



Our Ref.: C/X/FO-701(a)

19 April 2016

Invitation to the 23rd Session of the Committee on Forestry
and the 5th World Forest Week

Rome, Italy, 18-22 July 2016

Reply requested by 17 June 2016

The Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations has the honour to extend an invitation to attend the 23rd Session of the Committee on Forestry (COFO), which will be held at FAO Headquarters in Rome from 18 to 22 July 2016. The meeting will open on Monday 18 July at 10.00 hours. Registration of participants will take place from 14.00 hours on Sunday 17 July and from 08.00 hours on Monday 18 July at the Turkish Registration Centre, Building A.

The 23rd Session of COFO will be the main event of the 5th World Forest Week which will focus on the role of forests in implementing major global decisions, in particular the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement, and will feature, in addition to COFO, a number of events sponsored by FAO partners and Members.

The session is being convened under the provisions of Article V-6 of the FAO Constitution and is open to members of the Committee and to observers. Expenses incurred in connection with attendance at the Session and travel of representatives and observers shall be borne by the governments or organizations concerned.

The Session will be conducted in Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish.

The Provisional Agenda is enclosed. Further documents, including the Provisional Timetable and additional information, may be downloaded at: <http://www.fao.org/forestry/57758/en/>.

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This invitation is sent to addressees of invited FAO Members, not members of COFO, as prescribed in the official channels of communication of FAO, as follows:

For ACTION/INFORMATION, as appropriate:

- Main Addressees (Ministers for Foreign Affairs or Agriculture or other addressees selected by the Government);
- Permanent Representatives to FAO/Embassies.

Membership of the Committee, which is open to all Members of the Organization shall be composed of those States which notify the Director-General in writing of their desire to become members of the Committee and of their intention to participate in its work. Such notification may be made at any time, but not later than 10 days before the opening date of a session. Membership acquired on the basis thereof shall be considered valid unless the Member has not been represented at two consecutive sessions of the Committee, or has notified its withdrawal from it. A Notification of Membership form is attached. The deadline for submission of Notifications for the 23rd Session of COFO is 8 July 2016.

The Director-General would appreciate being informed by 17 June 2016 of the representatives designated to attend the 23rd Session. Online registration will be accessible through the password-protected area of the FAO Members Gateway at <http://www.fao.org/members-gateway/home/en/>. Instructions for online registration can be downloaded from the website. Please note that online registration requires the uploading of a recent passport-size digital photograph.

Participants requiring visas must obtain these from the Italian Consulate or competent Diplomatic Mission in their country before leaving for Rome. Visa applications must be submitted well in advance of departure, as three weeks or more may be required for an Italian visa to be issued. Exclusively those participants traveling from a country where there is no Italian Consulate or other competent Diplomatic Mission may obtain a visa on arrival in Rome, provided that they advise the Secretariat of the meeting of their full name, date of birth, nationality, passport number, issue and expiry dates, flight number, date and hour of arrival and their full travel itinerary, which must not include any other Schengen country. This information must reach FAO at least three weeks before the arrival of participants to permit FAO to request that a visa be issued at Rome airport. Participants failing to comply with the above will not be allowed to enter Italy by the Italian authorities.