and markets related to forests and trees outside forests. Forestry focuses on the forest, but it does not stop at the forest boundary; city dwellers are involved in urban forestry, and farmers are involved in agro-forestry. Forestry is inter-disciplinary; it takes into consideration the complexity of the many different forest ecosystems in the world, as well as the social and ecological complexities of the broader landscapes within which forests and trees exist.

## **GLOBAL GOALS FOR FORESTS AND FORESTRY**

In translating the broader FAO vision into the context of forests and forestry, three global goals are identified:

- 1. Decision-making across sectors is informed, better coordinated, transparent and participatory**, enabling effective action both within and outside the forest sector. Forest-related decisions are based on timely and accurate information, inter-disciplinary approaches and stakeholder participation at all levels.
- 2. The benefits from trees, forests and forestry are increasing, widely recognized and appreciated**. Their contributions to society are increased, including the role of forests in livelihoods, poverty alleviation, food security and sustainable supply of raw materials and energy. Investments in forestry are increased, and forestry is accorded a growing priority in wider development strategies.
- 3. Forest resources are increasing in a majority of countries and ecosystem services are increasingly recognized and valued**. The vitality and area of forests show a stable or increasing trend in most countries and ecosystems, thereby increasing the contribution of forests and trees to mitigating climate change, combating desertification, conserving biodiversity, and ensuring water quality. Good management practices are implemented and include integrated land-use approaches.

## **CORE FUNCTIONS OF FAO IN FORESTRY**

Future challenges for forests and forestry are multi-faceted. Many national and international organizations deal with forest issues, in addition to actors in the private sector and non-governmental organizations. With more than 60 years of experience, FAO's role in forestry continues to evolve.

Through the FAO Conference, the member countries of FAO have agreed on a set of core functions that provide the means of action to underpin the work of FAO at global, regional and national levels. The core functions for forestry include:

- Providing long-term perspectives and leadership in monitoring and assessing trends in forest resources and services, and the production, consumption and trade of forest products.
- Generating, disseminating and applying information and knowledge, including statistics.
- Leading the development of voluntary guidelines, supporting the development of national legal instruments, and promoting their implementation.
- Articulating policy and strategy options and advice to improve the social, economic, and environmental aspects of forest development and conservation.
- Providing technical support to promote technology transfer, catalyze change and build effective and sustainable institutional capacity for sustainable forest management.



- Undertaking advocacy and communication to mobilize political will and promote global recognition of required actions to achieve sustainable forest management.
- Bringing integrated interdisciplinary and innovative approaches to bear on work in the forest sector and in other key sectors that have an impact on forests.
- Working through strong partnerships and alliances where joint action is needed.
- Facilitating linkages between national, regional, and global levels.

## **ASSUMPTIONS AND RISKS**

Success in achieving the global goals will depend on relatively consistent economic progress and improvements in forestry require investments. FAO can make a significant contribution to the capacities of countries to help them overcome obstacles to sustainable forest management by providing policy advice, capacity development and technical assistance. Continued population growth, political instability, and/or and economic pressures, however, may continue to result in the conversion of forests to agriculture, urban, or other land uses. There is a high level of risk that sustainable forest management may continue to fail in some key countries without a combination of political will, effective governance, and economic progress at all levels.

## **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE FOR FORESTRY**

In preparing a revised strategic framework for FAO, 11 strategic objectives have been identified and approved by the FAO Conference, including one objective (Strategic Objective E) that is specific for forestry:

### **Sustainable management of forests and trees**

#### ***Organizational Results***

To move toward a broad vision, goals, and strategic objectives for society as a whole, a set of six outcomes or “organizational results” are identified for the FAO Forestry Department. While these results cannot be achieved by FAO alone, the organization will significantly contribute to achieving these results. For each result, several FAO priorities are identified to guide FAO during the first four years of this strategy, 2010-2013. The FAO Medium-Term Plan that is developed for this time period will include indicators for each of these outcomes. These indicators will be monitored, and success or failure will be reported to FAO governing bodies, including COFO.

#### ***Organizational Result 1. Policy and practice affecting forests and forestry are based on timely and reliable information***

The FAO priorities are:

- serve as an authoritative global source of information on forests;
- prepare and disseminate the results of periodic Global Forest Resources Assessments and reports on the State of the World’s Forests;
- support to national and regional forest monitoring and assessment, including interactions with other sectors through integrated land use assessments;
- effectively share knowledge and information through timely, high-quality use of the internet, networks, publications, and other media.

During the first four years of this strategy, the number of countries completing a comprehensive and improved national forest monitoring and assessment (NFMA) meeting FAO standards would increase from nine to at least 10 in the first two years and reach 18 by 2013. The number of countries submitting complete reports for the global Forest Resources Assessment (FRA) 2010 report would rise by 20 over a four-year period, from 130 to 150 country reports.



***Organizational Result 2. Policy and practice affecting forests and forestry are reinforced by international cooperation and debate.***

The FAO priorities for this result are:

- provide a dynamic forum for governments and other stakeholders to address policy and emerging issues, including Ministerial Meetings, the Committee on Forestry, the World Forestry Congress, Regional Forestry Commissions, technical panels and commissions, expert consultations, and global and regional networks;
- strengthen linkages between national, regional and global processes, including through an expansion of the role of Regional Forestry Commissions;
- provide leadership for the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF), including developing joint programmes or actions, and through other partnerships including hosting the Mountain Partnership and active partnerships with the private sector and non-governmental organizations.

Quantitatively, the number of countries represented at the regional forestry commissions (RFC) would grow from 108 to at least 120 in the first two years of the strategy and to 130 by 2013. It is anticipated that attendance of senior forestry officials at COFO would reach 90 by 2011 and 100 by 2013. The quantitative targets would be attained if these attendees find the meetings relevant and useful, based on structured post-meeting surveys. With regard to CPF activities, the above priorities would be met by expanding formal initiatives undertaken by two or more CPF organizations from two to three in the first two years of the strategy and four by 2013.

***Organizational Result 3. Institutions governing forests are strengthened and decision-making improved, including involvement of forest stakeholders in the development of forest policies and legislation, thereby enhancing an enabling environment for investment in forestry and forest industries. Forestry is better integrated into national development plans and processes, considering interfaces between forests and other land uses***

The FAO priorities for this result are:

- support participatory development of forest policy and law, institutional reform and efforts to improve governance at all levels;
- sector studies, including regional forestry outlook studies, and comparative analyses of forest institutions;
- Support for integrated (cross-sectoral) policy analysis and planning to better understand the implications of policies of other sectors on forests and vice versa;
- support to effective national forest programmes, including capacity building and knowledge exchange;
- host and support the National Forest Programme (NFP) Facility.

The FOE would increase the number of partner countries where the NFP Facility has a positive impact from 30 to 40 in the first two years of the strategy and to 50 by year four. The impact of this measure would be assessed by the Facility's impact assessment tool. Secondly, FOE would work to update an additional seven countries' forest policies or laws by 2011, following best participatory practices, and update and additional eight countries from the period 2011—2013.

***Organizational Result 4. Sustainable management of forests and trees is more broadly adopted, leading to reductions in deforestation and forest degradation and increased contributions of forests and trees to improve livelihoods and to contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation***

The FAO priorities are:

- development and use of guidelines for good forest practices through effective stakeholder consultative processes;



- support development and implementation of strategies for conservation and sustainable use of forest genetic resources at global, regional and local levels;
- support improved forest fire management, including through community-based approaches;
- support the development and implementation of national and international financial mechanisms to support sustainable forest management;
- increased use of financial mechanisms to facilitate information sharing and database development, and to build capacity to strengthen forest management and to reduce deforestation and forest degradation (e.g., REDD).

For this priority, the number of countries including or adopting FAO guidelines for good practices in forestry by 2013 would be: at least 20 including or adopting fire guidelines; at least 20 with planted forest guidelines; and 15 with forest health guidelines. It is anticipated that the number of countries using FAO community-based fire management approaches would be at least five by 2011 and would jump to 10 over the subsequent two years. With respect to training trainers, 40 people would be trained by 2011 and the amount would double by 2013. Finally, the number of countries participating in comprehensive programmes intended to address REDD issues would increase from five to eight in the first two years and to 12 by 2013.

***Organizational Result 5. Social and economic values and livelihood benefits of forests and trees are enhanced, and markets for forest products and services contribute to making forestry a more economically viable land-use option***

The FAO priorities for this result are:

- analysis and knowledge of social and economic factors resulting in increased innovation and investment;
- analysis of production, consumption and trade of forest products;
- technical assistance and guidelines for community-based forest management, forest-based enterprises that improve livelihoods and reduce poverty;
- information and assistance on accessing carbon markets provided to forestry practitioners.

Under this Organizational Result, up to 30 countries would be assisted with forest products and industries strategy formulations, codes, good practices, trade statistics and capacity building in the field of forest harvesting, wood products, non-wood forest products, wood energy, trade, markets, marketing and economics by the year 2013.

***Organizational Result 6. Environmental values of forests, trees outside forests, and forestry are better realized; strategies for conservation of forest biodiversity and genetic resources; climate change mitigation and adaptation, rehabilitation of degraded lands, and water and wildlife management are effectively implemented.***

The FAO priorities for this result are:

- provide technical, policy, and legal assistance in support of landscape and ecosystem approaches and the development of payment for environmental services schemes, with an emphasis on mountain ecosystems, arid zones and rangelands, coastal forests and other fragile ecosystems;
- development and use of guidelines for adapting forest policies, institutions, practices and governance arrangements to improve climate change adaptation and mitigation;
- support national and regional initiatives to conserve forests and their biological diversity, including wildlife resources in protected areas and production forests;
- provide policy and technical assistance to improve the management of watersheds, to rehabilitate degraded forest lands and combat desertification.



The quantitative indicators established for this organizational result focus on growing the use of FAO guidelines, tools and expertise for a number of items. Countries using FAO guidelines, tools, and expertise for improved policies and field implementation in conservation and sustainable use of forest biodiversity, watershed management, arid zone forest management and agro-forestry would rise from 10 to 20 in the first two years of the strategy and reach at least 40 by 2013. The number of countries providing reports on the State of the World's Forest Genetic Resources (to be completed by 2013) would be 60 in the first two years and jump to 150 by the year 2013. Additionally, countries adopting FAO guidelines for integrating climate change strategies into national forestry would increase four fold over the course of the strategy, from five in 2011 to 20 in 2013.



## CONTEXT FOR THE FAO STRATEGY ON FORESTS AND FORESTRY

In 1999, the FAO Committee on Forestry (COFO) approved the first *FAO Strategic Plan for Forestry*. In 2007, COFO requested that the plan be reviewed and updated in consultation with member countries and other stakeholders. The present version of the draft is a result of rounds of consultations with FAO members, other stakeholders and FAO staff. The Regional Forestry Commissions provided guidance for its preparation. A proposed strategy was presented to COFO for consideration in March 2009.

The *FAO Strategy for Forests and Forestry* has been prepared within the context of the broader reform of the United Nations and FAO. In particular, the Independent External Evaluation of FAO (IEE) recommended that FAO should undertake a strategic review of its work in Forestry using logical framework principles with a focus on desired outcomes to be achieved as the result of FAO's work in Forestry. This document is consistent with the broader review of FAO Strategic Objectives and Organizational Results, and the preparation of a new FAO Strategic Framework and programming model.

The *FAO Strategy for Forests and Forestry* supports the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, the FAO Goals for Members, and the Global Objectives on Forests agreed by the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF). It also contributes to the implementation of the international agreements, in particular the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) and the Non-Legally Binding Instrument on All Types of Forests adopted by UNFF and subsequently by the United Nations General Assembly.

The core values of FAO will guide its work in forestry, including: commitment to cooperation among nations; independence, in which Members seek to broaden consensus; partnerships within the UN family; competence; equality, especially the full participation of women in development; diversity; and unity of action when carrying out the decisions of Members.

The time frame of the strategy is 10 years. However, it will be dynamic so that it can be regularly updated to reflect new priorities and changing expectations of society. The *FAO Strategy for Forests and Forestry* is directly linked to the FAO programme budget process. The Organizational Results have been formulated for a four-year time frame, and Indicators will be identified in the FAO Medium-Term Plan with a four-year time horizon.

FAO Strategy for Forestry is developed within the broader framework of:

### **UNFF Global Objectives on Forests**

1. Reverse the loss of forest cover worldwide through sustainable forest management, including protection, restoration, afforestation and reforestation, and increase efforts to prevent forest degradation.
2. Enhance forest-based economic, social and environmental benefits, including by improving the livelihoods of forest dependent people.
3. Increase significantly the area of protected forests worldwide and other areas of sustainably managed forests, as well as the proportion of forest products from sustainably managed forests.
4. Reverse the decline in official development assistance for sustainable forest management and mobilize significantly increased new and additional financial resources for the implementation of sustainable forest management.



### **Millennium Development Goals**

1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
2. Achieve universal primary education
3. Promote gender equality and empower women
4. Reduce child mortality
5. Improve maternal health
6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases
7. Ensure environmental sustainability
8. Develop a global partnership for development

### **FAO's Vision and Global Goals**

FAO's vision is of a world free of hunger and malnutrition where food and agriculture contributes to improving the living standards of all, especially the poorest, in an economically, socially and environmentally sustainable manner. To foster the achievement of this vision and of the Millennium Development Goals, FAO will promote the continuous contribution of food and sustainable agriculture to the attainment of three global goals:

1. reduction of the absolute number of people suffering from hunger, progressively ensuring a world in which all people at all times, have sufficient safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life;
2. elimination of poverty and the driving forward of economic and social progress for all with increased food production, enhanced rural development and sustainable livelihoods;
3. sustainable management and utilization of natural resources, including land, water, air, climate and genetic resources, for the benefit of present and future generations.

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<sup>1</sup> Agriculture encompasses all aspects of crops, livestock, forestry and fisheries

