

26th Session of the Committee on Forestry

Item 9.1 FAO's work in Forestry under the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31

In the 2020-21 biennium FAO continued its work in forestry in alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Global Forest Goals (GFGs) of the UN Strategic Plan for Forests 2017-2030 (UNSPF). Focus areas, in line with the guidance of the Committee, have been: the protection of forests, including halting deforestation and enhancing resilience; forest biodiversity; forest ecosystem restoration, including agroforestry, reforestation and afforestation; sustainable use of forest resources and legal and sustainable value chains for forest products; provision of up-to-date and high-quality data on forests and forestry; normative work and standard-setting; and playing a lead role on forest matters in the UN system in particular through the Collaborative Partnership on Forests. Experiences show good results on all fronts (details are presented in COFO/2022/INF/11 and C/2023/8) but revealed also the need for further work on identifying opportunities to create income and employment, especially for vulnerable and marginalized groups in the post-COVID recovery; upgrading forestry research, all forms of education and training, professional capacity development and extension services; and engaging youth and women more strongly.

Global trends driving FAO's work in forestry continue to be the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; climate change and the follow up to the Glasgow Climate Pact; biodiversity, in particular the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework; the work under the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD); and the support to the implementation of the UNSPF. New drivers are arising from the implementation of the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration 2021-2030, the follow-up to the UN Food Systems Summit, and the recommendations of the XV World Forestry Congress.

In line with the FAO priorities and the Strategic Framework 2022-31, priority areas of work in forestry can be summarized under four closely interrelated and overarching themes, directly linked to FAO's "four betters". Activities in Priority Area 1 Halting Deforestation and Enhancing Resilience, contribute to Better Environment, Better Production and Better Life; Area 2 Mainstreaming Biodiversity and Restoring Forest Ecosystems supports Better Environment, Better Production and Better Life; while Area 3 Enhancing Sustainable Production, Use and Livelihoods as well as Area 4 Data, Statistics, Analytics contribute to all four.

To accelerate impact and minimizing trade-offs FAO applies four accelerators: (i) technology, (ii) innovation, (iii) data products, and (iv) governance, human capital and institutions as complementary dimensions of effective collective action. Further, the cross-cutting themes of Gender, Youth and Inclusion will be further strengthened and up-scaled in FAO's work in forestry.

In moving towards a reinvigorated business model FAO will further strengthen efficiency and effectiveness, better interlink normative work and operational support on forestry matters to synthesize global normative knowledge and operational experiences to provide better access to knowledge. FAO will continue to strengthen partnerships and enhance efficiency in translating science and innovation into normative and policy guidance and practical tools for development. It will pursue further the generation of and faster and cheaper access to more relevant and higher quality data, to support more effective decision-making and sound action at all levels. In supporting Members, FAO's work in forestry continues to strive towards demand-driven approaches by considering national circumstances, diversity of contexts, specificities, priorities, synergies and capabilities across regions and countries and at the local level.

The Committee is invited to:

- acknowledge the achievements of FAO's work in forestry during the 2020-21 biennium and review and advise on the global trends and developments relevant to FAO's work in forestry (Sections II and III);
- provide guidance on the priorities for FAO's work in forestry in 2022-23 within the Programme of Work and Budget (PWB) 2022-23 and the Medium Term Plan 2022-2025 in the context of implementation of the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31; and
- take note of and provide guidance on FAO's efforts towards a reinvigorated business model.

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