FAO’S ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON SUSTAINABLE FOREST-BASED INDUSTRIES (ACSFI)

AT A GLANCE
Established in 1960, the Advisory Committee on Sustainable Forest-Based Industries (ACSFI) is a statutory body of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).

The ACSFI has the broad mandate to:

provide guidance to FAO on concepts, fundraising opportunities and relevant policy and regulatory matters in the field of sustainable production and consumption of forest products;

advise on required support to FAO member countries and the incorporation of private sector perspectives into FAO’s Programme of Work and Budget;

identify key emerging issues from across forest product value chains and review studies and statistical data compiled by FAO on forest products and forest industries;

propose new activities for implementation by FAO, including international meetings, events and initiatives jointly organized with the Committee and other partners;

maximize the potential for the forest based industries to benefit from innovations and efficiency improvements; and

improve communication, knowledge and information exchange and training on good practices between members, the private sector and FAO.

It provides a forum for dialogue between FAO and the private sector to enhance the understanding of emerging opportunities, and to identify strategic actions that promote sustainable forest management, as well as sustainable consumption and production patterns related to forest products.

The Committee directly contributes to:

the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

Global Forest Goal 2 adopted by the United Nations Forum on Forests to enhance forest-based economic, social and environmental benefits, including by improving the livelihoods of forest-dependent people.

FAO’s Strategic Objectives 2 and 4 to make agriculture, forestry and fisheries more productive and sustainable and to enable more inclusive and efficient agricultural and food systems.
Committee membership consists of a diverse range of 15–30 leading private sector experts, who are appointed by the Director-General of FAO and are familiar with the challenges of the forest sector. Where appropriate, other experts may be invited to attend and/or participate in ACSFI meetings.

The Committee is led by a Chair and Vice-Chair, normally elected for a two-year term and are guided by a Steering Committee. The Committee is supported by a Secretariat provided by FAO.

The Committee is expected to meet physically once a year. Since 1960, over 60 regular meeting sessions of the ACSFI have taken place. The Steering Committee is also expected to meet once a year but may also work between sessions. Working groups may be established to enhance work on topics of interest to the ACSFI. All decisions are expected to be made by consensus.

The Committee reports on its activities and conclusions, and makes recommendations to the FAO Committee on Forestry (COFO). The Director-General may invite the ACSFI to provide a report, reflecting the view of the private sector on specific topics, at COFO sessions.

The Committee normally defines working priorities for a two–year period coinciding with the FAO biennium and the term of the chairpersons. In recent years the Committee has produced a number of scoping studies and working papers for members. Topics of interest have included:

- Potential implications for the forest industry of corporate zero deforestation commitments
- Argentina wood-based housing and construction – state of the industry and surrounding policies
- Bio-based food packaging in sustainable development
- Global review of the influences of bioeconomy strategies on forest industries

ACSFI meetings are complemented by country reports and information about FAO’s broader programme of work. In addition, the Committee has played an important role in the development and support of initiatives such as Sustainable Wood for a Sustainable World (SW4SW).