

## **27th Session of the Committee on Forestry - Written Correspondence Procedure**

### **Item 8.5 Dialogue with Statutory Bodies in Forestry (Document COFO/2024/6.5)**

#### **Secretariat response to written inputs from Members**

The secretariat expresses its appreciation for the comments from Members on Item 8.5 Dialogue with Statutory Bodies in Forestry (Document COFO/2024/6.5).

The secretariat noted Mexico highlighting the importance of forestry statutory bodies in providing expert advice in support of the work of FAO and its Members on priority issues and its commitment to dialogue and collaboration within the framework of the forestry statutory bodies.

#### **I. AFWC/EFC/NEFRC Committee on Mediterranean Forestry Questions – *Silva Mediterranea***

The secretariat noted the European Union and its Member States' (EU) encouragement for the broad and active participation at the 25th Session of the Committee on Mediterranean Forestry Questions and the 8th Mediterranean Forest Week, and the support for the development of the Mediterranean Youth Task Force (MYTF). The support to the suggested actions contained in Annex I. of the above document by the EU and Canada is much appreciated. The secretariat further took note of Canada encouraging members to continue their restoration work and note their contributions to FAO reports and publications.

#### **II. Advisory Committee on Sustainable Forest-based Industries (ACSFI)**

The secretariat noted the EU's acknowledgement of ACSFI's engagement to further catalyse strategic partnerships as a way to implement its strategic priorities according to its Strategic Framework 2020-2030. The secretariat also noted the support to the recommendation contained in 8. b. of Annex II. of the above document, understanding that it will also contribute to achieving the Paris Agreement and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.

The secretariat acknowledges the comment of the United States of America and Australia regarding the use of the term "bioeconomy" and the implications for the wording in the recommendation. The secretariat wishes to note that item 6 of the provisional agenda will allow for opportunities to discuss the subject in depth at which the Committee on Forestry (COFO) would recommend on appropriate formulation that will be used also in relation to ACSFI.

The secretariat appreciates Canada's support to the suggested actions as contained in paragraph 8. a-b. of Annex II of the above document.

The secretariat noted Mexico's acknowledgement of the efforts of the ACSFI to promote a forest-based bioeconomy and support the SDGs.

The secretariat noted Australia's support to the recommendations in sub-paragraphs b – e. of paragraph 7 in Annex II of the above document and its connection with a related recommendation of the 13th session of the Asia-Pacific Forestry Commission. The encouragement to FAO to provide international leadership to help address the increasing challenge of global fibre security, by providing the technical information needed and helping facilitate appropriate responses, in close cooperation with the members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests, is noted.

#### **III. The International Commission on Poplars and Other Fast-Growing Trees Sustaining People and the Environment (IPC)**

The secretariat took note of the EU acknowledging the increased focus of the Commission on the role of sustainably managed fast-growing trees, and resilient and diverse planted forests in combating deforestation and enhancing forest benefits in rural and urban contexts; as well as the support to the suggested actions as contained in paragraph 13. a-b. of Annex III. of the above document.

The secretariat took note of the United States of America recalling additional major milestones including a database of Researchers working with Fast-Growing Trees, which is highly relevant with mandate from the 2019 IPC reform to broaden the IPC priority genera beyond *Populus* and *Salix* and to foster a collaborative network and engagement among scientists. The secretariat noted the query regarding the status of preparations of the Green Book and is pleased to inform that it is planned for launch during the 27th Session of the IPC. The secretariat also noted the proposal for using “phytotechnologies” instead of “bioremediation”. The secretariat wishes to note in this regard that the language originates by the Commission itself, so changing it at this stage may not be appropriate, but the IPC may wish to consider the proposal and take appropriate action, as deemed necessary.

The secretariat noted the appreciation of Canada for the IPC’s progress in the implementation of its Strategy and the recognition of its valuable contributions.

#### **IV. COFO Working Group on Dryland Forests and Agrosilvopastoral Systems**

The secretariat took note of the acknowledgement by the EU of the importance of enhancing coordinated responses to member’s needs for an integrated and multidisciplinary dryland management approach, and of welcoming the progress made in promoting activities related to drylands, including by partnering with entities inside and outside FAO. The comment on the potential of agroforestry as a useful toolbox for sustainable agriculture and landscape restoration is duly noted.

The secretariat also took note of the importance reiterated by the EU of strengthening collaboration with the UNCCD and other relevant processes and will seek to strengthen such collaborations. The secretariat also noted the similar recommendation of the United States of America and the proposal to share with UNCCD any quantitative analyses or reports that relate to land degradation and agriculture and will seek to include these proposals in the programme of work.

The secretariat also noted the request that the Working Group continue and strengthen the collaboration with the FAO Committee on Agriculture (COAG) Sub-Committee on Livestock (COAG-CL), including through the Grazing with Trees global initiative, and inform both the COAG and the COFO on the progress made.

The secretariat noted Australia welcoming the holding of the third Drylands Summer School in Australia in 2025, alongside the International Rangeland Congress.

#### **V. Regional Forestry Commissions**

The secretariat acknowledged the support by the EU to the recommendations contained in paragraph 5. b-c. of Annex V of the above document. The secretariat will seek to reflect the invitation to FAO for enhancing its support for better integration of important regional forest-related matters in the work of the FAO Regional Conferences in the session report, together with the request to FAO to support RFCs to enhance their role, improve their functionality and increase their impact in the regional contexts where they operate, according to their request.

The secretariat agrees to Japan’s proposal to strategically describe how forests and forestry will contribute to other sectors, including climate change, agriculture and the environment, and to clarify priorities in the region, and will support the RFCs to do so, in line also with the recommendation contained in paragraph 5. d. of Annex V of the above document.

The secretariat appreciates Canada’s recognition of the Regional Forestry Commissions and the note on the North American Forest Commission as a significant and valuable platform for cooperation on forest policy and technical issues of commonality to the continent.

The secretariat took note of Mexico welcoming the recommendations made by the Regional Forestry Commissions, as well as the support to the strengthening of cross-sectoral forest policy dialogue and cross-sectoral work on forestry and agrifood matters.

The secretariat is grateful to Australia for having hosted the FAO Asia-Pacific Forestry Commission in Sydney in October 2023 and took note of the comment on the in-person format of the session.