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Regional and Sub-Regional Inputs to UNFF11

Regional/Sub-regional Organization/Process:

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General Information

The multi-year programme of work (MYPOW (2007-2015)) of the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) sets a new focus on regional collaboration and partnerships. Since its eighth session in 2009 the Forum has solicited inputs from relevant regional and sub-regional forest-related mechanisms, institutions, organizations and processes as an integral part of session deliberations.¹

The eleventh session of the UNFF (UNFF11) will be held from 4 to 15 May 2015 in New York City, USA. The theme of the session is *Forests: progress, challenges and the way forward on the international arrangement on forests (IAF)*, with the following sub themes:

1. Reviewing the effectiveness of the international arrangement on forests and consideration of all future options
2. Reviewing the progress towards the achievement of the Global Objectives on Forests (GOFs) and the implementation of the Non-Legally Binding Instrument on All Types of Forests (NLBIF)
3. Reviewing the contribution of forests and the IAF to the internationally-agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs),

In completing this questionnaire, you may choose to extract the relevant information and include it in your submission, if information is already available in existing

Section I: Progress towards the implementation of the forest instrument and the achievement of the GOFs as well as the contribution of forests and the IAF to the internationally-agreed development goals, including the MDGs

A. Progress towards implementation of the Forest Instrument

1. Briefly describe actions (e.g. regulatory, financial/economic and informational/educational) taken by your respective regional, sub-regional organization/process to foster political commitment for sustainable forest management (SFM).

ASEAN reaffirms to continue promoting sustainable forest management (SFM) and eradicating unsustainable forest practices such as illegal logging and illegal trade. At the 14th ASEAN Summit in 2009, ASEAN has put SFM as priority in the ASEAN Economic and Socio-Cultural Community Blueprint, together with forest law enforcement and governance (FLEG), and forest and climate change towards 2015 and beyond.

Towards the implementation of SFM in the region, ASEAN has developed tools to support ASEAN Member States in evaluating their efforts in contributing towards the Four Global Forest Objectives and their linkages to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. These regional instruments, among others, are the Assessment and Reporting (MAR) Format for Sustainable

to submit periodic reports on progress of implementation of sustainable forest management and the IPF/IFF Proposal for Action, including lessons learned, constraints and impediments faced in implementing them by ASEAN Member States to the UNFF. Further ASEAN has agreed on MAR online System to report the progress of SFM in the region.

Please describe the main challenges encountered and/or lessons learned.

ASEAN member state would need to adopt innovative measure to address new policy regimes in SFM, Forest Certification, forest law enforcement and governance, forest and climate change, and other forest related issues. It is expected to diverse programs, strategies and approaches to meet these impediments. There are common problems on the need to synchronize forest governance at national and local levels, the increasing power, roles, and functions of Local Government Units in implementing forest related projects and activities, as well as the increasing number

and level of complexity of players in SFM process. Local implementation such as logging operations and forest plantation activities needs to be better enhanced through better effort and regulations, contributing towards achieving sustainable livelihoods and poverty alleviation of the ASEAN people.

Some of the obstacles faced in financing SFM are due to policy and market failures as unsustainable forest practices seem to be more profitable in a short run than sustainable forest management. In addition, current market prices of timber and timber products do not reflect the full values of forest goods and the services provided by forest. The public good benefits SFM do not generate income for the private investor and as such do not provide incentives for investment in the forestry sector; the contributions of SFM to poverty reduction, food supply, water and energy have not been clearly incorporated in Poverty Reduction Strategy processes, nor in other similar macro-level assistance strategies, and the perceived low returns and higher risk in natural forest management by investors as compared

ASEAN member state exchange information, experiences, best practices and lessons learnt on country approaches and mechanisms related to the implementation of their nfp processes. For this purpose, the AEG-IFPP has developed specific tools such as the ASEAN Guideline for the implementation of the IPF/IFF proposals for action, and conducted national forest programme (NFP) related capacity building.

In addition, in November 2007 in Singapore signed the "ASEAN Declaration on Environmental Sustainability" which calls, among others, to work closely with the international community to better understand and adapt to the adverse impacts of climate change, including, in particular, the related issues of greenhouse gas emissions and carbon sinks, as well as to collectively work towards achieving an aspiration goal of significantly increasing the cumulative forest cover in the ASEAN region by at least 10 million hectares by 2020.

ASEAN has been very active in engaging with global society through the ASEAN Common Position on Reducing Emission from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+) to UNFCCC since 2008. The ASEAN Regional Knowledge Network on Forest and Climate Change (ARKN-FCC) plays crucial role in facilitating dialogue on this issue.

Please describe the main challenges encountered and/or lessons learned.

ASEAN member state (AMS) have shared their progresses in adopting the nfp framework that contribute to the implementation of SFM. Some AMS have made progresses in establishing mechanisms for stakeholder participation and facilitating the development of policies and action plans. However, some AMS have not been able to establish the necessary cross sector linkages and integrate forestry into overarching policies. Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) is still viewed as a technical issue dealing with logging and plantations. Meanwhile there is a need of improvement in integrating the social environmental values and services provided by forests and trees. AMS also views that reporting requirements on SFM from international organization should be harmonized to be more effective and efficient for country to make a reporting.

ASEAN will need to continue to enhance the sustainable management of forest

3. Briefly describe actions taken to enhance regional cooperation to promote international trade in forest products from sustainably managed forests harvested.

In November 2009, in promoting international trade, the ASEAN member states adopted a reference framework for timber legality which define the criteria and indicators for legal timber, as part of a phased approach for timber certification for sustainability. Some ASEAN member states work on additional measures for a more responsible and sustainable trade in forest products through the development of a national Timber Legality Assurance System, which is the core element for Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) Voluntary Partnership Agreements (VPA) with the European Union (EU).

Under the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) Blueprint, targets have been set for the implementation of a common ASEAN market by 2015 with free flow of goods and services. The timber sector is one of the twelve priority sectors identified for accelerated economic integration. Within the overall target date of 2015, the year 2010 was set for the individual ASEAN Member State (AMS) to finalize their respective national standard for chain-of-custody for legal timber and sustainable timber, the year 2011 for their respective national standard for verification of legal timber to be finalized, and the year 2014 for their respective national standard for forest management certification to be finalized.

ASEAN has also initiated to have ASEAN Single Custom Window to regulate

FLEG issues addressed through the ASEAN member state (AMS) is still evolving. The implementation of FLEG requires supports and strong political commitments from AMS by adopting it into national forest programs or other integrated programs relevant to forests. Some member states are still developing an integrated mechanism to avoid overlaps and duplication of efforts in trying to combat illegal activities in the forest sector.

Enforcement and Governance (FLEG) in ASEAN, 2008-
commitment and intent of ASEAN and serve as a profound mechanism to work
along with and d

1. Please describe studies or initiatives in your respective regional, sub-regional organization/process that capture the contribution of forests to the achievement of the internationally-agreed development goals, including the MDGs.

ASEAN has embarked on strengthening its institutional capability and building infrastructure. The process of development is ongoing.

monitoring, assessment and reporting format with agreed criteria and indicators.

collaborating partnerships with other UN related agencies and encouraging their involvements in major activities by synergizing its activities with these agencies. In many instances, try to avoid duplication of actions and activities in order to maximize the usage of limited resources.

ASEAN considers that UNFF would need to improve its secretariat including the structure, human and financial resources in order to enhance its role and function,

closely with the ASEAN Regional Knowledge Network on FLEG.

FAO is supporting ASEAN in furthering the application of the Online Monitoring, Assessment and Reporting Format for Sustainable Forest Management in ASEAN (MAR Format) at the national level and the Offline MAR Format at the forest management unit level which were developed through ReFOP. In this regard, FAO, the ASEAN Secretariat and Member States have organized several regional training workshops.

Overall these collaborations have been important for ASEAN and member state in supporting policy frameworks development and implementation. The ongoing cooperation in the framework of the ASEAN Regional Knowledge Networks ARKN and affiliated organizations will provide a good basis for cooperation with Non-Profit and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs). Through donors, for example, GAP-CC and others will actively search such cooperation when implementing the various analytical steps, networking activities, and stakeholder fora. Potential cooperation partners will include RECOFTC, CIFOR and IUFRO.

6. How would your respective regional, sub-regional organization/process envisage a strengthened collaboration with CPF member organizations and/or major stakeholders in a revised IAF?

It is expected that there will be a streamline of priorities of the CPF in terms of programs and fund dissemination and the need for the forum to identify and establish its niche which is not duplicative of the work of other organizations. Although CPF members have different mandates they pursue with various Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) related programs and projects in member states, appropriate coordination among them are needed to avoid repetition which may result in inefficiency and diminished impacts. These inputs will provide baseline support to strengthen ASEAN collaboration with CPF member organizations and/or major stakeholders.