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منظمة الأغذية
والزراعة
للأمم المتحدة

联合国
粮食及
农业组织

Food
and
Agriculture
Organization
of
the
United
Nations

Organisation
des
Nations
Unies
pour
l'alimentation
et
l'agriculture

Organización
de las
Naciones
Unidas
para la
Agricultura
y la
Alimentación

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**AFRICAN FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE COMMISSION
SIXTEENTH SESSION**

**NEAR EAST FORESTRY COMMISSION
EIGHTEENTH SESSION**

18 – 21 February 2008

KHARTOUM, REPUBLIC OF THE SUDAN

**SHAPING AN ACTION PROGRAMME FOR FAO
IN THE AFRICA AND NEAR EAST REGIONS**

INTRODUCTION

1. This document introduces some of the key events and processes that FAO is leading or is closely involved in. Delegates are invited to take note of the activities and provide guidance on the specific points outlined in the sections below.

NEW FAO STRATEGY FOR FORESTRY

2. The forest sector is affected by the rapid pace of global changes, including economic globalization, acceleration of climate change, and the dynamism of global communications. In response to these changes and at the request of the Committee on Forestry (COFO), FAO is updating its strategy for forestry. The review is carried out in the context of ongoing UN and FAO reforms, and the outcome of the Independent External Evaluation of FAO.

3. Suggestions are solicited from FAO Members and other stakeholders through the Regional Forestry Commissions, among other means. Based on feedback, a draft strategy will be developed and stakeholders will have a further opportunity to comment. A proposed new strategy will be presented to FAO members for consideration during the 19th Session of COFO in March 2009.

4. The discussion paper “*FAO strategy for forestry: elements of a possible strategy*” is presented in the Annex. More information and a facility for on-line commenting are available at www.fao.org/forestry/strategy.

For reasons of economy, this document is produced in a limited number of copies. Delegates and observers are kindly requested to bring it to the meetings and to refrain from asking for additional copies, unless strictly indispensable.
Most FAO meeting documents are available on Internet at www.fao.org

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Discussion items for the Commissions:

5. In providing guidance for the development of the strategy, delegates are invited to
- (i) comment on the strategic elements outlined in the discussion paper, and
 - (ii) consider the following general questions:
 - What is the biggest impact that FAO has had in forestry?
 - What are the three highest priorities for FAO in forestry in the future?
 - Are there any programmes or activities that FAO currently carries out in forestry that should be discontinued?
 - Do you have any additional comments about FAO programmes, activities, or priorities, or about the way that FAO works?

GLOBAL FOREST RESOURCES ASSESSMENT (FRA 2010)

6. Like the last assessment (FRA 2005), FRA 2010 will provide a comprehensive picture of the extent of forests and other wooded land, their condition, management and uses; this time covering all the seven thematic elements of sustainable forest management. Moreover, FRA 2010 is designed to cover the forest-related information needs for monitoring progress towards the 2010 Biodiversity Target of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the Global Objectives on Forests of the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) and the Millennium Development Goals, as endorsed by COFO. FRA 2010 will be officially launched during a global workshop in Rome from 3 to 7 March 2008.

7. In addition to the traditional collection of country information through questionnaires and thematic studies, a complementary global remote sensing survey will be carried out in partnership with countries and other organizations. It aims at improving the knowledge about land use change dynamics, including deforestation, afforestation and natural expansion of forests. FAO will offer training to strengthen the countries' capacity to determine historical trends in rates of deforestation and to monitor future rates, thus helping readiness to benefit from a potential instrument of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) to reduce deforestation in developing countries.

8. Within the FRA process, FAO is committed to strengthening the existing global and regional networks of national correspondents and to further harmonizing forest reporting with other organizations. (www.fao.org/forestry/site/fra/en)

For the consideration of the Commissions:

9. Members of African Forestry and Wildlife Commission (AFWC) and the Near East Forestry Commission ((NEFC) are invited to provide their national correspondents to FRA 2010 and their teams with the support they need to prepare the country reports and to participate in the remote sensing survey and any special studies that may cover their country.

STATE OF THE WORLD'S FORESTS (SOFO) 2009

10. The *State of the World's Forests* (SOFO) is published by FAO every two years. The next edition, SOFO 2009, will be released at the 19th Session of the FAO Committee on Forestry in Rome in March 2009.

11. The theme of SOFO 2009 will be "Society, forests and forestry: adapting to the future." SOFO 2009 will include updated summaries of regional forestry sector outlook studies prepared by FAO over the past several years, including the Forestry Sector Outlook Study for Africa (FOSA) and the Forestry Sector Outlook Study for West and Central Asia (FOWECA). These studies have been reviewed in detail at previous sessions of the AFWC and NEFC

Discussion items for the Commissions:

12. Members of the AFWC and NEFC are invited to comment on the updated regional outlook study summaries for Africa and for West and Central Asia. These summaries will be available in hard copy at the commission meetings in Khartoum, and they are also available for comment on the FAO internet site: www.fao.org/forestry.

STATE OF THE WORLD'S FOREST GENETIC RESOURCES

13. The FAO Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture has approved the inclusion of forest genetic resources in its Multi-Year Programme of Work. A State of the World's Forest Genetic Resources Report will be prepared for the Commission in 2011, preceded by a scoping paper for the Commission's review in 2009. COFO and the Regional Forestry Commissions will be involved in this process. The report will draw on FRA and other existing information such as national reports and outcomes of a series of regional forest genetic resources workshops that have been organized since the mid-1990s and that FAO and other partners continue to support. (www.fao.org/forestry/site/fgr/en).

XIII WORLD FORESTRY CONGRESS

14. The next World Forestry Congress will be held in Buenos Aires, Argentina, from 18 to 25 October 2009. It will provide a forum for the exchange of experiences and for discussions on various topics related to the theme "Forests in development – a vital balance". 6,000 participants from all over the world are expected to participate in various congress sessions, round-table discussions, poster presentations, information events, exhibits and study tours.

15. The first call for voluntary papers and posters was made in October 2007. The Congress Secretariat will make every effort to provide financial support for the participation of those experts who produce the best papers. (www.wfc2009.org)

For the consideration of the Commissions:

16. The Regional Forestry Commissions, through their Executive Committees, are encouraged to assist in organizing the regional specific activities of the Congress programme. The chairs of the Regional Forestry Commissions have been invited to participate as members of the External Advisory Committee of the Congress. In addition, the members of AFWC and NEFC are invited to encourage the submission of papers by experts from their countries.

INTERNATIONAL YEARS RELEVANT TO FORESTRY

17. Three forthcoming international years declared by the United Nations General Assembly feature forestry matters:

(i) International Year of Natural Fibres 2009 aims to foster international partnership among the various natural fibres industries. It intends to emphasize the value of these fibres to consumers while helping to sustain the incomes of farmers. Fibres from wood as well as from non-wood forest products can have an important input, particularly at the local level. FAO will facilitate the implementation of the year together with partners.

(ii) International Year of Biodiversity 2010 will coincide with the 2010 biodiversity target. It aims to raise awareness of biodiversity for sustaining life on earth and to mobilize the international community for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from its use. The Secretariat of CBD serves as the focal point for the year and has created an inter-agency advisory committee, including FAO, to guide and maximize the activities.

(iii) International Year of Forests 2011 aims to raise awareness of sustainable management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests. Governments and other

stakeholders are expected to promote the related activities, including by creating national committees. The Secretariat of UNFF serves as the focal point for the year. FAO will work in close collaboration with countries and the UNFF Secretariat and other members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF) for the implementation of the year.

18. All the years will have global awareness-raising campaigns, with a number of activities and information materials. These can be adapted for regional situations and will also support the preparation of national actions.

Discussion items for the Commissions:

19. Delegates are invited to consider the ways their countries could support and link their relevant activities at all levels to these three years, and the kind of support FAO could provide especially in the preparation of the International Year of the Forests (IYF).

APPENDIX 1

FAO Strategy for Forestry

Discussion paper on elements of a possible strategy

What is *Forestry*?

For the purposes of this strategy, *forestry* is broadly defined to include livelihoods, social aspects, environmental services, forestry policies and institutions, and economic considerations. In addition to traditional aspects of forest management, production, health and protection, *forestry* considers the broad landscape of trees outside forests, including urban forestry and agro-forestry. *Forestry* includes the management of wildlife and protected areas. *Forestry* considers the impacts of other sectors on the forest, as well as the impact of the forest on other sectors.

Potential strategic goals for Forestry

In developing the FAO strategic goals for forestry, the broader context of forestry within the world and the importance of linkages with other sectors are acknowledged. In particular, goals for forestry directly support the Millennium Development Goals and the FAO Global Goals of Members. Within the forestry sector, the global objectives on forests agreed by the United Nations Forum on Forests provide an important framework for strategic goals (refer to the Annex).

Decision-making is informed, harmonized across sectors, and participatory.

Decisions about forestry, forests and trees are based on timely and accurate information. Stakeholder involvement in decisions is increased at all levels. Countries have progressive policies and laws that are developed through broad stakeholder participation and effectively implemented through efficient and responsive institutions and sound governance.

- **The benefits from trees, forests and forestry are increasing, equitably shared, and widely recognized and appreciated.**

The contributions of forests and forestry to food security and society are increased, including the role of forests in livelihoods and poverty alleviation. Clear and secure forest tenure contributes to equitable sharing of benefits at local and national levels. The wider public and key actors in other sectors are aware of the many values and benefits of forests as demonstrated by changed behaviour. Investments in forestry are increased, and forestry is accorded an increasing priority in development.

- **Forest resources are increasing and ecosystem services are increasingly valued.**

The health, vitality, and area of forests show a stable or increasing trend in most countries and ecosystems, thereby increasing the contribution of forests to mitigating climate change, conserving biodiversity, and improving water quality. The net rates of forest loss and degradation are reversed. Good management practices are implemented along a continuum ranging up to the landscape level, including interactions with other sectors.

Potential elements of Strategies for FAO to achieve the Strategic goals for Forestry

- **Strengthen country capacities**
Work with member countries to strengthen policies and institutions, and to support participatory processes and the allocation of decision-making to appropriate levels.

- **Strengthen information to support policy-making**
Support national capabilities to collect and analyze information about forests and forestry, and to strengthen linkages with policy making.
- **Exchange knowledge**
Serve as an authoritative source of information about forests, forestry policies and institutions, and natural resources. Provide leadership in the exchange of knowledge.
- **Improve forestry practices**
Develop guidelines for best practices through multi-stakeholder processes and assist countries with their implementation.
- **Promote networks**
Develop and facilitate networks among countries, institutions, and individuals to more effectively share knowledge and implement improved practices.
- **Work across sectors**
Link forestry with broader FAO goals and strategies and with the Millennium Development goals. Assist countries to mainstream forestry into other sectors and national development processes and to implement integrated land use approaches.
- **Work in partnerships**
Collaborate with others in the public and private sectors and in civil society to achieve synergies, to leverage resources, and to avoid duplication.
- **Vertical linkages**
Facilitate the exchange of knowledge and best practices between local, national, regional and global levels.
- **Advocacy for forestry**
Raise awareness about forestry, especially in other sectors, in order to increase political commitment and support for increased investments in forestry.
- **Neutral venue**
Serve as a forum for the exchange of knowledge and the development of shared approaches to forestry policies and technical issues.

Comparative advantages

Forestry has been part of FAO's global mandate from its establishment in 1945. As a UN specialized agency, FAO has many assets including:

- Producing and disseminating global forest information based on country information
- providing information and venues for consultation in multiple languages
- sharing knowledge in the form of guidelines and best practices that reflect experience from a broad range of stakeholders
- policy support and capacity building
- providing direct linkages between national, regional and global levels, e.g., through national forest programmes, regional forestry commissions and networks, and COFO
- experienced staff covering a broad range of specialty areas
- neutral facilitator, providing a venue for dialogue and the development of globally agreed concepts
- global, regional, country and field presence
- multi-disciplinary organization with a broad mandate for agriculture, food security, nutrition, fisheries, rural development, natural resources, economics and investment

ANNEX

The FAO Strategy for Forestry is developed within the broader framework of:

Millennium Development Goals

1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
2. Achieve universal primary education
3. Promote gender equality and empower women
4. Reduce child mortality
5. Improve maternal health
6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases
7. Ensure environmental sustainability
8. Develop a global partnership for development

FAO Members' Global Goals (Strategic Framework for FAO 2000 – 2015)

1. Access of all people at all times to sufficient nutritionally adequate and safe food, ensuring that the number of undernourished people is reduced by half by no later than 2015.
2. The continued contribution of sustainable agriculture and rural development, including fisheries and forestry, to economic and social progress and the well-being of all.
3. The conservation, improvement and sustainable utilization of natural resources, including land, water, forest, fisheries and genetic resources for food and agriculture.

UNFF Global Objectives on Forests

1. Reverse the loss of forest cover worldwide through sustainable forest management, including protection, restoration, afforestation and reforestation, and increase efforts to prevent forest degradation.
2. Enhance forest-based economic, social and environmental benefits, including by improving the livelihoods of forest dependent people.
3. Increase significantly the area of protected forests worldwide and other areas of sustainably managed forests, as well as the proportion of forest products from sustainably managed forests.
4. Reverse the decline in official development assistance for sustainable forest management and mobilize significantly increased new and additional financial resources for the implementation of sustainable forest management.