

25th Session of the Committee on Forestry – written correspondence procedure

Item 8.3 Dialogue with Statutory Bodies in Forestry

Secretariat response to written questions from the Committee

The Secretariat expresses its appreciation for the comments received from Members on item 8.3 of the Agenda - *Dialogue with Statutory Bodies in Forestry*. All comments are well noted.

- Advisory Committee on Sustainable Forest-based Industries (ACFSI):

Under points for consideration it is suggested for COFO to "Request FAO to facilitate, as Secretariat of the ACSFI, the finalization and implementation of the ACSFI Strategic Framework 2020-2030, including identifying key action to address the impacts of COVID-19 on the forest sector". The ACSFI recently endorsed its new ACSFI Strategic Framework 2020-2030 to ensure the targeted and strategic implementation of its work, including its strategic guidance to FAO and taking into account COFO recommendations. A reference to this point in the COFO report would highlight the linkage between COFO and the ACSFI to guide FAO in the effective delivery of its mandate.

- International Poplar Commission (IPC)

The IPC's global work priorities are forest resources production, protection, conservation and utilization using fast-growing trees, in order to sustain livelihoods, land uses, rural development and the environment^[1]. The IPC has carried out its work successfully now for more than seventy years on five continents^[2]; following this work, in 2019 the IPC Members^[3] voted to expand the IPC scope of work from the poplars and willows to all fast-growing tree species that can sustain people and the environment.

The IPC Secretariat affirms the primacy of the informed choice of stakeholders and the local social, economic and ecological context in the development of its work. The work of the IPC is in alignment with broader initiatives and frameworks on the choice of species and respect for tenure; specifically with the Voluntary Guidelines for Responsible Management of Planted Forest^[4] and Voluntary Guidelines on Tenure^[5].

The IPC is in the process of developing a strategy after the amendments to its Convention in 2019, so that it can best support the UN Decade of Action for the Sustainable Development Goals, the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration, and the UN Decade on Family Farming; the IPC Secretariat is grateful for the guidance of IPC Members on the content and scope of that strategy as its next (26th) Session approaches. The IPC also welcomes the participation of all FAO's Members in the next Session.

- Working Group on Dryland Forests and Agrosilvopastoral Systems

The Global Drylands Assessment is a thematic study complementing FAO's Global Forest Resources Assessment (FRA). It was prepared by a consortium of partner institutions and was carried out through visual interpretation of satellite images. The results are reported at the global

^[1] Convention of the IPC, Article 3 (a)

^[2] See for example <http://www.fao.org/3/ca3160en/ca3160en.pdf>

^[3] <http://www.fao.org/unfao/govbodies/gsb-subject-matter/statutory-bodies-details/en/c/110/>

^[4] <http://www.fao.org/3/j9256e/j9256e00.htm>

^[5] <http://www.fao.org/tenure/voluntary-guidelines/en/>

and regional levels, not at the country level (according to UNEP –WCMC 2007). Therefore, no legal status on land occupation was addressed.

The assessment drew on information from sample plots located across the world's drylands. The the augmented visual interpretation assessment highlighted the importance of investing in forest and woodland resources in drylands, including trees outside forest. The findings can be used as a baseline to highlight key emerging threats to drylands and their populations at the global and regional levels, including climate change, biodiversity and food security challenges. Thus, they can assist in prioritizing and targeting the investments needed for dryland restoration.