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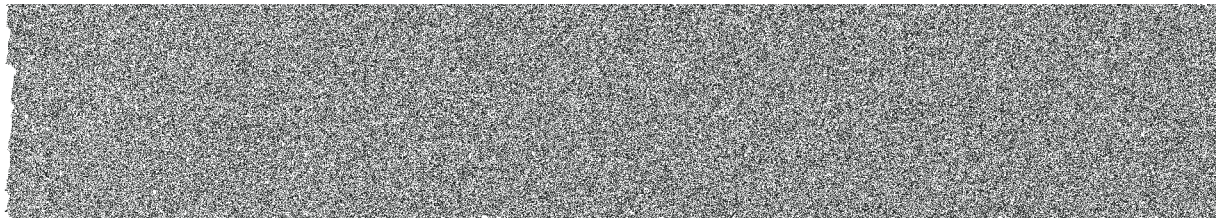
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The United Nations Forum on Forests Secretariat  
DC2-2301  
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New York  
NY 10017  
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Reference: M511-0559  
Your reference:  
Our reference: PFR  
Contact person: GRU  
**Bern, 16 December 2013**

### **Assessment of the IAF 2013**

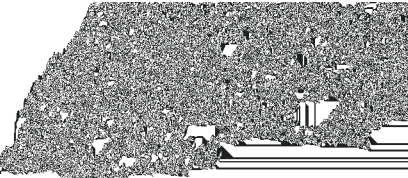
Dear Madam, dear Sir,



Franz Perrez  
Ambassador

Enclosures:

- Swiss views and proposals on the International



Copies to: AL, GRU, MAR, KCH, DUC

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**Swiss**

## **II: Swiss answers to the format for soliciting views and proposals on the IAF**

### **A: A full range of options for the IAF**

Switzerland believes that the present IAF does not fill the expectations that were placed in the IAF in 2000, nor in 2006. The reasons are elaborated below on the basis of the UNFF questionnaire.

It is noticeable to look back and see that international forest policy has been addressed by quite a few different institutional set-ups since 1992.

Nevertheless, as it will be stated below, further development of the institutional set-up for SFM is greatly needed. Political commitment and collective efforts at all levels need to be further strengthened, to include forests on national and international development agendas, to enhance national policy coordination and international cooperation and to promote intersectoral coordination at all levels for the effective implementation of SFM of all types of forests.

The follow-up organ/instrument to the present IAF should provide a coherent, comprehensive, effective and efficient policy framework driving the implementation of SFM on the ground through enhanced political awareness and political leadership.

Such an organ/instrument should be entrusted with/contain the formulation of a common vision and of common goals and targets for strengthening political commitment between sectors within countries through policy deliberation, policy development, overarching policy guidance. It should also allow for the monitoring of SFM with clear indicators worldwide.

The follow-up organ/instrument to the present IAF should be **the** UN global forest policy hub for all other organizations/instruments related to sustainable forest management, including sectors such as biodiversity, climate change, desertification, agriculture , energy, water, public health, etc.

The follow-up organ/instrument to the present IAF should:

- Streamline forests/forest policy/SFM in the global sustainable development agenda
- Bring forest governance to all LBAs relating to forests (UNFCCC, UNCCD, CBD, CITES, ITTA as well as regional instruments) so as to reduce the fragmentation of decisions and actions, as well as using synergies with forest related processes
- Catalyze cooperation within and between countries, as well as foster the implementation of concrete actions at all levels

Due to different challenges and conditions in the regions, a global legally binding instrument replacing the IAF may take the format of a framework convention with a set of common overriding principles and goals, implemented through regional conventions/regional annexes of the convention (as in UNCCD) or national and/or local targets for the standards and levels of performance that need to be achieved or maintained (as in UNECE-WHO Protocol on Water and Health, art. 6).

## **B: Performance of UNFF and its process since 2000 and future options for UNFF**

### **B1 and B2: UNFF structure and performance**

The United Nations Forum on Forests was established by the ECOSOC in 2000 as a subsidiary body to ECOSOC with a universal membership. UNFF has been the only global high-level intergovernmental policy body on Forests.

Despite its mandate, UNFF did not succeed to decide, in 2005, to develop a legal framework

The NLBI reporting has been low (around 25%), but increased in 2012 through the organization of some regional capacity building seminars. Therefore, its effectiveness as well as its impact is hard to judge.

UNFF has attracted all the international organizations of the forest sector and those related to it (among them the members of the CPF) but

cutting issues of livelihoods, equity and sustainable development more generally. All were designed to draw lessons and recommendations for action by the United Nations Forum on Forests and other key institutional actors and decision makers. The series of workshops can also be considered as the contribution of UNFF to a larger debate on tenure rights which did also manifest itself in the work of the Rights and Resources Initiative or the FAO Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security (2012), and did also surface as a key aspect in the negotiations of the UNFCCC and the REDD+ safeguards. In spite of the CLIs in support of the UNFF and the crucial importance of the theme for the implantation of SFM, the themes, findings and recommendations of the workshops were little captured in the official documents of the UNFF sessions. A key document which encompasses the first four workshops and which was jointly sent by Switzerland, Indonesia, South Africa and Mexico to the Secretary General of the UN can be found at <http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N10/693/46/PDF/N1069346.pdf?OpenElement> (<http://www.un.org/esa/forests/documents-unff.html#9>). Letter dated 2010/11/03 from the Permanent Representatives of Switzerland, Indonesia, South Africa and Mexico to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-

Ad Hoc Expert Groups have been preparing, through intersessional meetings, the sessions of UNFF on specific items of the agenda. Somehow, their work has not always been advancing the work of UNFF as the same discussions restarted at UNFF sessions. This might have served more as capacity building than anything else.

#### **B6: Engagement of major groups**

The multistakeholder (i.e. major groups) dialogues were given a half day session in the middle of the UNFF sessions, and were poorly attended by very few delegations. These dialogues had little impact on the formal decision-making as major groups were not integrated in the plenaries. Their participation was ghettoized with this separate dialogue session.

#### **B7: Impacts of the International Year on Forests (IAF)/International Day of Forests**

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According to the study on forest financing of the CPF, the Global Objective on Forests 4 (Reverse the decline in official development assistance for sustainable forest management and mobilize significantly increased, new and additional financial resources from all sources for the implementation of sustainable forest management) has been reversed, mainly due to REDD activities as well as a window for financing SFM within the GEF.

The GOFs might be a basis to build on a SDG on forests if it is so decided. But any SDG will need more precise targets and indicators. So the development of SDGs might possibly run in parallel to the NLBI GOFs and the SDG process should be given priority given its impact and political importance.

#### **Section D: The Forum's secretariat**

Countries continuously asked for information on the structure, number of employees and their tasks as well as financial mechanisms, especially given the large number of consultants that have been engaged to link with national UNFF focal points to write reports. Lack of transparency was one of the reasons of little response for contributions of the trust fund of UNFF.

The participation of UNFF staff in other international forest-related forums has not been as active as one would wish. Although MOUs were signed between UNFF secretariat and other organizations, it is unclear what they encompass and how this had any effect on the work of either UNFF or the given organizations/conventions. . There was also no analysis or reports on these MOUs.

It is also noticeable that some important members of the CPF have not seconded any staff lately as they did in the past.

The funding of the extrabudgetary activities of the secretariat has not been clear.

The secretariat engaged in some activities/ documents that were not agreed upon by the countries/Bureau.

#### **Section E: CPF and CPF members**

The CPF has been an important platform for getting some of the 14 organizations to discuss and come forward with very useful documents on common issues such as climate change and more recently with great knowledge, the forest financing. The sourcebook on forest financing has also been an important asset, although it is difficult to know how useful it has been to recipients countries. The main problem of the CPF is that it is not a body headed by UNFF as most members are independent conventions driven by their own governing bodies. This had an effect on the low level of participation of some of its members, by lack of time and finances.

It is unclear how the CPF members have transmitted the work of UNFF into their constituencies.

Recent developments on SDGs have not been addressed in a concerted manner.

#### **Section F: Financing options and strategies**

The facilitative process has been of great value to increase the understanding of the funding sources and mechanisms, the obstacles to access them and to join regional donors with countries. It also had a great value in capacity building.

