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Indonesian

New Zealand Submission to the UNFF on the International Arrangement on Forests (30 November 2013)

New Zealand welcomes the invitation to provide views to the UNFF as part of the UNFF's contribution to the review of the International Arrangement on Forests (IAF). We see the review of the IAF, during intersessional processes and at the UNFF meeting in 2015, as an important opportunity to provide feedback on achievements to date and to guide international forest governance in a more consistent and effective direction that allows for achievement of the four global forestry objectives.

Responses to the questions posed by the UNFF Secretariat

The IAF

(A.1) Please select and explain preferred option for the IAF:

A legally binding instrument on all types of forests

Strengthening the current IAF

Continuation of the current IAF

Other options

In our view the International Arrangement on Forests should enable co-ordinated action and governance at international, regional and national levels, encourage consistency in the continuing refinement, understanding and application of Sustainable Forest Management, and encourage efficiency by avoiding unnecessary duplication of efforts.

While we remain open to discussion on a possible

The UNFF

(B.1) Please explain if you consider the current UNFF structure and its biennial sessions as sufficient to take necessary actions and to provide advice and guidance on all issues related to all types of forests and at all levels:

We consider that the biennial sessions of the forum, combined with intersessional activities like ad-hoc expert groups, have provided a practical timeframe for UNFF meetings to date. We think the structure of the UNFF and its

(B.6) Please indicate how effective you consider the engagement of major groups in the work of the UNFF and provide suggestions in their further engagement:

We consider the involvement of major groups an important part of the UNFF. New Zealand is concerned by the declining interest from some of the major groups in the work of the UNFF over a period of time, particularly the private sector. This was particularly noticeable at the last UNFF, where the theme was economic development. Major groups can play a key role and represent perspectives of important parts of society; therefore they should be encouraged to engage effectively with other UNFF members on forest issues. It would be useful to ascertain from the groups themselves the reasons they are not attending and related to that, what impact they believe their engagement has.

Consideration also needs to be given to how input by major groups and stakeholders is integrated into the UNFF sessions. For example, the panel discussion held at the last UNFF did not draw a large audience and came across as a side event rather than a serious input that would inform policy development.

(B.7) Please explain the role and impact of the International Year of Forests and the International Day of Forests in promoting greater awareness and strengthening the political and public commitment for forests:

The activities promoting forests for the International Year of Forests were useful in raising awareness about the importance of forests. It is difficult for New Zealand to assess the actual impact particularly in terms of either political or public commitment for forests. We have not seen any evaluation of the activities undertaken during the International Year of Forests and thus any evidence based assessment of the effect that these activities have. We are aware of the incidental reporting from individual countries that they found the activities helpful. Our perception is that the International Year of Forests has not made much difference to the how forests and their importance (or not) are considered within the UN system compared to other sectors or other issues. Going forward, we would emphasise the need to find ways to enduring political/public commitment for forests.

The NLBI and the GOFs

(C.1) Please indicate progress in the implementation of the forest instrument – adequate, inadequate or not sure.

It is unclear to New Zealand precisely how far we have come in implementing the forest instrument in its entirety either globally or nationally.

It would have been useful to have a more comprehensive analysis of the implementation of the NLBI at the global level in the papers of the last UNFF session, which summed up the country reports, but did not give a picture of whether the forest instrument is being implemented well overall or where there are gaps generally.

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(C.3) Please indicate progress in achieving the GOFs — adequate, inadequate or not sure.

On the basis of other information, most notably the work of the FAO on the global forest resource assessment and material supplied by C&I processes, it would appear that we are making some progress towards achieving the Global Objectives on Forests contained in the forest instrument but not enough and certainly not enough given some of the challenges that are facing forests into the future.

(C.4) Please provide suggestions on how to improve progress:

Achieving greater progress towards the Global Objectives on Forests has been the source of much discussion and debate at not just the UNFF but also at other international forestry meetings. We have available a wealth of decisions emanating from these bodies and a reasonable sense of what is necessary – land tenure reform and certainty, levelling the playing field in terms of economic incentives for different types of land use, eliminating illegal logging etc. And yet the evidence would suggest that we are either not making progress, or not making progress fast enough. It is one of the issues that needs to be considered as part of the independent evaluation of the IAF and underpins the discussion about the utility of a legally binding instrument for forests.

(C.5) Please explain how implementation of the forest instrument has contributed to the implementation of forest-related international conventions, and vice versa:

We are unable to provide this assessment. The overlapping and fragmented nature of the international forestry regime makes it difficult to isolate the implementation of the forest instrument from the implementation of other forest-related international conventions. For New Zealand, all of these instruments are consistent with current domestic policy settings for forests and forest related activities.

(C.6) Please describe how the forest instrument and the GOFs can contribute to the post-2015 UN development agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals:

We think that making progress in sustainable management of forests will remain an important part of sustainable development efforts regardless of what is agreed for the SDGs and in post-2015 development agenda.

As noted under question

The UNFF Secretariat

(D.1) Please indicate if you consider the structure, human and financial resources of the compact Secretariat of the UNFF adequate to fulfil its mandates – adequate, inadequate or not sure.

New Zealand considers that the financial and human resources of the Secretariat appear to be inadequate for it to carry out much of the work requested, including funds which may be required to support the inter-sessional work of the forum.

We would also note that Members have not had the benefit of detailed reports on the function and resources of the UNFF Secretariat during UNFF sessions despite requests for these reports. It has been therefore difficult for delegates to the UNFF (as opposed to New York based country representatives) to have a discussion on the resourcing of the Secretariat. Providing such reports to the forum, for example during inter-sessional times, would be useful to help member countries better understand key actions or constraints in the activities undertaken and make well informed decisions on the future needs of the UNFF Secretariat. In other organisations such as, for example, the ITTO there is a Committee on Finance and Administration that provides such oversight and allows for a conversation about priorities.

(D.2) Please provide suggestion(s) on strengthening the Secretariat of the Forum to enable it to fulfill its functions more effectively:

The need for future resourcing and strengthening of the UNFF Secretariat will likely be determined by the outcome of the review of the IAF over the next two years, and options for the future of the UNFF post-2015. Until we have a better indication of the direction for the UNFF as a result of this process and therefore the scope of the Secretariat's functions in the future, it is difficult to comment in great detail on how it can be strengthened.

As noted above, improved transparency and reporting of the budgeting and work planning

The CPF and members

(E.1) Please explain the impacts and sufficiency of the programs and actions taken by CPF and CPF member organizations in implementing resolutions and supporting the work of the UNFF since its inception:

It is not possible to respond to this question. As noted in D.3, what little reporting is available does not provide much insight. The slightly different mandates and priorities of each of the CPF members combined with the general lack of funding for forestry activities, would suggest that the CPF has had very little impact on supporting the work of the UNFF since its inception.

(E.2) Please describe how the CPF and its member organizations can further contribute to

In our view the following consistent findings from ad-hoc expert group meetings are vital considerations in the discussion of a way forward for forest financing:

- more funding is required to implement SFM globally;
- there are a number of ways the policies agreed to by the UNFF can and have been funded and implemented by organisations and countries in the past;
- the main way SFM implementation has been financed to date has been via a “portfolio approach” i.e. a range of programmes and projects operated by CPF partners, overseas development assistance programmes, bilateral programmes other than ODA, and investment;

The future success of funding SFM will rely strongly on how well SFM concepts become a mainstream element of economic and political development and of community appreciation and thereby attract funds

(F.2) Please suggest concrete steps that UNFF, CPF members and other organizations should undertake to develop financing options:

As noted there is no simple solution to funding. We consider that the dialogue at the UNFF ad hoc expert group meetings on forest finance generated very good progress in understanding how funding pathways could be sustained and enhanced. We emphasise that a single fund will not assist in enhancing and refining the funding pathways.

These discussions showed that the value of dialogue among key players in the various steps in funding SFM. These include recipients, donors, bankers, fund administrators and country institutions. We would strongly favour a continuation dialogue among these to identify and resolve the structural, political and technical issues that hamper the mobilisation of both existing and new funding for SFM