

The International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO) fully appreciates the Co-Chairpersons of the Open-Ended Ad Hoc Expert Group (AHEG) established pursuant to paragraph 48 of the Economic and Social Council Resolution 2015/33 for producing and circulating the document, "Building Blocks / Options for the United Nations Strategic Plan for Forests 2017-2030" and offered ITTO an opportunity to submit its views and comments on the document. ITTO recognizes that the document, which contains useful building blocks and options for consideration, was well drafted reflecting the discussion took place at the first meeting of the AHEG held in April 2016. The document provides a good basis for the further deliberation by the experts on the United Nations Strategic Plan for Forests (the Strategic Plan) at the second meeting of the AHEG in October 2016.

Because components of the Strategic Plan are closely linked to each other, ITTO sets out the following benchmark points to analyze the document, particularly the building blocks and options proposed therein for consideration:

Sustainable forest management is an inclusive concept, as defined in the UN Forest Instrument (UNFI) and interpreted in seven thematic elements, which comprehends all operational practices carried out to deliver benefits from forests on a sustainable basis, such as conservation, protection, restoration and use of forests and forest resources;

The main objective of the international arrangement on forests (IAF) is to promote the implementation of sustainable management of all types of forests, which is interpreted in the context of the IAF as the implementation of the UNFI, including the four Global Objectives on Forests (GOFs) and the identified 44 actions regarding national policies and measures and international cooperation and means of implementation; and

The contribution of all types of forests and trees outside forests to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including forest-related Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and their associated targets and other internationally agreed forest-related goals and targets will be enhanced in principle through the implementation of the UNFI.

ITTO supports _____ based on the benchmark points above.

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The strategic approach should be described in a way that the implementation of the UNFI, including the four GOFs and the 44 actions, will contribute to the achievement of the forest-related SDGs and other internationally agreed forest-related goals and targets through the implementation of sustainable management of all types of forests, as mentioned above. A convincing and concise text is required instead of a listing of goals and targets.

In order to make the monitoring, assessment and reporting simpler and reduce burden on Member States and other actors, ITTO believes that a limited number of targets should be set up in association with the GOFs and some key actions contained in the UNFI. In this respect, ITTO supports _____ in principle.

With the aim of demonstrating the close linkage between the UNFI and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in terms of their objectives and expected outcomes, ITTO suggests that the forest-related SDG targets should be used to the extent as possible as operational targets of the Strategic Plan.

ITTO fully supports the process to encourage Member States and other actors to voluntarily submit their intended contribution to the attainment of targets, as proposed in the document.

ITTO supports the development of a matrix to show the implementation framework, as well as actions and actors, and its inclusion in the document.

In this respect, the 44 actions contained in the UNFI may be categorized

ITTO believes that the part referring to the integration of the Strategic Plan into the strategies and programmes of the CPF member organizations and the provision of dedicated funds for the CPF activities should be placed in the section on Member States.

ITTO fully support the exploration of innovative mechanisms that facilitate the grater engagement of the private sector in particular, with the recognition of the current state of its participation in the Major Groups.