

Guidelines and Suggested Format for Voluntary National Reports to the Fourth Session of the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF)

Introduction

The suggested reporting format and accompanying guidelines have been prepared by the Secretariat of UNFF, at the request of the Forum (decision 3/2 of UNFF 3), in order to provide guidance to member states on the preparation of their reports for the fourth session of UNFF (Geneva, 3-14 May 2004).

The format has been prepared, taking into account the guidance given at UNFF 3 that the format should be simple, streamlined, flexible, cover the thematic issues of UNFF 4 and take into account the results of related country-led initiatives and conferences, as well as considering the purpose of the reports, as follows:

- to help countries assess their experiences and progress in implementing relevant IPF/IFF proposals, catalyze discussion among government agencies and other stakeholders in the process of preparing the report, and help countries prepare their interventions for UNFF 4
- to provide input to Secretary-General's reports for UNFF 4, enabling the reports to identify key issues for discussion in UNFF 4 and to highlight possible subsequent international action;
- to furnish important information for the review of the effectiveness of the international arrangement on forests.

I. Guidelines for the Preparation of National Reports to UNFF 4

Contents of the report

The format focuses on progress in implementing IPF/IFF proposals for action related to the thematic issues to be addressed at UNFF 4: i) social and cultural aspects of forests; ii) traditional forest related knowledge; iii) scientific forest related knowledge; iv) criteria and indicators of sustainable forest management; and v) monitoring, assessment and reporting, and concepts, terminology and definitions. Annex 1 provides a list of the proposals for action related to each of these issues and an indicative summary of the actions called for, to facilitate preparation of the report.

UNFF Member States are invited to provide information on their experiences in implementing proposals for action since 1997. Member States are also invited to provide information on "means of implementation" (i.e. finance, transfer of environmentally sound technologies and capacity-building for sustainable forest management) and relevant "common items" of UNFF in the context of the five thematic issues.

If a country does not have information on a certain point or that point is not relevant in the national context, the report may simply state "no information available" or "not applicable", respectively. If the information is available in another report or document, the country may choose to extract the relevant information and include it in the report to UNFF or provide the reference or document itself to the UNFF Secretariat.

Length, language and format

The length of the reports will vary from country to country. There is no recommended length, but countries are encouraged to be complete, yet as concise as possible.

Countries are asked to provide their reports in English, Spanish or French.

Countries are kindly requested to submit their national report in electronic form (in MS Word format), if possible, and are asked to specify the software used if it is other than Microsoft 2000. The following specifications are suggested: font in Times New Roman, size 11; margins of 1" or 2.5 cm on the sides, top and bottom; and simple text without tabs or line breaks.

Preparation of the report

Member States, to the extent possible and using whatever means they have available, are encouraged to involve a range of relevant government agencies and major groups in the preparation of their voluntary reports. This is consistent with UNFF's recognition (UNFF resolution 1/2) of the importance of stakeholder participation in the preparation of national reports.

Member States may wish to refer to information on forests that they have reported to other international processes or organizations, so as to reduce the burden of reporting. Member States are encouraged to consult to the CPF website for information on streamlining forest-related reporting (<http://www.fao.org/forestry/cpf-mar>) for easy access to national reports related to forests submitted to various international organizations and conventions.

Submission of the national reports

The UNFF Secretariat requests that UNFF Member States submit their reports by **8 November 2003**, preferably in electronic form (by e-mail or by sending a diskette). The report may be submitted to:

Mr. Pekka Patosaari
Coordinator and Head, UNFF Secretariat
Department of Economic and Social Affairs
Two UN Plaza, Room DC2-2286
United Nations
New York, N.Y. 10017
USA

Tel: (212) 963-3401
Fax: (917) 367-3186
E-mail: Patosaari@un.org

Dissemination of the national reports

To make the reports accessible, the UNFF Secretariat will post them on the UNFF website (<http://www.un.org/esa/forests>).

II. Proposed Format for the Voluntary National Reports to UNFF 4

**National Report to the Fourth Session of the
United Nations Forum on Forests**

Insert **Name of country**

Insert **Date**

I. Key Contacts

Head of Forestry in [insert name of the country]:

Name: [insert name of the person responsible for forests in the country]

Title: [insert title of the person]

Contact information:

Address: [insert information]

Phone: [insert information]

Fax: [insert information]

E-mail: [insert information]

UNFF national focal point for [insert name of the country]:

Name: [insert name of the UNFF focal point for the country, if already designated]

Title: [insert title of the UNFF focal point for the country]

Contact information:

Address: [insert information]

Phone: [insert information]

Fax: [insert information]

E-mail: [insert information]

Person to contact concerning the national report, if other than the UNFF national focal point:

Name: [insert name of the contact person]

Title: [insert title of the contact person]

Contact information:

Address: [insert information]

Phone: [insert information]

Fax: [insert information]

E-mail: [insert information]

II. Progress and issues related to implementation of IPF/IFF proposals for action

General

1. Please provide additional or new information on initiatives taken or lessons learned since 1997 further to the information on forests included in your national reports¹ to UNFF 2 and UNFF 3, the Commission on Sustainable Development, and other international instruments and organizations on the following points:

- assessment (including of the relevance, priority, status of implementation, planned actions) of the IPF/IFF proposals for action in the national context
- development and implementation of your national forest programme or similar national policy framework for forests, and
- mechanisms or initiatives to facilitate stakeholder participation, including indigenous and local communities, in forest sector planning, decision-making and/or forest management.

Implementation of the IPF/IFF proposals for action related to thematic issues of UNFF 4

Please provide information on: activities undertaken since 1997, progress made, constraints encountered, lessons learned, and issues that have emerged, as well as relevant information related to means of implementation (financing, transfer of environmentally sound technologies, and capacity-building) to support the following actions:

social and cultural aspects of forests

2. promoting the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the utilization of forest genetic resources and addressing the issue of intellectual property rights, including the identification of the origins of forest genetic resources, taking into account work undertaken by the Convention on Biological Diversity and other international agreements
3. strengthening the role of women in sustainable forest management, including through capacity building and greater participation in community-based forest management
4. integrating local and indigenous communities in sustainable forest management programmes, particularly as regards (a) recognition and respect of the customary and traditional rights and privileges of indigenous and local communities, (b) participation in decision making regarding the management of forests, (c) the attainment of secure land tenure arrangements, (d) capacity building and technology transfer for sustainable forest management directed at indigenous and local communities

traditional forest-related knowledge

5. inventorying, cataloguing, and applying traditional forest related knowledge for sustainable forest management and promoting research on TFRK with the involvement of the knowledge holders

¹ National reports related to forests may be easily accessed on the CPF website at www.fao.org/forestry/cfp-mar

6. supporting the application of intellectual property rights and/or other protection regimes for traditional forest related knowledge, and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the use of traditional forest related knowledge, innovations and practices

scientific forest-related knowledge

7. disseminating scientific knowledge to all interested parties, including through new and innovative ways, and strengthening capacity and mobilizing funding for national and regional research institutions and networks
8. enhancing interaction between scientific research and policy processes, including priority setting of research, addressing of knowledge gaps and using scientific knowledge to support decision-making

monitoring, assessment and reporting, concepts, terminology and definitions

9. improving information on national forest resources, making the information widely available, and assisting other countries in their related efforts

criteria and indicators of sustainable forest management

10. developing and using criteria and indicators of sustainable forest management (at national level and/or subnational level and for policy, planning, management and/or monitoring purposes), and participating in regional and/or international C&I processes

III. Preparation of the Report

11. Describe the process of preparing this report, including which government agencies and stakeholder groups were involved, and the extent to which they contributed. Provide information on successes, challenges and lessons learned in the preparation of this report.

List of IPF/IFF Proposals for Action Related to Each of the Thematic Issues on the Agenda of the Fourth Session of UNFF

The proposals for action listed below have been identified as being those most relevant to each of the thematic issues on the agenda of UNFF 4. To facilitate reporting, the proposals for action have been clustered and a summary of each cluster has been provided. These summaries are by no means meant to replace the proposals for action. Countries are urged to refer to the full text of the proposals for action as provided in the reports of IPF 4 (E/CN.17/1997/12) and IFF 4 (E/CN.17/2000/14).

Social and cultural aspects of forests

Type of action called for	Proposal(s) for action
Fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the utilization of forest genetic resources Promote the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the utilization of forest genetic resources	IFF 56 (j)
The role of women in sustainable forest management Involve women in national forest programmes (NFPs), and enhance their role in sustainable forest management	IFF 56 (m), IFF 56 (n), IFF 66
Enhanced role of indigenous and local communities in sustainable forest management Develop and implement programmes for sustainable forest management. Support indigenous people and local communities by funding sustainable forest management projects, capacity-building, information dissemination and participation.	IPF 17 (a), IPF 17 (f), IPF 29 (c), IPF 77 (f), IPF 131 (b), IFF 56 (f) IFF 66, IFF 115 (d), IFF 121 (b)
Common Item: Monitoring, assessment and reporting on social data	IFF 121 (b), IFF 129 (a)
Common item: Promoting public participation	IPF 89 (h)
Common item: Social aspects addressed in national forest programmes National forest programmes and the socially relevant elements <u>National forest projects and the social linkages</u>	IFF 122 (b), IFF 122 (d), IFF 129 (d), IFF 140 (a), IFF 144

Traditional forest related knowledge

Type of action called for	Proposal(s) for action
Advance use of TFRK for SFM. With the participation of indigenous people and local communities who possess TFRK inventory, catalogue, retrieve and apply TFRK for sustainable forest management.	IPF 40a, IPF 40b, IPF 40g, IPF 40h, IPF 40i, IPF 40j, IPF 40k, IPF 40l, IPF 40m, IPF 40n, IFF 75
Develop intellectual property rights for TFRK and promote equitable benefit sharing. Develop ways and means to promote effective protection of TFRK and work with relevant international organizations and conduct studies to help to	IPF 40c, IPF 40d, IPF 40f, IPF 40o, IPF 40p, IPF 40q, IPF 40r, IFF 74a, IFF 74b, IFF 74c, IFF 74d

develop common appreciation and understanding of relationship between TFRK and intellectual property rights and promote fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from TFRK, including consideration of payments.	
Means of implementation Technology transfer and capacity building: as an integral part of national forest programmes, taking account of local TFRK	IPF 17g
Common items Public participation: promote participation of people who possess TFRK in planning, development and implementation of national forest policies and programmes	IPF 40e

Scientific forest related knowledge

Type of action called for	Proposal(s) for action
Functional interaction between science and policy Improve linkages between scientific research and policy processes and involve guidance from all the interested parties.	IFF 96c, IFF 98b
Setting the research priorities and addressing the knowledge gaps Set research needs and priorities nationally, regionally and globally, address knowledge gaps, and promote and strengthen research efforts in support of SFM.	IPF 46g, IPF 94a(i), IPF 94b, IPF 94d, IPF 104c, IPF 50b, IFF 96d, IFF 96a, IFF 98a, IFF 97d
Promote efficient sharing of information and strengthen networks Make results and information available for all users to support decision making, develop new and innovative means of disseminating information and technologies and promote and make use of existing networks, institutions and mechanisms in efficient sharing of information.	IPF 58b(vii), IPF 94a (ii), IPF 94a(iii), IFF 97c, IFF98c
Means of implementation Mobilize funding for forest research: examine new ways to mobilize funding for forest research to accomplish its objectives and build capacity at the national, regional and global levels)	IPF 94a(iv), IPF 94c, IFF 96b, IFF 97a, IFF 97b
Common items Public participation: apply participatory mechanisms to involve research into planning process	IPF 17e

Monitoring, assessment and reporting, and concepts, terminology and definitions

Type of action called for	Proposal(s) for action
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<p>Collection and dissemination of national information on forests Improve national forest resource assessments and make information related to sustainable forest management widely available</p>	<p>IPF 46b, IPF 89b IFF 17a, IFF 17b</p>
<p>Improved and streamlined international reporting and information systems on forests Develop improved and streamlined reporting and information systems to assist in the collection, verification, synthesis, interpretation and dissemination of information on progress in sustainable forest management and financial resources for SFM</p>	<p>IPF 89d, IPF 89e, IPF 115e IPF 78a, IPF 78b, IPF 78c, IPF 89g IFF 18, IFF 19a, IFF 30d, IFF 142c</p>
<p>Concepts, terminology and definitions Formulate an internationally acceptable set of definitions of key terms used in forest resource assessment and criteria and indicators of SFM, including for low forest cover, planted forests and categories of protected areas</p>	<p>IPF 58a, IPF 89f, (IPF 115d) IFF 89, IFF 122a</p>
<p>Means of implementation Capacity-building and financial resources: to assist countries efforts in national reporting</p>	<p>IFF 17e, IFF 19b IFF 17a</p>

Criteria and indicators of sustainable forest management

Type of action called for	Proposal(s) for action
<p>Develop, test and implement criteria and indicators at national, subnational and operational levels Develop, field test and promote the use of criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management, including by integrating them into national forest programmes and national forest assessments and using them to monitor trends and promote best forest management practices</p>	<p>IPF 17d, IPF 89a, IPF 115a, IPF 115b, IPF 115c IFF 17d</p>
<p>Promote the use of criteria and indicators at regional and global levels Support international and regional initiatives to achieve a common international understanding of concepts, terms and definitions related to criteria and indicators, mutual recognition among sets of criteria and indicators, and methods for the measurement of indicators and the collection and dissemination of data</p>	<p>IPF 115d</p>
<p>Further develop biodiversity indicators Encourage, within the work of the Convention on Biological Diversity, the development of biodiversity indicators that are consistent and complementary to existing forest criteria and indicators</p>	<p>IPF 115f</p>
<p>Means of implementation Technical and financial resources: donor countries and multilateral organizations to provide adequate technical and financial assistance to countries for further development, field testing and implementation of C&I</p>	<p>IPF 115c</p>
<p>Common items Public participation: encourage the formulation and implementation of criteria and indicators of SFM with full participation of all interested parties</p>	<p>IPF 115a, IPF 115b</p>