



**EUROPEAN UNION**  
**DELEGATION OF THE EUROPEAN UNION**  
**TO THE UNITED NATIONS**  
**Head of Delegation**

New York, 29 November 2013

Dear Mr. Joshi,

Please find attached the submission on behalf of the European Union (EU) and its 28 Member States in response to the invitation by the UNFF Secretariat (ref. UNFF-13-L-HMM-219) to submit views and proposals for consideration by the first meeting of the ad hoc expert group (AHEG) on the review of the International Arrangement on Forests (IAF) in the context of the comprehensive process for the Review of the effectiveness of the IAF established through UNFF10 resolution 10/2.

The EU and its Member States look forward to a thorough and forward-looking review process

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which should consider a full range of options for the future of the IAF, including new and innovative options for a more effective future IAF.

We hope that the preliminary views expressed in the attached submission will help the follow-up discussions on the matter, and we will be ready to provide, at the appropriate time, further input, including available information on the advantages and disadvantages of different options for the future of the

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ON

VIEWS AND PROPOSALS ON THE INTERNATIONAL ARRANGEMENT ON FORESTS

**Introduction**

This submission by the European Union and its Member States is a response to the invitation by the UNFF Secretariat (ref. UNFF-13-L-HMM-219) to submit views and proposals for consideration by the first meeting of the ad hoc expert group (AHEG) on the review of the International Arrangement on Forests (IAF) in the context of the comprehensive process for the Review of the effectiveness of the IAF established through UNFF10 resolution 10/2. This

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effective and efficient in its operations. As already stated above, such a reflection cannot take place in isolation from other major regional and international developments with far-reaching implications on the international forest policy dialogue.

In this respect, the EU and its Member States would like to stress that, in order to take full

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forest issues from the angle of all three dimensions of sustainable development, the UNFF was intended to serve as policy forum to stimulate, guide and coordinate the work of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests which was created to bring together various UN and non-UN agencies with a mandate related to forest and enhance their ability to coordinate and deliver together on forest issues.

Overall, the current arrangement on forest has allowed to make some progress in advancing the global discussion on forest issues (the NLBI represents a major milestone in this respect and should not be underestimated, along with the work on forest finance, monitoring and

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reporting/data harmonisation). However, pending the results of the comprehensive review of the current IAF, it appears already clear that the current set-up for the IAF presents several shortcomings and that it has been unable to deliver satisfactorily on all of its functions as mandated in ECOSOC resolutions 2000/35 and 2006/49. This applies in particular with regard to its mandate to achieve a significant impact on implementation of regional and national forest policies, as well as to strengthen interaction with relevant regional and sub-regional forest related mechanisms, institutions and instruments, organisations and processes. Cooperation and policy coordination on forest related issues among the relevant international organizations and instruments have improved to a certain extent through the work of the CPF, but concrete ways and means to further strengthen the role of the CPF are still needed. Furthermore, it should be noted that the mandated functions of the IAF lack a clear identification of the respective roles and responsibilities amongst the UNFF itself (e.g. all

implementation of the Rio+20 outcome document. In this respect, the creation of the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) on Sustainable Development provides a new potential platform for truly integrated discussions on the role of forests in sustainable development at the UN headquarters level and it should be considered what role the HLPF could play in the future IAF. The strengthening of UNEP and its newly acquired universal membership should also be taken into consideration, along with evolving regional processes, including, but not limited to, the Legally-binding Agreement on Forests in Europe that is currently being negotiated in the pan-European region. In this respect, the IAF should enable a forest policy dialogue which is relevant to different regions. Furthermore, the on-going process for the

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**Section B: Performance of the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) and its processes since 2000, and future options for UNFF**

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subsequent cooperation and consensus on forest-related issues among the relevant international

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and regional organizations at the operational level.

However, it should be noted that the current structure of the UNFF as an intergovernmental

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The EU and its Member States see the Forest Instrument as a notable milestone in the international forest policy dialogue and an important tool to promote comprehensive

Forest Management. However, as highlighted in the recent report

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We believe that the CPF represents a unique model that has contributed to fostering interagency cooperation within and outside the UN system. In this respect, we would like to highlight in particular the significant contribution of the CPF as a whole in the areas of monitoring and reporting on forest resources (harmonized questionnaire), harmonization of terminology, forest finance and science policy interface. At the same time, the work of the CPF as a whole has been hampered by clear limitations at the operational level, with

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terms of coordination of the respective forest-related programmes of the various CPF member organizations, particularly at the regional and national level. Furthermore, we would like to

with the lack of a clear division of labour between the different CPF members along the lines

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The importance of establishing an adequate enabling environment at the national level in order to make up financing for SEM can hardly be over emphasized. In particular, there is a

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