



United Nations

Department of Economic and Social Affairs

The Global Forest Goals Report 2021



United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs

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The Global Forest Goals Report 2021

Realizing the importance of
forests in a changing world

Foreword

The *Global Forests Goals Report 2021* is the first evaluation of where the world stands in implementing the United Nations Strategic Plan for Forests 2030. Adopted four years ago, the Plan is a blueprint for forests and people expressed through six Global Forest Goals and 26 targets. Outlining a vision for a future where all types of forests and trees are sustainably managed, the Plan is integral to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.



The importance of forests for the well-being of people and the planet is clear. Some 1.6 billion people worldwide depend directly on forests for food, shelter, energy, medicines and income. Forests provide clean air and fresh water and help to avert desertification. They are home to 80 per cent of all known terrestrial species, and they regulate our climate, absorbing one-third of global greenhouse gas emissions.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, forests have been a lifeline for the millions of people who have turned to them for their most essential subsistence needs. Before the pandemic, many countries were working hard to reverse native forest loss and increase protected areas designated for biodiversity conservation. Some of those gains are now at risk with worrying trends of increased deforestation of primary tropical forests.

In this Decade of Action to deliver the Sustainable Development Goals, and as we prepare to launch the Decade on Ecosystem Restoration, every effort must be made to ensure that sustainable forest management is fully integrated into both short-term crisis response and long-term green recovery strategies. We need to set the bar high and look beyond the current emergency towards truly sustainable and scalable development solutions.

I urge all actors, including governments, the business community and civil society, to take urgent action to halt deforestation, prevent forest degradation and restore forests. This year's meetings of the Rio Conventions on climate, desertification, and biodiversity, as well as the Food Systems Summit I am convening, provide a significant opportunity to accelerate action on forest conservation and management through new partnerships and solutions. Only then can we realize the vision of the Strategic Plan for Forests and create a greener future for all by 2030.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Antonio Guterres'. The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a long, thin horizontal line that tapers to a point on the right side.

Antonio Guterres

Secretary-General
United Nations

Preface

The United Nations Strategic Plan for Forests 2017-2030 was created with a mission to promote sustainable forest management and enhance the contribution of forests and trees to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. At the heart of the Strategic Plan are six Global Forest Goals and 26 associated targets which are voluntary and universal.

The Plan recognizes that in order to create a world in which forests could provide economic, social, environmental, and cultural benefits for present and future generations, we will, first and foremost, need more forests. Accordingly, the first Global Forest Goal provides for increasing forest area by 3 per cent by 2030.

It is also well recognized that achieving the Global Forest Goals and targets by 2030 will require political commitment and action by all actors, at all levels. Given the cross-sectoral nature of forests, the Plan highlights the need for strengthened cooperation, coordination, coherence and synergies as being essential in enhancing the contribution of forests to sustainable development.

The aim of this inaugural Global Forest Goals Report 2021 is to present an overview of progress achieved thus far, based on available national and global data. The report highlights where actions are being taken, and where gaps and challenges remain. It also includes a set of success stories that showcase best practices in sustainable forest management.

The importance of forests for achieving sustainable development is underpinned by the alignment of the Global Forest Goals with the Sustainable Development Goals. Sustainably managed forests are crucial for eradicating poverty, combatting climate change, conserving biodiversity, protecting watersheds, and building food and energy security. Forests support the livelihoods of some most vulnerable segments of society, especially the rural poor and indigenous peoples.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the forest sector provided us with essential health products – from masks to cleaning supplies and ethanol for sanitizers. Healthy and well-managed forests create a natural buffer against the transmission of zoonoses. So, as we look forward to building resilience and reducing the risk of future pandemics, forests have a critical role to play. Investing in forests is investing in our future.

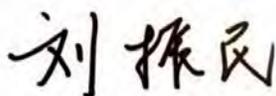
Yet, despite the many efforts taken by countries to safeguard and sustainably manage them, forests continue to be under threat. Every year, seven million hectares of natural forests are converted to other land uses such as large-scale commercial agriculture and other economic activities. And although the global rate of deforestation has slowed over the past decade, we continue to lose forests in the tropics – largely due to human and natural causes.

At present, it is still too early to assess the full impact of the current pandemic on the world's forests. However, there are indications that the pandemic is exacerbating challenges faced by countries in managing their forests. The wellbeing of forests is ultimately linked to the wellbeing of people, and the socio-economic impacts of the pandemic will undoubtedly affect our capacity to manage the world's forests sustainably.



The COVID-19 pandemic has been a harsh wake-up call, but it also presents us with a unique opportunity to take concerted action to recover better and stronger, re-think and re-engineer our economies, and adopt more sustainable policies and action plans. Forests offer nature-friendly solutions to many global challenges, from combatting climate change, land degradation and biodiversity loss, to building resilience against future crises.

The present report provides a snapshot of the myriad of actions that are being taken around the world on forest issues, with the underlying message that, if we intend to meet our deadline of 2030, these efforts will need to be amplified and accelerated. We must strengthen our global efforts to protect and restore forests and support the livelihoods of forest-dependent communities. Only then can we realize our shared vision for a more just, equitable and sustainable world.



LIU Zhenmin

Under-Secretary-General for
Economic and Social Affairs
United Nations

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The Global Forest Goals Report 2021 was prepared by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations (UNDESA), through its United Nations Forum on Forests Secretariat (UNFFS), under the overall guidance and responsibility of Alexander Trepelkov (Officer-in-Charge, UNFFS). The UNFFS drafting team was led by Afsa Kemitale-Rothschild and composed of UNFFS staff Mita Sen, Tomasz Juszczyk and Edith Niamke and UNFFS consultants Christopher Prins, Jorge Illueca and Stephanie Lee. In addition, contributions were made by Hossein Moeini-Meybodi, Peter Gondo, Barbara Tavora-Jainchill, Njeri Kariuki, Benjamin Singer, Ryo Nakamura, Yan Lang and Ninon Williams in UNFFS.

The report is based on information provided by the Member States who submitted voluntary national reports and voluntary national contributions to the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF): Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Cameroon, Canada, Central African Republic, China, Côte D'Ivoire, Ecuador, Eswatini, Germany, Ghana, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, India, Indonesia, Jamaica, Japan, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mexico, Morocco, Myanmar, Nepal, New Zealand, Niger, Nigeria, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Senegal, Serbia, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, State of Palestine, Sudan, Suriname, Switzerland, Thailand, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uzbekistan and Zimbabwe.

The report draws upon quantitative and bio-physical global data primarily from the Global Forest Resources Assessment (FRA) 2020 which is produced by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). In addition, substantive contributions were made by Mette Løyche Wilkie, Peter Csoka, Tiina Vähänen, Malgorzata Buszko-Briggs, Anssi Pekkarinen and Örjan Jonsson from the FAO Forestry Division.

The report benefited from guidance of the Informal Advisory Group (IAG) which was created in 2019 through the UNFF15 Bureau to provide advice on the development and production of the report. The IAG was composed of 10 members, with two Member State representatives from each of the five UN regions, namely: from the African Group Macarthy Afolabi Oyebo (Nigeria) and Ibro Adamou (Niger); from the Asia Pacific Group Abbas Golriz (Iran) and Ryosuke Ujihashi (Japan); from the Eastern European Group Jaroslav Kubista (Czech Republic) and Andrzej Talarczyk (Poland); from the Latin American and Caribbean Group Jorge Mario Rodriguez (Costa Rica) and Davia Carty (Jamaica); and from the Western European and Others Group Jesse Mahoney (Australia) and Maureen Whelan (Canada). IAG members provided valuable feedback on the overall scope and draft content of the report, including on the success stories that are featured in the report.

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The report was edited by Lauren Anderson and designed by Edgar Mwakaba.

Abbreviations and Acronyms

ABT	Aichi Biodiversity Target
APEC	Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
C&I	Criteria and Indicators
CAFI	Central African Forest Initiative
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CBFP	Congo Basin Forest Partnership
CITES	Convention on the International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora
COMIFAC	Central African Forest Commission
CPF	Collaborative Partnership on Forests
C&I	Criteria and indicators
EC	European Commission
ECOSOC	United Nations Economic and Social Council
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FCPF	Forest Conservation Partnership Facility of the World Bank
FIP	Forest Investment Programme
FLEGT	Forest Law Enforcement and Governance and Trade
FRA	Global Forest Resources Assessment
FSC	Forest Stewardship Council
GCF	Green Climate Fund
GFFFN	Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network
GFGs	Global Forest Goals
GHG	Greenhouse gasses
Gt	Gigatonne
GPS	Geographic positioning system
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
Ha	Hectare
IDF	International Day of Forests
IFF	Intergovernmental Forum on Forests
ILO	International Labour Organization

IMFN	International Model Forest Network
IPF	Intergovernmental Panel on Forests
ITTO	International Tropical Timber Organization
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
IUFRO	International Union of Forest Research Organizations
MRV	Measurement, reporting and verification for REDD+
NDC	Nationally determined contribution
NFFs	National forest funds
NGOs	Non-governmental organizations
NLBI	Non-Legally Binding Instrument for all types of forests
NTFP	Non-timber forest products
ODA	Official development assistance
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PEFC	Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification Schemes
REDD+	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SFM	Sustainable forest management
UN	United Nations
UNCCD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa
UNCCD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNECE	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNFF	United Nations Forum on Forests
UNFFS	United Nations Forum on Forests Secretariat
UNFI	United Nations Forest Instrument
UNSPF	United Nations Strategic Plan for Forests 2017–2030
VNCs	Voluntary national contributions
VNRs	Voluntary national reports
WWF	World Wide Fund for Nature

Global Forest Goals



Global Forest Goal 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 and contribute to the global effort of addressing climate change.



Global Forest Goal 2

Enhance forest-based economic, social and environmental benefits, including by improving the livelihoods of forest-dependent people.



Global Forest Goal 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.



Global Forest Goal 4

Mobilize significantly increased, new and additional financial resources from all sources for the implementation of sustainable forest management and strengthen scientific and technical cooperation and partnerships.



Global Forest Goal 5

Promote governance frameworks to implement sustainable forest management, including through the United Nations forest instrument, and enhance the contribution of forests to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.



Global Forest Goal 6

Enhance cooperation, coordination, coherence and synergies on forest-related issues at all levels, including within the United Nations system and across member organizations of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests, as well as across sectors and relevant stakeholders.

Sustainable Development Goals



Goal 1
End poverty in all its forms everywhere



Goal 2
End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture



Goal 3
Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages



Goal 4
Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all



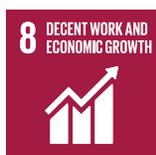
Goal 5
Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls



Goal 6
Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all



Goal 7
Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all



Goal 8
Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all



Goal 9
Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation



Goal 10
Reduce inequality within and among countries



Goal 11
Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable



Goal 12
Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns



Goal 13
Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts



Goal 14
Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development



Goal 15
Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss



Goal 16
Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels



Goal 17
Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development



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Introduction





The United Nations Strategic Plan for Forests 2017-2030 (UNSPF) was created by the Member States of the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) to provide a global framework for action at all levels to sustainably manage all types of forests and trees outside forests, and to halt deforestation and forest degradation. At the heart of the Strategic Plan are six Global Forest Goals and 26 associated targets, all of which are voluntary and universal. The Goals fully encompass and build on the foundation of the four Global Objectives on Forests of the United Nations Forest Instrument (UNFI), which was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in 2007.

The historic agreement on the UNSPF was forged at a special session of the UNFF in January 2017 and subsequently adopted by the UNGA, through its Resolution 71/285 in April of that same year. The Strategic Plan set out, for the first time, a shared United Nations vision and mission on the world's forests.

A shared United Nations vision

The shared United Nations vision is of a world in which all types of forests and trees outside forests are sustainably managed, contribute to sustainable development, and provide economic, social, environmental, and cultural benefits for present and future generations.

A shared United Nations mission

The shared United Nations mission is to promote sustainable forest management and the contribution of forests and trees outside forests to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including through strengthening cooperation, coordination, coherence, synergies, and political commitment and action at all levels.

The UNSPF vision, principles, and commitments align with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which offer a global and universally agreed blueprint for achieving sustainable development. Like the SDGs, the Global Forest Goals are interconnected and integrate the economic, social, and environmental dimensions of sustainable forest management. Achievement of the Global Forest Goals is meant to foster and accelerate progress towards the SDGs, as well as other international forest-related instruments, processes, commitments, and objectives such as the Aichi Biodiversity Targets of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the Paris Agreement adopted under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD).

Forests in Times of Crisis

The world is combatting unprecedented, worldwide crises on multiple fronts, from the devastating impacts of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, to the escalating impacts of climate change and a biodiversity crisis. For each of these complex global challenges, forests and forest-dependent people are both a casualty and an important part of the solution.

More than just a health crisis, the COVID-19 pandemic is laying bare systemic vulnerabilities and inequalities in just about every economy and society. It is driving losses of lives and livelihoods, extreme poverty, inequality, and food insecurity, and it has put the 'Future We Want' further out of reach. It is estimated that world gross product fell by an estimated 4.3% in 2020—the sharpest contraction of global output since the Great Depression.¹ Such outcomes show that the pandemic is a global development emergency with devastating consequences for those already at risk of being left behind.

An estimated 1.6 billion people, or 25% of the global population, rely on forests for their subsistence needs, livelihoods, employment, and income.² Of the extreme poor in rural areas, 40% live in forest and savannah areas, and approximately 20% of the global population - especially women, children, landless farmers, and other vulnerable segments of society - look to forests to meet their food and income needs.³ For centuries, forests have provided socio-economic safety nets for people and communities in times of crises.

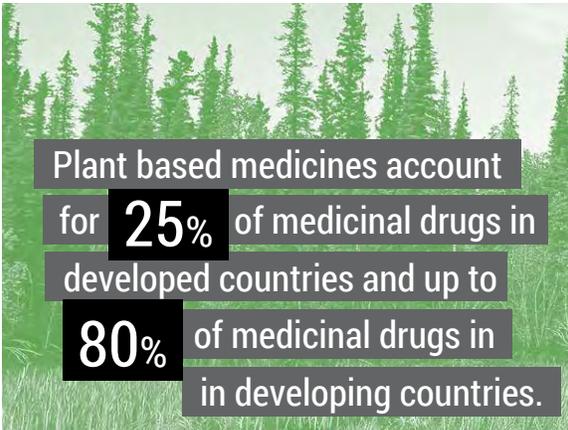
Healthy forests mean healthy people

3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING



75% of emerging **infectious diseases** are zoonotic, and usually occur when natural landscapes like forests are cleared.

Forests provide essential health products – from masks to cleaning supplies and ethanol for sanitizers.



Plant based medicines account for **25%** of medicinal drugs in developed countries and up to **80%** of medicinal drugs in developing countries.



Being in a forest or near trees can boost immune systems, lower blood pressure reduce stress, improve mood and relaxation.

15 LIFE ON LAND





The COVID-19 pandemic is threatening the lifeline that forests so often provide. Economic contractions, disruptions to global trade and local commerce, and lockdown measures to contain the virus, have affected almost 2.7 billion workers, representing approximately 81% of the world's workforce.⁴ Forest-dependent populations are amongst this demographic. On the economic front, they have faced job loss, reduced income, diminished access to markets and information, and for many women and youth, a contraction in seasonal employment.⁵ Socially, many of these populations are already marginalized and vulnerable groups, such as indigenous peoples, least able to access critical socio-economic safety nets. Many forest-dependent populations, especially those in remote or hard to reach places, have faced difficulties accessing healthcare or find that government assistance programmes and basic services are disrupted.⁶

Pandemic driven health and socio-economic outcomes have increased pressure on forests. To ease their growing vulnerability, many indigenous peoples and local communities, as well as returning migrants and urban workers, have retreated deeper into the woods to seek food, fuel, shelter, and protection from the risks of COVID-19. As more and more vulnerable people have turned to forest products and forest resources as a coping mechanism, these ecosystems are beginning to show signs of stress. Several regions now find the stability and viability of their forest sectors in jeopardy.⁷

The impacts of the pandemic are coupled with the escalating impacts of climate change and a biodiversity crisis – global emergencies with serious implications for forest ecosystems. Among its many findings, the 'Global Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services' of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) highlighted that one million species were at risk of extinction and that 100 million hectares of tropical forest were lost from 1980 to 2000. At the same time, climate change is jeopardizing the resilience of forest ecosystems and their ability to support ecosystem services worldwide. Though forests offer nature-based solutions to overcome these concurrent global challenges, they have also never been more at risk.

This means that a resilient recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic along with responses to the climate and biodiversity crises must be rooted in the world's forests. The path forward needs to be paved with greater sustainability and a greener, more inclusive economy – of which healthy forest ecosystems and forest-dependent communities are an integral part. Sustainably resourced and managed forests can bolster employment, disaster risk reduction, food security and social safety nets, for starters. They can also protect biodiversity and advance both climate mitigation and adaptation. And with regard to global health, safeguarding and restoring forests are among the environmental actions that can reduce the risk of future zoonotic disease outbreaks.

The Importance of Informed Decision-making

The need for timely, quality, and accessible data and statistics has never been more urgent. Data are essential for designing short-term responses as well as longer-term recovery measures. This is particularly true for the sustainable management of forests – in the context of the current pandemic and beyond.

Comprehensive forest monitoring, assessment, and reporting (MAR) is widely recognized as essential for informed and evidence-based decision-making. Systematic data is critical to understanding how forests contribute to livelihoods, poverty reduction, health and well-being, and sustainable development overall.

Global data collection on the world's forests dates back to the 1940s, with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) completing its first assessment of the world's forest resources in 1948. At that time, the objective was to collect information on available timber supplies to meet post-war reconstruction demand. As interest in the state of forests grew and evolved, the scope of MAR on forests adapted to meet changing information needs. Today, the FAO Global Forest Resources Assessment (FRA) covers all the thematic elements of sustainable forest management, offering a comprehensive evaluation of forest resources and their condition, management, and use.

In addition, and since its inception in 2000, the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) has gathered voluntary national reports from its Member States on progress made towards the implementation of sustainable forest management. Initially, the Forum tracked progress on the implementation of the proposals for action made by the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests and the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests (which preceded the UNFF). Following the adoption of the non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests (later renamed as the United Nations Forest Instrument) in 2007, the focus of national reporting shifted to tracking progress on implementing the Instrument and achieving the four Global Objectives on Forests.

With the adoption of the UNSPF in 2017, UNFF national reporting began to focus on monitoring progress made in implementing the Strategic Plan, and its Goals and targets. The first round of voluntary national reporting on progress towards the implementation of the Strategic Plan proceeded from 2019 to 2020. The reports received from fifty-two Member States of the UNFF,⁸ among other data and sources outlined below, formed the basis for the drafting of this report.

The Path to the Inaugural Global Forest Goals Report

Recognizing the importance of voluntary national reports and the need to make effective use of the information contained in them, the UNFF, at its thirteenth session (UNFF13) held in 2018, requested the Forum Secretariat to prepare a concise flagship publication on progress towards achieving the Global Forest Goals of the United Nations Strategic Plan for Forests 2030.

The Strategic Plan also invited Member States to, on a voluntary basis, determine their contributions towards achieving the Global Forest Goals and targets, taking into account their national circumstances, policies, priorities, capacities, levels of development, and forest conditions. These “voluntary national contributions” or VNCs, could include national actions and targets related to other international forest-related commitments and goals, such as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Aichi Biodiversity Targets and actions to address climate change under the Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. To date, 19 Member States of the UNFF⁹ have announced their VNCs towards achieving the Global Forest Goals and targets.

This inaugural report draws upon these 52 voluntary national reports (VNRs) and 19 voluntary national contributions (VNCs), representing 75% of forests in the world. This national information on progress towards the Global Forest Goals is supplemented with quantitative and bio-physical data primarily from FRA 2020.

The Global Forest Goals Report thus provides an initial overview of progress towards achieving the six Global Forest Goals and their 26 associated targets as contained within the United Nations Strategic Plan for Forests 2030. Each chapter features actions taken by countries, and an overview of progress towards each Goal and the associated targets, as well as some success stories that illustrate best practices.

Lastly, it is important to note that the Strategic Plan recognizes that achieving the Global Forest Goals and targets requires ambitious and transformational actions inclusive of all actors, at all levels. These entities include Member States, the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF), the United Nations system and other intergovernmental partners and stakeholders, regional and subregional organizations and processes, Major Groups, and other stakeholders. While this first report primarily focuses on the actions taken by Member States, future reporting intends to include data and information from the many other actors that play a vital role in sustainable forest management and in the world’s efforts to achieve the Global Forest Goals and targets.





Global Forest Goal 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 and contribute to the global effort of addressing climate change.

All trees count

15 LIFE ON LAND



Forests cover **31%** of the Earth's land, an area of over **4 billion** hectares.



93% of world's forests are **natural**, and **7%** are **planted**.



Every year, we lose **10 million** hectares of the world's forests.



Forest ecosystems are the largest terrestrial **carbon sink**, absorbing roughly **2 billion** tonnes of CO₂ each year.

13 CLIMATE ACTION

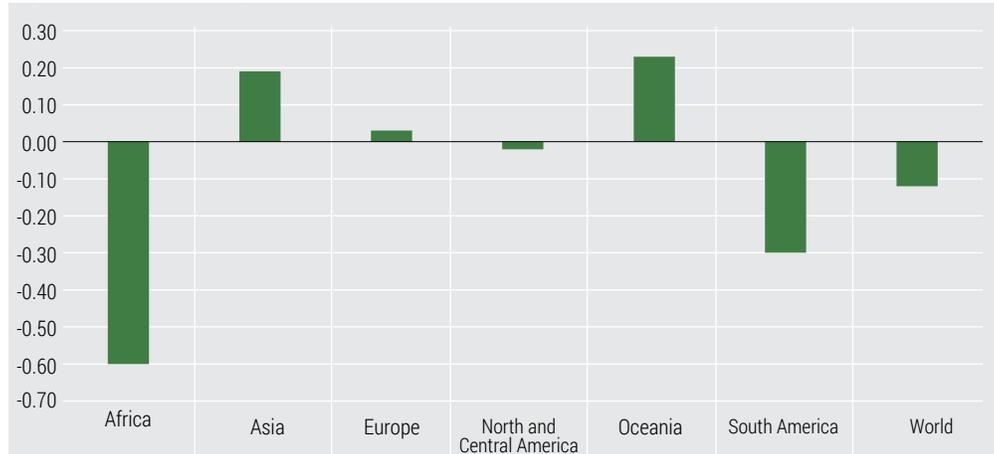




Overview

Global Forest Goal 1 (GFG1) calls for reversing the loss of forest cover worldwide through sustainable forest management. Forests currently cover 31% of the global land area. Between 2010 and 2020, global forest area fell by 1.2%, with declines concentrated in Africa and South America. However, within this global trend, and since 1990, Asia, Europe, and Oceania saw net increases in forest area: the forest area of this group of regions increased by 1.1% between 2010 and 2020. Further, according to the FRA 2020, “The rate of net forest loss decreased substantially over the period 1990–2020 due to a reduction in deforestation in some countries, plus increases in forest area in others through afforestation and the natural expansion of forests.”¹⁰

Figure 1: Percent change in forest area 2010 - 2020



Source: FRA 2020

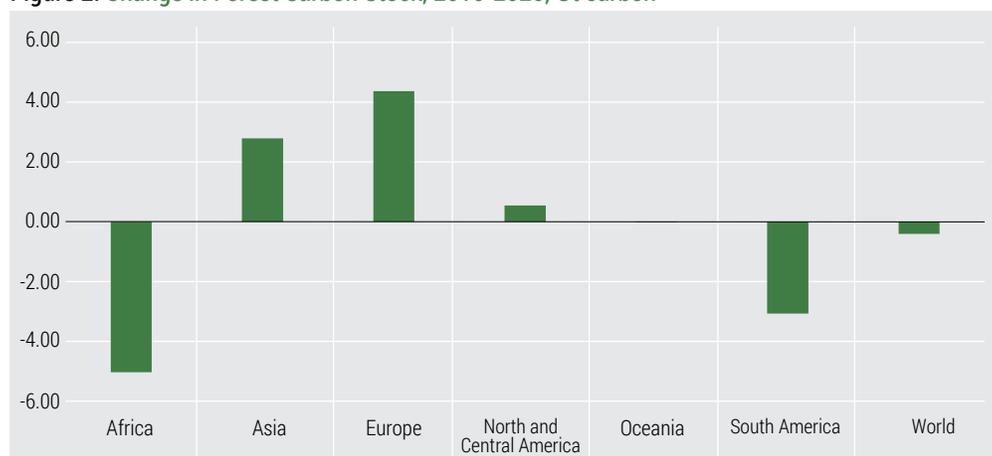
Between 2015 and 2020, deforestation, which measures the conversion of forest to other land use, stood at 10.2 million hectares (ha) per year. This was rather less than in earlier periods. Within this same five-year window, total forest expansion by afforestation or natural expansion was 4.7 million ha per year, with Asia registering the largest expansion.

Forest ecosystems are the largest terrestrial carbon sink, absorbing roughly 2 billion tonnes of CO₂ each year.¹¹ Between 1990 and 2010, the total global forest carbon stock fell from 668 gigatonnes (Gt) in 1990 to 662 Gt in 2010, mainly due to a loss of forest area. In 2020, it stayed at 662 Gt, with Europe, North and Central America, and South America housing two thirds of this total. The global carbon stock comprised approximately 300 Gt of soil organic matter, 295 Gt of living biomass, and 68 Gt of dead wood and litter. Figure 2 shows how for the period of 2010-2020, increases in the carbon stock of Asia, Europe, and North and Central America compensated for reductions in Africa and South America.

“ Drastically reducing deforestation and systemically restoring forests and other ecosystems is the single largest nature-based opportunity for climate mitigation.”

- UN Secretary General António Guterres speaking on the State of the Planet



Figure 2: Change in Forest Carbon Stock, 2010-2020, Gt carbon


Source: FRA 2020

Country Action by Target

Target 1.1: Forest area is increased by three percent worldwide¹²

Countries¹³ developed strategies and plans to maintain or increase their forest area, often with quantified targets, detailed objectives, methods, and resources. Sometimes these strategies covered only the forest sector, such as national forest programmes. However, in other instances, plans were part of broader national strategies, such as for mitigating climate change (REDD+¹⁴) or addressing national development and poverty reduction goals. Some countries increased the availability of resources to expand forest area or reduce deforestation. **China** and **Liberia**, for instance, drafted clear guidelines for silviculture and afforestation. These guidelines were met with the provision of training for all relevant activities and support for research and technical assistance, for example on tree breeding and seedling production.

Table 1: Quantified Goals for Forest Area/Tree Planting as Reported by Countries

Country	Official Objective as Reported by Countries
Australia	Plant 20 million trees by 2020, and a billion plantation trees by 2030
Brazil	Increase planted area by two million ha
Bulgaria	No decrease in forested area allowed
Côte d'Ivoire	Increase forest cover to 20% by 2030
India	Add 200,00 ha of forests and tree cover per year
Jamaica	No net forest loss
Japan	Maintain 25 million ha of forest
Kenya	Increase tree cover to 10%
Madagascar	Restore four million ha by 2030
Myanmar	Increase forest cover to 30%
New Zealand	Plant one billion trees between 2018-2028
Nigeria	Increase forest cover from 6% to 25% by 2030
Panama	Restore one million ha between 2015-2035
Philippines	Rehabilitate 1.5 million ha of denuded and degraded forestland
Sri Lanka	Increase forest cover to 32%
Suriname	Preserve present level of forest cover at 93%
Thailand	Increase forest cover to 55%



Some countries developed partnerships with industry, including in sectors beyond forestry, to prevent the loss of forest area. The Government of **Côte d'Ivoire**, where cacao plantations are known to drive deforestation, worked with cacao producers to manufacture and market “deforestation free cocoa.” In **Zimbabwe**, where the use of fuelwood for curing tobacco threatens forests, the government taxed tobacco curing to support forest restoration. Other countries organized tree planting programmes and events, often with the participation of civil society and the general public. On National Tree Day in the **Central African Republic**, the government invited each citizen to plant at least one seedling provided by the Forest Service.

Target 1.2: The world's forest carbon stocks are maintained or enhanced

The inclusion of forest-related actions in national climate strategies and programmes impacted favorably on the achievement of GFG target 1.2 by raising public visibility of and political will for maintaining and enhancing carbon stocks. Incorporating forest and climate action also opened access to resources and promoted intersectoral approaches (see also target 5.3) to achieving forest related goals and objectives. International programmes, notably REDD+, as well as core work under the UNFCCC, including Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) and Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions (NAMA) played a major role in this regard. International funding sources for climate change mitigation and adaptation included the Green Carbon Fund, the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF), and the Climate Investment Fund.

Monitoring and reporting of carbon stocks improved. These often progressed according to standard international methods, notably greenhouse gas (GHG) inventories and national reference levels, as was the case in **Madagascar, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea, and Turkey**. In some countries, improved national forest inventories accompanied strengthened monitoring and reporting.

Countries also innovated. **The Republic of Korea**, for instance, implemented a forest carbon offset scheme, while **New Zealand** introduced changes to strengthen its Emission Trading Scheme by increasing economic incentives for afforestation, as administered by Te Uru Rākau (Forestry New Zealand). **Côte d'Ivoire** considered a carbon tax to curb the exploitation of wood that led to deforestation. **Ecuador** developed its REDD+ Action Plan ‘Forests for Good Living,’ through which the country sought to reduce gross CO₂ emissions by at least 20% by 2025 through policies and measure focused on reducing deforestation. Other countries took measures to ensure that harvests remained at sustainable levels, like in **Guinea-Bissau** or **Kenya**, which imposed a moratorium on felling.

The year 2020 saw record fire seasons in **Australia** and **the United States of America**, among other countries, and these events contributed to global carbon emissions. **Algeria, Bulgaria, Guinea, the Slovak Republic, and the United States of America** each reported taking specific measures, such as procuring equipment, carrying out trainings, offering funding, and implementing systems to prevent and control fires and their consequent impacts on GHG emissions.

Finally, research helped deepen forest-climate links, most notably in the areas of assessing carbon flows in forest ecosystems and in harvested wood products; improved monitoring methods; and in the construction of scenarios to inform policymaking. Such research set the stage for the continued and additional integration of forest and climate objectives, and the maintenance, if not enhancement, of global forest carbon stocks.

Target 1.3: By 2020, promote the implementation of sustainable management of all types of forests, halt deforestation, restore degraded forests and substantially increase afforestation and reforestation globally¹⁵

Related to this target, in many cases, countries revised and modified forest laws, codes, and institutions to enhance progress towards sustainable forest management. Policy instruments often explicitly stated the principles underlying sustainable forest management. For instance, **the Philippines** wrote that it was “mainstreaming” sustainable forest management into its policies and programmes. Overall, a number of countries put in place measures to protect forests, halt deforestation, and expand the forest area legally protected with a view to preserving biodiversity, native forests, and forest ecosystem functions. Some countries, like **Ecuador** envisioned reaching zero net deforestation by 2030.

Countries widely recognized the importance of improved knowledge and data as a basis for sustainable forest management, notably through modern forest inventories and other monitoring tools like biodiversity surveys and improved mapping. Fourteen countries - **Algeria, Argentina, Austria, Brazil, Bulgaria, Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia, Madagascar, Morocco, Nepal, Papua New Guinea, Serbia, Turkey, and the United States of America** - each stressed the importance of forest inventories to sustainable forest management. Many of these countries also took actions to strengthen their inventory systems, as well as **Eswatini**, which sought funds to carry out a forest inventory. In addition to inventories, improved land registers and the development of national systems of criteria and indicators helped bolster sustainable forest management. Further, many countries pursued long-term forest management plans and other forward-looking management tools to advance their sustainable forest management priorities.¹⁶

Countries also addressed sustainable forest management on the supply and demand sides of markets for forest-related products. **Ghana, the Philippines, Senegal, and Thailand**, for instance, implemented measures to reduce illegal logging and strengthen legal trade. At the other end of the value chain, some reporting countries regulated the placement of illegal timber and wood products on domestic markets, notably in accordance with the European Union (EU) Timber Regulation. **Ukraine** introduced an electronic timber tracking system. **Mexico**, among other countries, worked to maintain programmes to promote the competitiveness of their national forest sectors and the value-added of forest-related products. Examples included supporting investment in wood processing plants or encouraging the export of finished products rather than unprocessed wood.

Increasingly, a diversity of stakeholders involved in forest management pushed forth a wide range of dialogues, and they expanded partnerships, including with local or subnational administrations, community forest management actors, and the private sector. The breadth of active stakeholders helped to build intersectoral approaches¹⁷ to sustainable forest management.

International programmes, notably REDD+; CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora); and the European Union's FLEGT (Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade) programme and its Voluntary Partnership Agreements (VPAs), helped support a shift towards sustainable forest management. The Bonn Challenge, also a global platform, focused on the restoration of degraded and deforested lands.

Finance and incentives towards sustainable forest management helped underwrite GFG target 1.3. Funding sources came from own resources (public and private forest owners' net revenues), central and municipal budgets, official development assistance (ODA), and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Some countries reported innovative finance mechanisms such as a forest environment tax (**Japan**); increases in concession fees (**Suriname**); and the issuance of Green Bonds (**Nigeria**).¹⁸ Many countries also set up dedicated funds to support sustainable forest management or forest expansion. **Côte d'Ivoire** maintained a programme of compensatory reforestation to replace deforested areas.

Target 1.4: The resilience and adaptive capacity of all types of forests to natural disasters and the impact of climate change is significantly strengthened worldwide

The impacts of climate change threatened progress towards the Global Forest Goals and the full gradient of targets addressing the environmental, protective, and socio-economic services provided by forests. Many countries attributed forest disturbances to a variety of causes related to and intensified by climate change, such as insect infestations, fires, storms, and droughts. Countries thus worked intensely to understand how to build resilience into their planning and strategic approaches to forest management. Towards this end, they established specialized units and institutes to carry out research and to provide guidance to forest managers. They also advanced knowledge on the analysis of disturbance and risk in a changing climate as well as how to take decisions in the face of incomplete information.


Table 2: Resilience Building in Reporting Countries

Country*	Official Objective as Reported by Countries
Austria, Kenya, Mexico, Switzerland	Maintaining and strengthening diversity at the ecosystem, species, and genetic levels
Kenya	Identifying or developing species adapted to possible future climate conditions, such as drought tolerant species
Algeria, Guinea, Nigeria, Senegal	Developing seed orchards and other genetic conservation measures to increase choices available to future forest managers
Slovenia, Switzerland	Pursuing different silvicultural measures such as closer-to-nature approaches or shorter rotations (reducing exposure of the stands to risks over their lifetime)
Japan, Mexico	Developing wildlife corridors and refuges to restore connectivity threatened by climate change
Bulgaria**	Modifying the rules for harvest and regeneration, as well as changing thinning regimes
Japan,** Switzerland	Pursuing forest conservation measures, including by civil engineering in mountainous regions
Algeria, Bulgaria, Canada, the Slovak Republic, Switzerland, United States of America	Improving fire prevention and suppression

* Countries listed specifically mentioned these measures in their national reports, but it is likely that other countries also apply them.

** Bulgaria and Japan have already put in place regulations and policies to deliver a more resilient silviculture, which accounts for possible future climate change

Table 2 summarizes the resilience building measures countries specifically highlighted in their national reports.

Finally, the broad monitoring of forest ecosystem services played an important role in identifying emerging issues and tracking progress made with alternative strategies focused on resilience. The Global Forest Observation Initiative helped build such monitoring capacity. Further, it was learned that gathering data from across sectors was necessary to deepen understanding of the events affecting resilience, such as for instance, using meteorology to track the prevalence and impacts of extreme weather events.

Progress towards Global Forest Goal 1

Countries took a number of legislative and policy actions to implement Global Forest Goal 1, using existing forest laws and codes, as well as national forest programmes and strategies as their frameworks. Many countries recently reviewed or revised these instruments, thereby clearly indicating the priority they assigned to maintaining and/or creating the necessary infrastructure for achieving the Global Forest Goals and sustainable forest management in general. Further to these developments, stakeholder consultations were being built out to inform policy and, despite coordination challenges, countries were seeking to move beyond siloed approaches and to mainstream forestry considerations across other sectors such as those addressing energy, agriculture, climate change, and environment in general.

In line with this notion of moving beyond silos, international commitments in sectors other than forestry supported progress towards the Global Forestry Goals. Efforts to implement commitments and achieve objectives, for instance, on climate change, under the UNFCCC; biodiversity conservation, under the CBD; trade in wildlife, under CITES; and desertification, under the UNCCD, often buoyed efforts to meet the Global Forest Goals. For instance, the forest component of countries' Nationally Determined Contributions under the Paris Agreement on climate change may make an important contribution to reversing

the loss of forest cover worldwide. Similarly, CITES' focus on strengthening capacity to fight illegal logging, including by training and arming forest rangers and specialized prosecutors, helped sustainable forestry initiatives overall. Moratoriums on logging and log export bans, also under this Convention, were impactful.

Asia, Europe, Oceania appear to be on track to increase their forest area by three percent between 2015 and 2030, based on the net gains in forest area that were seen in these regions during 2010 to 2020. Africa and South America, however, were still losing forest area, although at a slower rate than in the past. With regard to sustainable forest management¹⁹, for most of the subregions, and most of the five sub-indicators used to monitor SDG target 15.2.1,²⁰ the data showed positive change into 2020, with only a few regions and sub-indicators showing little or negative change. Some countries set a national target to expand or maintain forest area or plant trees. Forest monitoring units and services were strengthened in most countries.

The world as a whole was on track to maintain its forest carbon stocks. However, in the regions of Africa and South America where deforestation was significant, the carbon stock decreased. Disturbances to forests caused significant impacts, and in the face of such challenges, it was not yet possible to determine whether countries had significantly strengthened forest resilience and adaptive capacity.

Progress towards Target 1.1

Many regions on track to achieve target.

- ✓ Countries developed strategies to achieve Target 1.1.
- ✓ Countries made resources available, often in the context of programmes for climate change mitigation or national development.
- ✓ Asia, Europe, Oceania appear to be on track, based on net gains in forest area seen in these regions during 2010 to 2020.
- ✓ Africa and South America were not on track and were still losing forest area, although at a slower rate than in the past, despite the strategies and measures reported.

Progress towards Target 1.2

Many regions on track to achieve target.

- ✓ Countries integrated action on forest carbon into broader climate action and funding to achieve target 1.2.
- ✓ In Africa and South America, where deforestation was significant, the carbon stock decreased, and these regions were not on track to maintain their forest carbon stock.

Progress towards Target 1.3

The world largely on track to achieve this target.

- ✓ Countries undertook many actions to achieve target 1.3, addressing all dimensions of sustainable forest management.
- ✓ Most of the subregions, and most of the five sub-indicators used to monitor SDG 15.2.1, showed positive change into 2020, with only some regions and sub-indicators showing little or negative change.

Progress towards Target 1.4

Too early to conclude/insufficient data to determine progress towards this target

- ✓ Disturbances due to fire, insects, disease, and severe weather events significantly impacted forests, and the services and products they provided.



- ✓ Monitoring at the global level remained unsatisfactory.
- ✓ Some of these disturbances were attributed to climate change.
- ✓ Conscious of this threat, countries began taking steps to increase the resilience of their forests and to adapt their management to the changing situation, notably by improving knowledge and risk evaluation.

Challenges

Climate Change: The majority of countries highlighted disturbances and forest damage, both linked to climate change, as significant challenges to achieving GFG1. Australia, Ghana, Nepal, the Philippines, and Tunisia specifically discussed coping with fire, while Ghana, Lesotho, Morocco, and the State of Palestine highlighted the difficulties of dealing with drought. New Zealand and the Slovak Republic underscored the intricacies of responding to an uncertain outlook.

Inadequate Resources: Almost all developing countries identified a lack of resources, especially financial, as a major obstacle to achieving GFG1. The Central African Republic and China specifically highlighted the need to overcome insufficient human resources and capacity. Nine countries (Botswana, Eswatini, Ghana, Guinea Bissau, Lesotho, Madagascar, the Philippines, South Africa, and Suriname) emphasized the difficulty of enforcing laws and combatting illegal logging given institutional weaknesses, inadequate resources, and judicial constraints.

Land Use: Countries almost universally highlighted competition for land use as a major challenge. Australia, Côte d'Ivoire, Jamaica, and Liberia cited competition from agriculture; Nepal, Nigeria, South Korea, and Thailand identified infrastructure as a competitor; Australia and Mauritius highlighted urbanization as a competitor; and Suriname noted competition from mining. Cameroon pointed out that other sectors with important sources of revenue for government were competing for land use. Many countries also discussed the need for more and more adequate tools to support land use planning and conflict resolution. Jamaica and Lesotho highlighted that tenure systems played an important role in land use planning and, that in some cases, they also presented a bottleneck to achieving GFG1.

Institutional Frameworks: Many countries considered weak institutions and the lack of high-level policy frameworks as significant obstacles to achieving GFG1. Botswana pointed out that it lacked a holistic approach, while for the Central African Republic, Madagascar, and Zimbabwe, the challenge derived from inadequate strategic frameworks and political will. Thailand discussed the difficulties of overcoming overlaps in authority. Other countries were more specific, stressing the challenges of reimbursement of agricultural loans (Panama); the difficulty of obtaining water licenses for afforestation (South Africa); inadequate cooperation with nature protection authorities (the Slovak Republic); and excessively strict rules for dealing with insect damage (Ukraine).

Social and Economic Challenges: Several countries discussed social and economic challenges that included: pressure from growing populations; a lack of community forestry; rural poverty; political instability and insufficient awareness of sustainable forest management; high costs (Japan, Sudan, and Switzerland); lack of automation; and difficulties identifying the contribution of forest ecosystem services to gross domestic product (GDP) (Nigeria, Turkey). Kenya and Niger both identified weak wood consumption sectors as a challenge to achieving GFG1.

Success Stories



Canada

THE BLUEPRINT FOR WILDLAND FIRE SCIENCE IN CANADA (2019-2029)

© Government of Canada



Strong wildland fire science can help make Canada more resilient in the face of new and changing wildland fires. To help meet this need, the Natural Resources Canada – Canadian Forest Service worked with a pan-Canadian team of government, indigenous peoples, academia, and non-governmental partners, with input from experts and other stakeholders across the country, to develop the Blueprint for Wildland Fire Science in Canada (2019-2029). This is a strategic 10-year plan of action focused on building national wildland fire science capacity. Since the release of the document in 2019, the Government of Canada has progressed on a number of fronts in relation to identified needs and recommendations contained in the Blueprint, including: Near completion of the design phase for WildFireSat - a Canadian satellite system used to conduct near real-time wildfire detection and monitoring; Revitalization of Indigenous cultural burning practices; Announcement of an investment of CAD \$5million to develop a Wildland Fire Research Network; and the build out of international partnerships.



China

"A GREEN MIRACLE" THE SAIHANBA MECHANIZED FOREST FARM

© Government of China



Since its establishment in 1962, the Saihanba Mechanized Forest Farm has reaped the benefits of the unremitting efforts of three generations of tree-planters. Forest cover has increased from 11.4% to 80%, with the forest stock volume now reaching up to 10.12 million cubic meters. Today, these plantations provide 137 million cubic meters of clean water to the cities of Beijing and Tianjin and deliver approximately 545,000 tons of oxygen while providing 7.6911 million tons of forest carbon storage. In 2012, the Saihanba Mechanized Forest Farm became one of the first 12 pilot sites implementing the United Nations Forest Instrument (UNFI) in China, and in December 2017, Saihanba Afforestation Contributors were awarded the Champions of the Earth award. In addition to showcasing sound forest management, the Saihanba has also driven rural tourism and helped alleviate rural poverty in northern China.







Global Forest Goal 2

Enhance forest-based economic, social and environmental benefits, including the livelihoods of forest-dependent people.

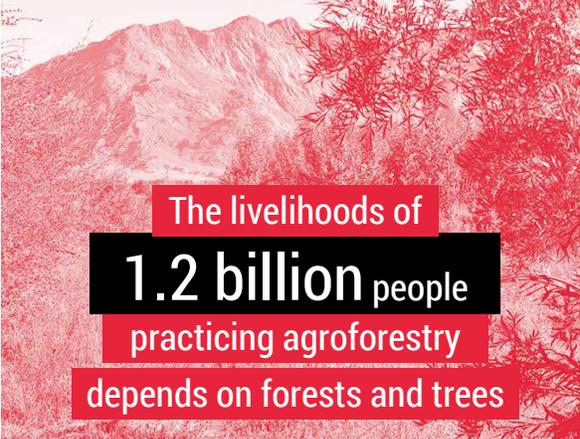
Forests support sustainable livelihoods

1 NO POVERTY



40% of the extreme poor in rural areas, live in **forest** and savannah areas.

252 million people living in forests and savannahs earn less than **US\$ 1.25** per day.



The livelihoods of **1.2 billion** people practicing agroforestry depends on forests and trees



Globally, **76 million** tonnes of food comes from forests, **95%** of which is plant-based.

2 ZERO HUNGER





Overview

Global Forest Goal 2 (GFG2) seeks to eradicate extreme poverty for all forest-dependent people.²¹ While there is no agreed-upon standard definition for “forest dependent people”, the phrase generally refers to all those who are dependent on forests in one way or another – which can include local communities, indigenous people, rural populations living in or near forests, forest owners and forest workers, amongst others.

It is estimated that 252 million people living in forests and savannas currently earn less than US\$1.25 per day, which was the World Bank’s poverty line measure through 2015.²² Of these, 252 million, 63% are in Africa; 34% are in Asia; and three percent are in Latin America. For Latin America, that figure corresponds to 82% of the region’s rural people living in extreme poverty.

The physical and social divides often characterizing forest landscapes, peoples, and enterprises contribute to these poverty levels. Forest landscapes, often remote and poorly connected to markets, make it difficult to build out businesses and earn livelihoods. In addition, many forest populations are also socially marginalized groups such as ethnic minorities or indigenous peoples.²³ In addition to being physically distanced, these communities find themselves and their enterprises socially sidelined, further complicating efforts to reduce their poverty levels.

As part of its focus on enhancing livelihoods, GFG2 aims to increase market access and finance for small-scale forest enterprises. Smaller, forest-dependent businesses are important contributors to the rural economy in most developing countries, despite being often overlooked in rural development planning because of their size and general lack of a focal point for assistance. However, National Forest Funds (NFFs), which generally co-finance private investments in forests, are serving as complementary mechanisms and programmes dedicated to facilitating financing to small-scale forest enterprises. Most of the governments that reported on the status of their NFFs (see targets 4.1 and 4.2), cited measures relevant to the second target of GFG2. Between the establishment of the UN Instrument on Forests in 2007 and the adoption of the UN Strategic Plan for Forests in 2017, nearly 80 NFFs were established and have supported sustainable forest management.²⁴

GFG2 also focuses on improving forests’ contributions to food security. Current estimates indicate that 690 million people go hungry every day and that two billion people did not have regular access to safe, nutritious and sufficient food in 2019.²⁵ With the global population expected to reach over seven billion by 2050, keeping hunger in check will mean increasing current food production by 60%.²⁶ While meeting these needs will require capitalizing on the many ways forests can improve food security; forest contributions are often poorly reflected in national development and food security strategies. Coupled with poor cross-sectoral coordination, the result is that forests are, at present, not frequently considered in policy decisions related to food security, hunger, and nutrition.²⁷

The one exception to this trend is agroforestry, which developing countries are increasingly using to improve their food security, especially in the face of climate change. With climate-related warming and severe droughts and storms seriously impacting agricultural production, countries are expanding climate-resilient agroforestry. Present estimates indicate that agroforestry is practiced to different degrees and scales on 43% of the world’s agricultural lands, thereby engaging approximately 1.2 billion people.²⁸

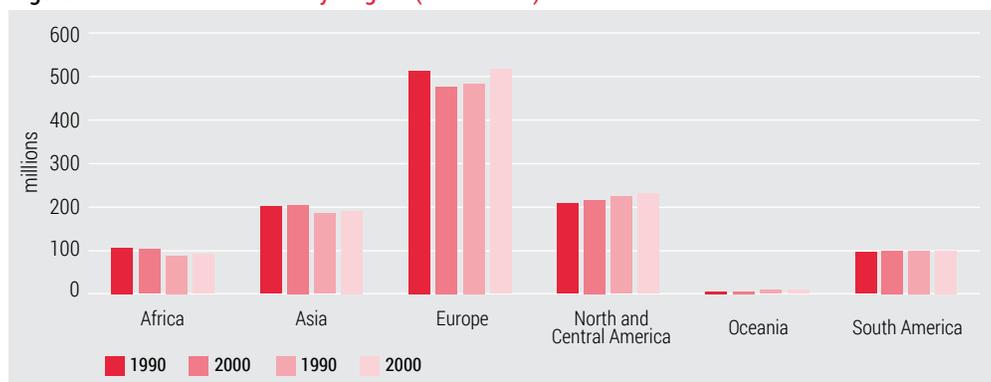
“ We must act more broadly, more holistically, across many fronts, to secure the health of our planet on which all life depends. Nature feeds us, clothes us, quenches our thirst, generates our oxygen, shapes our culture and our faiths, and forges our very identity.”

- UN Secretary General António Guterres speaking on the State of the Planet

Forests provide an array of ecosystem services that help meet the basic needs of humanity. Three-quarters of the world’s accessible freshwater comes from forested watersheds.²⁹ Forests managed for the protection of soil and water increased worldwide from 271.5 million hectares in 1990 to 390.5 million hectares in 2020, an increase of 43.8% in a span of thirty years. From 2010 to 2020, global forests managed for the protection of soil and water remained constant in North and Central America and Oceania, with decreases of approximately two million hectares each in Africa and Asia. A major expansion of these forests occurred in Europe, which saw an increase of 65 million hectares over the past decade. The South American region also experienced growth, with an addition of about four million hectares.

About 1.15 billion ha of forests worldwide are managed primarily for the production of wood and non-wood forest products, according to the FRA 2020. Also reported by the FRA 2020, the global surface area of production forests remained relatively constant from 1990 to 2020. Within this trend, from 2010 to 2020, production forests in Asia, Europe, and North and Central America grew by 1.5 million, 32 million, and five million hectares, respectively. They decreased by 1.6 million hectares in South America and almost 100,000 hectares in Oceania. Figure 3 captures these trends.

Figure 3: Production Forests by Region (1990-2020)



Source: FRA 2020

Two measures of forest productivity are roundwood and woodfuel production. As indicated in Table 3, global wood removals increased by 385 million m³ from 2010 to 2018, with industrial roundwood and woodfuel accounting for 79.2% and 20.8%, respectively of this increase. In 2018, industrial roundwood represented the bulk of forest removals in Europe, North and Central America, and Oceania. Woodfuel removals (2018), mainly for cooking, featured most prominently in Africa and Asia, exceeding industrial roundwood production. In Africa, woodfuel production surpassed industrial roundwood removals by nearly nine times. The 2018 trend was different in South America where industrial roundwood removals (248 million m³) exceeded woodfuel production (181 million m³). While woodfuel removals had been historically important in the South American region, over the last thirty years, they were nearly comparable to those of industrial roundwood.

Table 3: Wood Removals (million m³), 1990-2018

	Industrial Roundwood				Woodfuel				Total			
	1990	2000	2010	2018	1990	2000	2010	2018	1990	2000	2010	2018
Africa	61	71	72	79	445	551	644	700	506	623	715	779
Asia	268	273	379	442	897	808	764	718	1,165	1,081	1,444	1,161
Europe	642	519	533	650	157	109	154	175	799	628	687	824
North & Central America	595	632	485	532	162	129	129	159	757	761	613	691
Oceania	34	47	57	77	9	13	11	10	43	60	68	87
South America	110	147	198	248	162	185	162	181	272	332	359	429
World	1,710	1,690	1,723	2,028	1,833	1,795	1,863	1,943	3,543	3,485	3,586	3,971

Source: FRA 2020 and FAOSTAT



Aside from production forests, multiple use forests are those designated for more than one purpose and with no single use predominating. Uses can include any combination of goods production, soil or water or biodiversity conservation, or social services provision. While the area of production forests has increased globally, multiple use forests have decreased.

Since 2010, the most marked declines in multiple use forests occurred in Africa (nine million hectares) and South America (15 million hectares). A lesser degree of decline took place in North and Central America, which together experienced a loss of four million hectares this past decade. The greatest increase in multiple use forests occurred in Asia (13 million hectares), followed by Europe (two million hectares). Table 4 shows the area of multiple use forests by region from 1990 -2020.

Table 4: Multiple Use Forests (million ha), 1990-2020

Region	1990	2000	2010	2020
Africa	95	88	82	73
Asia	95	109	120	134
Europe	38	38	41	43
North & Central America	260	260	258	254
Oceania	13	10	12	12
South America	309	275	238	223
World	809	780	751	739

Source: FRA 2020 and FAOSTAT

GFG2 seeks to increase forests' contributions to economic development, for which employment trends can be illustrative. According to FRA 2020, total employment in the forest sector was estimated at 12.5 million people (fulltime equivalent) in 2015. Of this, almost 90% of the formal labor force in the forest sector was in Asia and Africa. Asia accounted for more than 70% (8.90 million people employed) of total formal employment in the forest sector globally, led by India (6.23 million people employed) and China (1.15 million people). According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), global figures in employment in the forest sector are likely to underestimate the true level of employment in forestry, as they do not capture informal laborers who likely dominate the landscape.

Trends related to forest and biodiversity conservation are relevant to GFG2. All regions reporting to the FRA 2020 steadily increased their forests for biodiversity conservation over the last thirty years. Table 5 captures this increasing trend. While the decade between 2000 and 2010 saw the largest upsurge, forest coverage for conservation increased globally by nearly six percent over the most recent decade.

Table 5: Forests Managed for Conservation (million ha), 1990-2020

Region	1990	2000	2010	2020
Africa	95	97	104	107
Asia	63	67	81	89
Europe	18	28	35	39
North & Central America	46	53	69	74
Oceania	20	24	29	31
South America	68	78	82	83
World	311	347	399	423

Source: FRA 2020 and FAOSTAT

Country Action by Target

Target 2.1: Extreme poverty for all forest-dependent people is eradicated

Many countries took steps to reduce poverty through community-based forestry. **Germany, Switzerland, Turkey, and the United States of America** provided substantial financial support to strengthen community forestry and ease poverty for forest-dependent people. Reported actions included:

- developing forest community plans,
- engaging local communities in supporting forest plantations,
- increasing employment in forestry for local communities,
- engaging NGOs and other stakeholders in promoting community-based, non-timber forest products,
- integrating local communities and indigenous peoples into forestry production, and
- promoting forest stewardship contracting for achieving shared land management goals to meet local and rural community needs.

In **Argentina**, the Native Forest and Community Project sought to improve the quality of life for 150,000 people (small producers, peasant, and indigenous peoples) through the implementation of comprehensive community plans for sustainable forest management.³⁰ Meanwhile, **Myanmar** reported that it will establish 919,028 hectares of community forests by 2030. As of November 2019, it designated 257,044 hectares as community forests.

In **the Philippines**, the Non-Timber Forest Products—Exchange Programme helped Community-Based Non-Timber Forest Products Enterprises (CBNEs) and local and national marketing centers generate income from non-timber forest products such as forest honey, almaciga resin, food products (e.g., jams, jellies, and wine), fibers, traditional crafts, natural dyes, and hand woven eco-textiles. In **the United States of America**, the Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration (CFLR) programme extended local job and contracting opportunities to rural communities to meet forest restoration objectives. Since 2012, the programme has supported an estimated 5,600 jobs per year and contributed US\$1.8 billion to local labor income.

The Governments of **Algeria, China, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, and Nigeria** adopted and implemented national forestry strategies, action plans, and programmes specifically addressing poverty eradication among forest-dependent people, including through increased employment opportunities. Also, in **Algeria** and **Ghana**, as well as in **Kenya** and **Myanmar**, initiatives to eradicate poverty among forest-dependent people led directly to forest restoration and sustainable forest management.

Countries also reported on forest strategies and plans to promote rural development. These often augmented employment opportunities and poverty reduction initiatives. For instance:

- In **China**, the Action Plan on Poverty Alleviation through Forestry Science and Technology focused on alleviating poverty and strengthening ecological protection and restoration in ecologically fragile areas. By 2020, it will offer 400,000 ecological forest ranger jobs to impoverished people;
- **Germany** supported forest-related initiatives addressing poverty caused by land degradation and desertification in **Burkina Faso, Haiti, Honduras, Mali, Peru, and Tajikistan**;
- Through its poverty reduction programmes for forest dependent people, **Ghana** allocated portions of degraded forest reserves for crop production in conjunction with establishing and maintaining forest plantations until the canopy closes through the Modified Taungya System (MTS). The programmes significantly increased food security for many forest dependent people in the country; and
- The Government of **Nigeria's** Social Investment Programme targeted the poorest of the rural poor living where most of the country's forest resources were located. The programme improved their livelihoods and reduced their dependence on the use of forest products for sustenance.



Target 2.2: Increase the access of small-scale forest enterprises, in particular in developing countries, to financial services, including affordable credit, and their integration into value chains and markets.

Fourteen countries reported on a number of actions to stimulate progress towards target 2.2 and to increase the access of small-scale forest enterprises, in particular in developing countries, to financial services. Governments took steps to establish institutions and networks, and they implemented measures that revised laws, regulations, and policies; strengthened forest business enterprises; and created processes and or institutional bodies. Some examples from these countries are provided below.

- In **Kenya**, the Forest Investment Facility (FIF) offered a revolving loans scheme to support small-scale forest enterprises at the farm level for livelihood improvement.
- In **New Zealand**, the Provincial Growth Fund provided funding for the One Billion Trees Programme. It also supported transport and infrastructure projects that buoyed the forest sector by increasing domestic wood processing and employment.
- In **Panama**, Law No. 69 of 30 October 2017 created an incentive programme to increase forest cover and natural forest conservation. The country emphasized finance for forest development projects for farmers, indigenous peoples, and persons of African descent.
- In **South Africa**, the Forestry Development Funding Framework provided access to information on grants funding, loans, and the funding process. It also guided qualifying projects interested in accessing loans or grants to kick-start forestry projects.
- **Argentina, Australia, Liberia, and Papua New Guinea** began developing or put in place forest policies, strategies, and plans to promote access to financing for small-scale forest enterprises.
- The **Australian** National Forest Industries Plan aimed to reduce unnecessary barriers to forestry expansion by reviewing existing legislation and policies. Further, a Farm Forestry Strategy was under development to help meet targets on wood supply set out in the Plan.
- **Ghana** trained small-scale wood industry players to access financial support and use machinery to reduce waste. Since 2015, 800 artisans were trained as master craftsperson in downstream processing to reduce wastage.
- In **Indonesia**, the Badan Layanan Umum (Public Service Agency) used schemes such as loans and profit sharing for off-farm and on-farm activities to support financing for small and medium enterprises in the forestry sector.
- **Papua New Guinea** launched the National Policy on Small to Medium Enterprises to increase the access of forest resource owners to small-scale forest enterprises and to help them venture into revenue and income generating activities.

Target 2.3: The contribution of forests and trees to food security is significantly increased.

Ghana, Guatemala, Guinea-Bissau, Jamaica, and Niger reported on developing and implementing national policies, strategies, and plans that leveraged forests for the achievement of greater food security. In **Guinea-Bissau**, for instance, the Second National Strategy Document for Poverty Reduction, prepared in 2010, but with a horizon of 2025, prioritized the role of forests, including agroforestry, in addressing poverty and food security throughout the country.

Mauritius, Niger, Thailand, and Uzbekistan promoted agroforestry and the use of forest plantations to achieve food security objectives. In **Mauritius**, from 2018 to 2020, the Ministry of Agroindustry and Food Security, in collaboration with the Forestry Service, implemented demonstration sites to encourage agroforestry, agricultural diversification, enhanced ecosystem services, and livelihoods. **Niger** took a different approach, using its Strategy of the 3N Initiative for Sustainable Food Security and Agricultural Development to strengthen national capacities for food production, supply, and resilience in the face of food crises and disasters.

In **Senegal**, the National Forest Service and the food industry signed a memorandum of understanding to oversee the establishment of processing units for forest products in rural areas. Through this arrangement, private fruit juice manufacturing companies collaborated with local communities to secure the supply of raw materials for their production plants.

Guatemala, Jamaica, Mauritius, and Niger also reported working with the private sector to improve the processing and marketing of non-timber forest products (NTFPs). **Guatemala** will restore 275,000 hectares of deforested lands with forest plantations and agroforestry systems through incentives, licenses, and other mechanisms by 2032, through its Institutional Strategic Plan 2017-2032.

The **Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation** helped finance the improvement and sustainable management of NTFPs in **Burkina Faso**, a country where NTFPs accounted for 43.4% of rural households' diet while also providing employment, income, and resilience to climate shocks and food deficits.

In **Thailand**, in 2019, the Royal Forest Department established 1.6 million hectares of five-kilometer wide buffer zones between national forest reserves and communities for 15,000 community forests. This helped secure food and non-timber forest products for 18,000 forest-dependent communities. Meanwhile, in **Uzbekistan**, where forests produce approximately 5,500 tons of medicinal herbs annually, from 2018 to 2019, the country established 20,000 hectares of hazelnut tree plantations.

In general, efforts to increase food security contributed to forest restoration, as did shelterbelts, which offered another means to protect agricultural lands from soil erosion, as well as to enhance freshwater management and augment biodiversity conservation. **Australia, Canada, Denmark, Hungary, New Zealand, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the United States of America** established shelterbelts over the last decade. In **Bulgaria**, 423,238 hectares of protective forests were set aside by the end of 2018, including a system of shelterbelts for protecting agricultural lands from erosion and loss of soil fertility. Since 1980, in **China**, the Three-North Shelterbelt Development Programme, also known as the Great Green Wall, restored over 400,000 km² of areas affected by soil and water erosion. The networks of shelterbelt forests created through this programme protected 44.1% of project areas, safeguarding 30.193 million hectares of cropland.



Success Stories



Australia

TIWI ISLANDS – SUPPORTING A COMMUNITY THROUGH SFM

© Government of Australia



The Tiwi Islands, located off Australia's Northern Territory, are home to the indigenous Tiwi people and are governed by the Tiwi Land Council, which manages the region's natural resources to meet local food, shelter, medicinal, weapons and tools, and spiritual needs. For instance, in 2003, the Council adopted the Tiwi Islands Regional Natural Resource Management Strategy, which among other actions, allocated 10% of lands to create an economy that would provide jobs for future generations and ensure the long-term protection of Tiwi natural resource and cultural values. The resulting Tiwi Plantations Corporation now employs locals and oversees a thriving business that supplies woodchips and market quality *Acacia mangium* to overseas paper manufacturers. The Corporation also engages in ecological research to ensure the best and most sustainable environmental, social, and economic management of the plantations. Speaking on the Tiwi approach to sustainable forest management, Frederick Mungatopi, a former TLC chairman, noted, *"It is not enough to hope that the land will look after itself. Using the land for jobs and our own economy requires us to manage the land properly."*



Côte d'Ivoire

COCOA FOREST INITIATIVE

© Mita Sen / UNFFS



A project in Côte d'Ivoire is supporting sustainable cocoa production in a way that protects forests while also improving the livelihoods of producers and forest-dependent people. To do so, it is mobilizing both public and private funding for inclusive, zero-deforestation agriculture. Thus far, the coffee-cocoa sector has provided four billion FCFA (~ €6 million) to the Ministry of Water and Forests to equip forestry services with the technical and logistical means to carry out its mission of forest protection and monitoring. In addition, more than 126 billion FCFA (~€192 million) were mobilized for the creation of a fund for the reconstitution of degraded forests. The initiative has also introduced the concept of agro-forestry in forestry legislation, an outcome that will help extend forest protection.

Target 2.4: The contribution of forest industry, other forest-based enterprises and forest ecosystem services to social, economic, and environmental development, among others, is significantly increased.

Countries undertook a range of initiatives towards this target. Furthermore, country actions taken to strengthen the contributions of forest industry, other forest-based enterprises and ecosystem services to development were amongst the most widely reported amongst respondents, indicating the growing importance of the forestry sector in national economies.

Bulgaria and **Côte d'Ivoire** established and strengthened their mechanisms for payment for forest ecosystem services.

Australia, Brazil, Bulgaria, Kenya, Nepal, Niger, Switzerland, and **Turkey** adopted legislation, policies, strategies, and plans to promote the marketing of forest products, both timber and NTFPs. In this vein, **Indonesia** and **Slovenia** promoted sustainable forest production certificates.

Other countries, namely **China, Mexico, Nepal,** and **the United States of America**, discussed the increasing volume and value of their forest products. Nations also sought to expand the contribution of forestry to other sectors. **Canada** and **Switzerland**, for instance, reported using forests for energy production, including biomass for bio-energy production. **Nepal, Serbia,** and **the Slovak Republic** also expanded their forest productivity to include bio-energy, as well as timber, NTFPs, and eco-tourism.

In line with such efforts, countries - **Canada, China, Lesotho, the Slovak Republic, Serbia, Suriname,** and **the United States of America** - discussed the increasing importance of the forest sector to employment. In **China**, for instance, forestry employment grew from 52.47 million in 2015 to 60 million people in 2020. Meanwhile, **the United States** Forestry Service (USFS) contributed nearly 196,000 jobs in 2017, and, in 2018, the country's forest products industry employed approximately 955,400 people, not including government (such as USFS) employees.³¹

Australia and **Canada** reported substantial investments in forest productivity. **Côte d'Ivoire, Indonesia, Japan, Kenya, Nepal, New Zealand, the Republic of Korea, Slovenia, Suriname,** and **Switzerland** discussed working with private industry to support and stimulate forest productivity. **Kenya** waived customs and excise duties and introduced tax rebates for imported capital goods for forest industries. Its goal was to stimulate investments in plant, equipment, and machinery as well as wood raw materials to improve wood utilization.

Against this backdrop, the section below discusses a number of additional initiatives countries undertook to strengthen the productivity of their forestry sectors. Given the difference in the scale of available domestic financing and, in several cases, differences in technological development, the contributions to the achievement of target 2.4 are divided into those undertaken in developing countries, developed countries, and countries with economies in transition.

Developing Countries

Emerging market economies like **China** and **Mexico** were modernizing, expanding, and increasing the industrial productivity of their forestry sectors, and hence their contributions to GDP. **Suriname** was also focused on increasing timber production, but with less attention to downstream processing. Other reporting developing countries put more emphasis on strengthening forestry to enhance the livelihoods of communities in or near forested areas, including through poverty reduction and the utilization of NTFPs, or for forest conservation. In such instances, social gains featured just as prominently, if not more so, than economic gains in country reporting.

- In **Brazil**, the Bioeconomy–Sociobiodiversity Programme promoted partnerships between public institutions and small and family farmers, and traditional peoples and communities to support their participation in the economy and promote the sustainable use of forest biodiversity resources and their associated social benefits.
- In **China**, the output value of forestry in 2018, was 7.63 trillion RMB (by current pricing standards) or approximately US\$1.081 trillion, and 7.02% higher than that in 2017. Total output of commercial timber was 88.11 million m³, and 4.92% higher than that in 2017.
- Forest production in **Mexico** increased from 5.9 million cubic meters in 2012 to 9.0 million cubic meters in 2017, representing a 52.4% increase. The value of production from forest harvesting grew from 14,416 million pesos (2013 prices in 2013) to 19,922 million pesos (2013 prices to the second quarter of 2018), representing a 38.2% increase in real terms.



- In **Nepal**, the average annual income of community-based forestry groups, mainly Community Forest User Groups and Collaborative Forest Management Groups, in the past three years, was estimated to be over US\$50 million, mainly from the sale of timber and non-timber forest products. The 2019 Forest Act required that at least 25% (~US\$12.5 million) of their income be invested in forest management activities, and 50% (~US\$25 million) in poverty reduction, enterprise development, and women's empowerment.
- In **Suriname**, approximately 30% of the country's timber production came from community forests. This was mainly realized via third party agreements with villages within forest communal lands that also allowed villagers to log. The revenues from these agreements were then transferred to village funds and used to finance village development projects.

Developed Countries

Developed countries reported an array of forward-looking initiatives and programmes meant to increase the productivity and scope of forestry sector contributions to their social, environmental, and economic development.

- **Australia**, through its 2018 National Forest Industries Plan titled '*Growing a Better Australia: A Billion Trees for Jobs and Growth*', committed AU\$20 million over four years to support the forestry industries goal to increase the nation's plantation resource by a billion trees over the next decade. The plan also supported research in value adding to forest products.
- In **Bulgaria**, for the period 2017-2021, the government foresees implementation of a system for ecosystem services payments and finance to compensate forest owners participating in the country's NATURA 2000. An EU initiative, NATURA 2000 aims to establish a network for the conservation of the most valuable and threatened native species as well as their habitats.
- In **Canada**, investments in the Forest Industry Transformation (IFIT) programme were extended, with C\$55 million in funding over three years starting in 2017-2018. Funded projects aim to reduce GHGs, increase green electricity production, create energy efficient building materials, generate renewable alternatives to fossil fuel-based products, and reduce water use. They also intend to create new jobs and opportunities in forest resource-dependent areas.
- The **Japanese** government established the Forest-related Service Industry Review Committee to consider policies that create and promote forest-related services industry and employment for local communities countrywide.
- In the **Republic of Korea**, the Mountain Village Development Project pilot offers comprehensive support for use of region-specific forest resources for business development and discovery. The project began with five cities/districts in 2018 and will expand to include 30 cities/districts by 2021.
- In the **Slovak Republic**, the GDP value of the forest sector in 2018 prices amounted to €0.35 billion (US\$0.413 billion), representing a 9.4% increase from the previous year. The share of forestry in the total economy increased due to higher wood harvesting in recent years, increased wood consumption, and development of the wood sector. The pulp and papermaking industry was one of the most profitable and competitive in the national economy. Excluding wood-processing, profits reached €40.62 million (approximately US\$44.009) in 2017. Timber production and use offered significant environmental benefits for climate change mitigation since wood-based products store sequestered CO₂ over the long term. The volume of CO₂ in harvested wood products (sawn-wood, wood panels, paper, and paperboard) increased in 2017 by 1.059 million tonnes.
- **Switzerland's** Wood Resource Policy ensures that wood from Swiss forests is supplied, processed, and used in a way that is sustainable and resource-efficient.
- In the **United States of America**, US Forest Service (USFS) programs contribute nearly 196,000 jobs and more than US\$11 billion in GDP annually.

Countries with Transition Economies

The two reporting countries characterized as economies in transition discussed the context, implications, and importance of strengthening their wood processing industries.

- The forestry sector in **Serbia** grew over the past few years. Its share in the country's GDP was approximately 2.6%, with the wood processing industry contributing 5.7% of total exports. The wood processing and furniture industry was comprised of 2,182 companies employing 22,965 workers. More than 90% of enterprises were privately owned and mainly located in the central areas of Serbia. The majority of these companies dealt in timber (1,504), while the rest engaged in downstream furniture production (678).
- **Ukraine** reported that forest enterprises were the biggest employer and a major taxpayer to local budgets in the western and northern parts of the country.

Target 2.5: The contribution of all types of forests to biodiversity conservation and climate change mitigation and adaptation is enhanced, taking into account the mandates and on-going work of relevant conventions and instruments.

A large number of countries reported on target 2.5 to the 15th session of the UN Forum on Forests (UNFF 15), which convened in May 2019. These country actions also supported progress towards the Convention on Biodiversity (CBD), the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), as well as the UN Forest Instrument (UNFI). They are presented below accordingly.

Convention on Biological Diversity

Nearly two-thirds of the reported contributions to target 2.5 supported the implementation of the CBD. Many of these initiatives, but not all, fell under three types of generic action: (1) improvement and/or expansion of protected area systems; (2) the development and implementation of evaluative biodiversity management tools; and (3) policies and plans to conserve and sustainably use forest biodiversity. Overall, countries reported notable, wide-ranging, and innovative actions on the contribution of forests to biodiversity conservation.

- **Algeria** established five new protected areas, extended an existing protected area, and incorporated the valuation of forest ecosystem services into its Forest Strategy.
- **Germany**, through its Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), contributed €9.5 million to assist African countries in the negotiation and implementation of the Nagoya Protocol of the CBD.
- **Jamaica** completed a six-year UN Development Programme (UNDP)-funded project titled, 'Strengthening the Operational and Financial Sustainability of the National Protected Areas System (NPAS).'
- **Japan's** Forestry Agency established a mechanism for quantitatively evaluating the status of biodiversity conservation efforts in national forests at the forest planning area level. The mechanism's pilot began in 2020.
- **Liberia** established and gazetted five protected areas that contribute to biodiversity conservation; it proposed 11 other protected areas.
- **Madagascar** established the Foundation for Protected Areas and the Conservation of Biodiversity in Madagascar (FAPBM), in 2005. Currently, it finances 31 protected areas covering three million forest hectares.
- **Mexico** elaborated the Integration Strategy for the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biodiversity in the Forest Sector 2016-2022. Implementation commenced and manuals for biodiversity conservation in productive forests of temperate climates and tropical ecosystems were developed.
- **The Republic of Korea's** Forest Biodiversity Master Plan provided measures needed to conserve 54 endangered species listed on the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List. It included 'Conservation and Restoration Measures for Endangered High-Altitude Conifers (2016),' which covered seven species that suffered major damages.



- **The Slovak Republic** granted €3.21 million to financially compensate forest owners for conservation-related management restrictions imposed in forests.
- **Switzerland's** national Swiss Biodiversity Strategy increased well-structured and species-rich forest boundaries, dead wood (standing and lying), protection for old-growth trees, and the proportion of broad-leaved tree species adapted to the site at the cost of coniferous trees.

United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

China, New Zealand, and Panama reported on three specific initiatives that increased both the mitigation and adaptation functions of forests. The actions each pertain to the implementation of national forest strategies and, in the case of developing countries, their REDD+ strategies.

China, with the support of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and FAO, is implementing the project titled 'Sustainable Forest Management in China for Improving the Capacity of Forests in Combating Climate Change.'

Te Uru Rākau (Forestry **New Zealand**), a branch within the Ministry for Primary Industries, is developing a Forest Strategy for the country to set the direction for the forest system to 2050 and beyond. The Strategy will provide a vision for the important role trees will play in New Zealand's transition to a low-emissions economy, and for how trees can deliver economic, social, and environmental benefits countrywide. The Forest Strategy is supported by the Climate Change Response (Zero Carbon) Amendment Bill, passed in November 2019, that sets the framework for New Zealand's transition to a low emissions and climate resilient economy.

On 28 March 2019, **Panama** approved its National Forest Strategy. It includes a REDD + strategy with a horizon of 2050, in line with the NDC of Panama to increase the unconditional absorption capacity of GHG by 10% and by 80% for conditional absorption.

United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification

Morocco and **Uzbekistan** reported on key actions underway to protect land from soil erosion and freshwater resources from deterioration. **Morocco** protected 500,000 hectares against soil erosion, avoiding 26 million m³ of sediments. It is also working to stabilize dunes that will protect 240,000 hectares of threatened lands. **Uzbekistan**, during the past two years, restored more than 500,000 hectares of area subjected to soil and water erosion.

United Nations Forest Instrument

In total, 45 of the 52 countries that submitted voluntary national reports to UNFF 15 reported that their actions supported the UN Strategic Plan for Forests 2030 and furthered implementation of UN Forest Instrument. While most countries discussed the general complementary of implementation, a few countries described specific support for goals and measures contained in the UNFI. One country—**China**—set up a pilot and demonstration sites to implement the UNFI nationally and subnationally.

Progress towards Global Forest Goal 2

Actions reported by countries to attain Global Forest Goal 2 included programmes and projects as well as other activities that benefited forest communities and small forest-based enterprises. Generally, the development of the forest sector often helped vulnerable people, in particular rural populations. Given this link, many governments devised programmes and plans to promote rural employment, empowerment, and poverty eradication - and employed forests to drive the achievement of these objectives.

Based on country reporting, target 2.4 (the contribution of forests to social, economic, and environmental development) registered the most progress of all the GFG2 targets, especially with regard to employment and increased forest productivity. With slightly less, yet comparable levels of headway, target 2.2 (access to financial services for small-scale forest enterprises), target 2.1 (reducing extreme poverty), and target 2.5 (biodiversity conservation and climate change mitigation and adaptation) followed. Target 2.3 (food security) was the least addressed of the targets. Nevertheless, a number of countries, particularly developing countries, reported notable results on the contribution of forests to food security.

Progress towards Target 2.1

Many actions reported towards this target.

- ✓ National reporting provided evidence that forests could meet subsistence needs and serve as a safety net in times of stress.
- ✓ More research is needed to understand how different types of forest-related practices, programs, and policies, can support or amplify the subsistence, safety net, and asset accumulation functions of forests.
- ✓ Much work remains to effectively measure progress towards the eradication of poverty in the highly vulnerable and diverse group of forest dependent people.

Progress towards Target 2.2

Many actions reported towards this target.

- ✓ Countries developed and listed many actions and measures for supporting small-scale forest enterprises, capacity building measures, and governance structures.
- ✓ Various countries discussed how they promoted and strengthened mechanisms and programmes to facilitate financing to small producers and enterprises.
- ✓ At present, there is no specific indicator to measure progress towards this target.

Progress towards Target 2.3

Many actions reported towards this target.

- ✓ Countries reported many actions to increase the contributions of forests, trees, and agroforestry to food security.
- ✓ Coherent data remained a challenge as these contributions were not included in forest inventories or national statistics, despite being well known and described at the local level.
- ✓ While ecosystem services provided by forests, trees, and agroforestry supported agricultural production, there were multiple dimensions, each involving complex interactions that made measurement extremely difficult.
- ✓ The full scope of contributions from forests to food security was often undervalued, and the socio-economic benefits were particularly difficult to measure, leading often to the underestimation of the role of sustainable forest management in meeting broader development goals.

Progress towards Target 2.4

Many actions reported towards this target.

- ✓ Countries reported many actions, however whether these contributions of the forest industry, other forest-based enterprises, and forest ecosystem services to social, economic, and environmental development were significantly increased was difficult to measure.
- ✓ Forest sector employment was greatly underestimated due its informal nature. For instance, although the woodfuel industry created jobs for tens of millions of households in developing countries, due to its informal nature, its value remained largely unreported.
- ✓ Developed countries provided many examples on increasing productivity, diversifying the products generated and producing them more efficiently through environmental and management practices, and increasing the economic benefits generated.
- ✓ While timber products were easiest to quantify in economic terms, valuing and calculating the revenue from the social and environmental benefits of forests, remained a challenge.



Progress towards Target 2.5

All regions on track to achieve target.

- ✓ The majority of reported country actions supported the achievement of other international forest-related commitments, in particular those under the CBD.
- ✓ As of 2020, CBD Aichi Biodiversity Target 11 (to protect at least 17% of the world's terrestrial area by 2020) was exceeded for forest ecosystems at the global level and for most regions.
- ✓ According to FRA 2020, since the 1990s, all regions of the world steadily increased forests managed for biodiversity conservation.

Challenges

Forest Financing: Twenty-five countries, mostly from the African and Asian regions, reported that inadequate funding hindered progress towards achieving GFG2 targets. In particular, several cited limited investments for increasing the socio-economic and environmental benefits of forestry.

Governance: Governance challenges featured prominently in VNRs from developing countries. Standout issues included: the need to improve cross sectoral coordination and integrated forest management; constraints resulting from political instability and corruption; unresolved land tenure issues; and illegal logging.

Capacity Building: Thirteen countries, more than half in Africa, cited capacity building and technological deficiencies as obstacles to progress.

Climate Change: Many countries mentioned climate change as a current threat to the achievement of GFG2. They specifically highlighted climate driven forest fires and biodiversity loss.

Productivity: Nearly half of all reporting countries noted a range of constraints and hinderances to strengthening their forest industries. Commonly shared challenges included: engaging the private sector in forestry development; poor infrastructure; the undervaluation of NTFPs; the degradation of essential natural resources such as water and soil; the informal nature of the forestry sector; labor shortages; and declining productivity.

Access to Markets: With market access inextricably linked to the productivity of forest industry, developing countries often highlighted difficulties in getting their forest products to market. Specific challenges included insufficient capacity in value chain-marketing and infrastructural deficiencies.

Social Challenges: Developing countries and one developed country indicated that the difficulty of using sustainable forest management to eradicate poverty was the greatest challenge to achieving GFG2. In this regard, the rural exodus to urban areas was seen as a major obstacle to developing the forestry sector, as well as growing demographic pressures on forested areas. Other countries cited challenges such as those related to access to education for forest-based communities, access to land by women, insufficient information on poverty reduction and food security, difficulties encountered in integrating forests into agricultural programmes, and growing incidences of human-wildlife conflicts.

Success Stories



Mauritius

CREATION OF PERI URBAN SOCIAL FOREST

© Government of Mauritius



A project in Mauritius is enhancing ecosystem protection and supporting the sustainable use of natural resources in the Peri Urban Social Forest at Grand River North West – an area covering approximately 30 hectares of beaches, estuaries, riparian, and marshy lands. Not only does the initiative intend to increase tree cover and conserve biodiversity, but it will also protect historical sites, encourage tourism, and support employment in the area through activities such as trekking, fishing, kayaking, and visitor tours as well as a fruit grove managed by a local community in Sable Noir. Since its official opening in 2019, the Social Forest has increased tree cover, raised the quality of local life, enhanced social activities, created a gene bank, reduced land degradation, and protected riparian and water catchment areas.



United States of America

THE URBAN FOREST STRIKE TEAM PROGRAMME

© Government of USA



The United States of America is taking steps to protect urban forests and aid their recovery from natural disasters, which can damage the tree canopy and pose significant risks to municipalities and human health and safety. To respond to these needs, the government has established the Urban Forest Strike Team Program, which offers a proactive approach to recovery, debris and damaged tree removal, and provides data and recommendations that help cities apply for federal public assistance. The programme is a coordinated disaster response and relief effort between local communities, state forestry agencies, and the national Forest Service tasked with aiding cities and assessing tree and canopy damage in the critical window following a natural disaster. Since 2007, this programme has successfully mobilized 13 multi-agency deployments, including in the aftermath of recent major hurricanes such as Hurricane Harvey in 2017, Hurricane Michael in 2018, and Hurricane Sally in 2020. It has also encouraged post-incident reforestation and the restoration of crucial green infrastructure while helping affected communities to rebuild.







Global Forest Goal 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.

Forests are vital to life

15 LIFE ON LAND



Globally, around **1 million** animal and plant species are under threat of extinction.



Forests are home to **80%** of all land-based species.



18% of forests are designated as protected areas

75% of the world's accessible freshwater comes from forested watersheds



6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION





Overview

Global Forest Goal 3 (GFG3) aims to increase the area of protected forests worldwide. In 2020, nearly 18% of the world's forests stood in legally established protected areas, compared to just over 14% in 2000, although the share of protected forests varied significantly between regions.³² The area of protected forests grew worldwide at nearly three million ha per year between 2010 and 2020 (10 million ha/year between 2000 and 2010), with increases in every region. With reference to Aichi Biodiversity Target 11 (to protect at least 17% of terrestrial area globally by 2020), this target was exceeded for forests at the global level, and for most regions.

Table 6: Forest Area in Legally Established Protected Areas

Region	Total, 2020	Annual Change, 2010-2020	Share of Forest Area, 2020
	Million ha	Million ha	%
Africa	158	0.2	27
Asia	144	0.7	25
Europe	58	0.5	6
North & Central America	80	0.2	11
Oceania	29	0.2	16
South America	257	1.0	31
World	726	2.8	18

Source: FRA 2020

GFG3 also calls for an increase in area of forests under long-term management plans. According to FRA 2020, 54% of the world's forests were under long-term management plans. The area of forest under long-term management plans increased by 135 million ha between 2010 and 2020. Some regions recorded fast growth from relatively low levels. In other regions, notably Europe, but also Asia and North and Central America, most forests were already under such plans, meaning there was little room for significant increase. In Oceania, the share of forest under long-term management plans did not increase. In Africa, Oceania, and South America, less than 20% of forests were under long-term management plans, despite recent growth in this percentage.

“ We need much more ambition and greater commitment [...] This means more and bigger effectively managed conservation areas, so that our assault on species and ecosystems can be halted

- UN Secretary General António Guterres speaking on the State of the Planet

Table 7: Forest Area under Long-term Forest Management Plans

Region	Total Area, 2020	Annual Change, 2010-2020	Proportion of Forest Area under Long-term Management plans
	Million ha	Million ha per year	%
Africa	130	2.6	24
Asia	353	3.9	64
Europe	944	0.5	96
North & Central America	433	3.0	59
Oceania	56	n.s.	31
South America	134	3.5	17
World	2,050	13.5	54

Source: FRA 2020

Country Action by Target

Target 3.1: The area of forests worldwide designated as protected areas or conserved through other effective area-based conservation measures is significantly increased

Many countries, including **Algeria, Guinea Bissau, Sri Lanka, and Thailand**, created new protected areas often under the provisions of legislation on and policy for biodiversity. These actions also helped meet other international goals and commitments, such as the EU NATURA 2000 directive, REDD+, and most notably, the Aichi Targets of the CBD. Further, **Nepal** and **Nigeria** incorporated CITES provisions into national legislation, and **Mexico** strengthened its institutional capacity to implement CITES provisions.

Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bulgaria, Cameroon, Guinea Bissau, Jamaica, Japan, Kenya, Mauritius, Mexico, Morocco, Niger, Nigeria, the Republic of Korea, Senegal, and Ukraine all reported taking legal and institutional measures to identify protected areas and pursue the necessary measures, such as mapping, gazetting, and management plans, to protect them. For most countries, these initiatives focused on native forests and habitat.

Australia, Brazil, Ghana, Nigeria, and Thailand reported stronger measures to stem illegal logging, including better enforcement.

Target 3.2: The area of forests under long-term forest management plans is significantly increased

Algeria, Bulgaria, Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Jamaica, Kenya, Morocco, Slovenia, Turkey, and the United States of America described how long-term forest management plans were either encouraged or legally required in their countries. They also discussed the systems in place to promote and monitor this planning.

In most cases, certification required the creation and use of long-term forest management plans. Many countries discussed certification by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) or Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC), or by national systems. These outcomes indicated that certification was either in place or that actions were underway to put it in place (see also target 3.3).

Countries also reported on the role of partnerships and cross-sectoral engagement in developing long-term forestry management plans. Several countries discussed the importance of working with civil society, local communities, and indigenous peoples to ensure sustainability, including sustainable livelihoods for local communities.



Target 3.3: The proportion of forest products from sustainably managed forests is significantly increased

Several countries, including **Australia, New Zealand, Nigeria, and Thailand**, described initiatives to increase the supply of sustainably managed wood through large plantation programmes. **Australia** also reported on its National Forest Industries Plan goal to plant a billion new plantation trees in 10 years.

Also, towards this target:

- ✓ **Algeria** promoted the organization of certain forest products into value chains.
- ✓ **Cameroon** encouraged the use of poorly known, yet marketable species.
- ✓ **Canada** mentioned a number of national and provincial programmes, for instance on clean energy for rural and remote communities, green construction through wood, the British Columbia Forest Investment Innovation's Wood First program, as well as research and development on building with wood and revisions to the National Building Code.
- ✓ **Jamaica** launched a sawmilling programme and developed a register of permits and a licenses system for the sale of standing timber.
- ✓ **Kenya** improved its institutional framework to increase investments in commercial forestry and the zoning of land for forestry development.
- ✓ **Senegal** approved a new forest code and a decree that laid out the modalities for forest product exploitation.
- ✓ **The Slovak Republic** approved the Action Plan of the National Programme of Utilization of Wood Potential.

Many countries, including **Argentina, Australia, Bulgaria, Canada, Ghana, Japan, Mexico, New Zealand, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea, Serbia, Slovenia, South Africa, Suriname, Turkey and the United States of America**, undertook measures to promote the certification of public and private forests. This often meant providing the framework for certification, notably national standards, and supporting the activities of FSC, PEFC and other certification agencies, as well as promoting the use of certified products.

Algeria, Myanmar, and the Philippines discussed how they worked to improve markets for non-timber forest products through awareness raising, and research and development. Also, in **the Philippines**, the Non-Timber Forest Products - Exchange Programme assisted indigenous peoples in the identification of Indigenous Community Conserved Areas within their ancestral domains.

At the other end of the value chain, **Austria** reported that, like other EU Member States operating under the EU Timber Regulation (EUTR), it was obliged to prevent illegally harvested timber from entering the EU market. The EUTR entered into force in the EU, although some Member States noted delays in its full implementation. **Japan** highlighted a measure with similar intentions - its Act on Promotion of Use and Distribution of Legally-Harvested Wood and Wood Products (the Clean Wood Act).

Progress towards Global Forest Goal 3

Many countries reported on their forest legislation, codes, and policies, which had specific provisions addressing protected areas (target 3.1), sustainable forest management (target 3.2), and the promotion of markets for products from sustainably managed forests (target 3.3).

The area of protected forests grew globally by approximately three million ha per year between 2010 and 2020, with increases in every region. As countries created new protected areas, they put in place legal and institutional measures to protect them, actions that were also in accordance with international commitments, notably the Aichi Targets. Countries built capacity, for instance to implement the provisions of CITES, and in this vein, some pursued stronger measures against illegal logging, including better enforcement.

In many cases, national and subnational institutional structures were adapted with revised definitions of the roles of forest services to aid forest management and protection. Sometimes the relations between the national and subnational levels were modified. Local (community) commissions, community forests, and other mechanisms for increased participation of stakeholders were put in place. Further, institutions with environmental mandates were increasingly involved in policy discussions on forests. For instance, action on land tenure – namely mechanisms such as conservation easements and land purchased by the state – spurred progress towards GFG3.

Many countries encouraged or legally required long-term forest management plans, which were often required for certification programmes. The area of certified forest increased very rapidly between 2000 and 2010 but slowed thereafter. Other developments also supported progress towards longer-term and sustainable management: countries used spatial development plans to address forest issues alongside those of other sectors; and national systems of criteria and indicators of sustainable forest management were developed.

Further, a wide range of planning approaches were applied. Such approaches included improved classification of protected areas, manuals for providing conservation services, research into wildlife habitat, designation of trans-frontier conservation areas and targets for biodiversity conservation and Red Lists. Systems and protocols included wood tracing systems, legality assurance systems, transboundary wildlife management protocols, and verification protocols. Research related tools included research and development on wood buildings, sustainability reporting and resource assessment, improved mapping, the use of remote sensing, global information systems (GIS), and socio-economic surveys.

Overall, the volume of wood harvested from certified forests was estimated at nearly 700 million m³ or 38% of global industrial roundwood production³³; and 97 countries and territories (84% of world forest area) had traceability systems for wood products at the national or subnational levels.³⁴ Further, several countries implemented significant plantation programmes. On the demand side, countries promoted the consumption of sustainably produced wood, encouraged the certification of public and private forests, and promoted the use of certified products.

Progress towards target 3.1

Many regions on track to achieve target.

- ✓ Most regions were on track to significantly increase the area of protected forest between 2015 and 2030. Africa, Asia, and South America already exceeded Aichi Biodiversity Target 11.

Progress towards target 3.2

Many regions on track to achieve target.

- ✓ Between 2015 and 2030, most regions were on track to significantly increase or maintain the area of forest under long-term management plans.

Progress towards target 3.3

All regions on track to achieve target.

- ✓ The area of certified forest expanded, as did the supply of wood from certified and other sustainably managed forests.
- ✓ All regions were on track to significantly increase the proportion of forest products from sustainably managed forests.



Challenges

Lack of Resources: The biggest challenge to achieving GFG3 was insufficient resources, especially human capacity. For instance, in some countries, the issue was not inadequate legislation, but rather a lack of capacity to enforce and implement existing laws and regulations. Achieving GFG3 hinges on the improvement of skills and building human capacity.

Competing Interests: Many countries highlighted difficulties in achieving consensus on the goals of forest management given poverty, unemployment, population growth, competing land uses, and sectoral interests. Many countries reported that a high proportion of fragmented, often privately owned forest made finding consensus and implementing policy challenging. Implementing policies taking into account the interests of local communities and indigenous peoples was also seen as a challenge.

Managing Trade-offs: When it came to the sustainable production of products, countries noted their struggles to manage trade-offs between the interests of downstream producers and the consumers of forest products, as well as other stakeholders. Some countries reported market tensions that made sustainable forest management, including the creation of long-term forest management plans, more difficult. Others pointed out the difficulty of motivating investment in commercial plantations, notably because of low returns and risks, often due to climate change.

Certification: Some countries described the challenges of drawing up and implementing certification systems. Countries with a high proportion of Intact Forest Landscape (IFL) also discussed obstacles to securing certification.

Insufficient Data: Some countries noted that for biodiversity and other dimensions of sustainable forest management, traditional forest inventory data were not sufficient as they focused primarily on wood supply and availability. The need to improve the data used for decision-making was noted, for instance on biodiversity concerns and threatened species.

Success Stories



Algeria

PRESERVING FOREST ECOSYSTEMS AND BIODIVERSITY IN THE TLEMCCEN MODEL FOREST

© UNESCO



With a focus on ecosystem restoration, local livelihoods support, and biodiversity conservation, the establishment of the Tlemccen Model Forest in north-west Algeria was an important step towards sustainable forest management for the region. The initiative supported protections for the globally endangered Egyptian Vulture by training 30 biodiversity facilitators and enabling research, monitoring, and outreach. Over a two-year period, a 100/100 litter was successfully bred. To boost local socio-economic development, the project enabled a women's cooperative association to manage a nursery for medicinal and aromatic plants, and it set up an essential oil distillery. In this case, sustainable forest management outcomes strengthened biodiversity conservation while providing rural women with employment and income.



Republic of Korea

BAEKDUDAEGAN GLOBAL SEED VAULT

© Government of Republic of Korea



The Republic of Korea established a seed vault to protect and store over two million species by 2030. The Baekdudaegan Global Seed Vault will help the country fulfill international cooperation obligations such as to the Convention on Biological Diversity and its Nagoya Protocol, in addition to meeting domestic forest biodiversity conservation and research needs. Built 46m below ground and with a maintained temperature of -20° and humidity (RH) 40, the Vault will provide for the ex situ preservation of at least 75% of native plants in accordance with the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation (GSPC) 2020.





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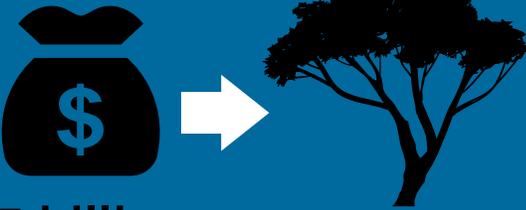


Global Forest Goal 4

Mobilize significantly increased, new and additional financial resources from all sources for the implementation of sustainable forest management and strengthen scientific and technical cooperation and partnerships.

Investing in forests plants the seeds for a greener future

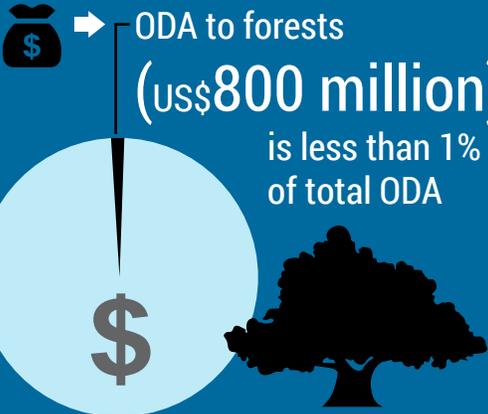
17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS



US\$ **15 billion** of private investment goes into the forest sector in developing countries and countries with transition economies



ODA to forests (US\$800 million) is less than 1% of total ODA



The value of ecosystem services that are lost due to illegal logging and forest degradation could be in the **trillions.**



Funding needs for global sustainable forest management range from US\$ **70** and US\$ **160** billion per year.

15 LIFE ON LAND





Overview

Global Forest Goal 4 (GFG4) addresses the critical resources needed to advance sustainable forest management, including financing, capacity development, and the transfer of environmentally sound technologies. The Strategic Plan acknowledges that to achieve the Global Forest Goals, a combination of actions is required to marshal resources at all levels, by all stakeholders, and from all sources, public and private, domestic and international, bilateral, and multilateral. However, mobilizing and increasing financial resources for sustainable forest management remains a key challenge, especially for developing countries, including least developed countries (LDCs), landlocked developing countries, and Small Island Developing States (SIDS), as well as countries with economies in transition.

While it is generally understood that forest financing needs outpace available resources, it remains difficult to secure an accurate measure of resource flows for sustainable forest management. Systematic global data on national, private, and philanthropic flows for forest financing are extremely limited, as are information and data on domestic flows. Outside of these limitations, data on official development assistance (ODA), which is systematically compiled by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), allows for the construction of relatively reliable trends and historical records of official forest-related bilateral and multilateral resource flows. Data on private resource flows also helps illuminate global trends in forest finance.

OECD data showed that forestry ODA gradually increased in gross disbursements from less than US\$400 million in 2002 to almost US\$800 million in 2014.³⁵ The increase from 2007 was largely due to the emergence of climate financing, part of which was labelled as forestry ODA. In recent years, as shown in Figure 5, forestry ODA gross disbursements for the 2009-2013 period increased from an annual average of US\$663.01 million to US\$744.09 million. For the period 2014-2018, the increase was 12.23%. Such growth becomes less significant, however, in the face of global economic growth (if growth in ODA doesn't keep pace with economic growth, its share falls).

Forestry ODA also decreased in proportion to total ODA. In 2013, ODA disbursements in forestry were at one percent of total ODA, but in 2015, at US\$800 million, they fell to less than one percent of total ODA. From 2000 to 2015, the main forest ODA donors were European Union institutions, Germany and Japan, which provided over half of global forest ODA, followed by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Finland, the Netherlands, Australia, and Sweden.

While ODA offered one window for assessing forest finance, private investment provided another. In 2008, the World Bank estimated that private investment in the forest sector in developing countries and countries with transition economies was approximately US\$15 billion, or 24 times the value of forestry ODA for that year.³⁶ The total private sector plantation investments in developing countries was estimated at US\$1,763 million in 2011, excluding investments in (REDD) and landscape restoration.³⁷ According to a FAO working paper, private financing for sustainable forest management (SFM) is a fast-growing trend with a positive outlook, and in recent years, institutional investors grew to be the main market participants in developing countries with over 1,000 pension funds, endowments, foundations, amongst others.³⁸

“ Investing in nature will protect biodiversity and improve climate action, human health, and food security.” -

- UN Secretary General António Guterres speaking at the 2020 United Nations Biodiversity Summit

The '2012 Study on Forest Financing',⁹⁹ conducted by the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF) Advisory Group on Finance, estimated the required funding for sustainable forest management globally to be between US\$70 and US\$160 billion per year. The Study approximated that the amount required to halve deforestation alone by 2020 ranged from US\$20 to US\$40 billion per annum. It highlighted the fact that the available funding for sustainable forest management, from all sources, would fall short, even by the most conservative estimation of needs.

Figure 4: Commitments and Gross Disbursements of Forestry ODA (2009-2018) in US\$ millions (multilateral and bilateral combined)



Source: OECD Creditor Reporting System database (<http://stats.oecd.org/#>), retrieved 23 August 2020

Table 8: Forest ODA Gross Disbursement According to Region, 2009-2018

Region	ODA Gross Disbursements	Percentage of Total	2009-2013	2014-2018	Percentage Change
Europe	778.541	11.07	244.579	533.962	+118.32
Africa	1,552.177	22.06	782.534	769.643	-1.65
Americas	823.863	11.70	359.593	463.770	+28.97
Asia	2,587.583	36.78	1,388.711	1,198.872	-13.67
Oceania	79.533	1.13	35.981	43.552	+21.04
Developing countries	1,214.321	17.26	503.673	710.648	+41.09
TOTAL	7,035.518	100	3,315.07	3,720.447	+12.23

Source: OECD Creditor Reporting System database (<http://stats.oecd.org/#>), retrieved 23 August 2020

The Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network (GFFFN) of the UNFF helped upscale sustainable forest management by facilitating country access to the resources needed to implement the UN Strategic Plan for Forests 2030. Since its inception in 2015, the GFFFN has assisted countries in mobilizing funding from a variety of sources. It has enhanced country access to multilateral funding through, *inter alia*, the development of national forest financing strategies and the provision of technical support for the preparation of project proposals for submission to multilateral funding institutions.

Over the last five years, the GFFFN received requests for assistance from 34 countries (20 from Africa, seven from Latin America and the Caribbean, four from Asia-Pacific, and three from Eastern Europe). These accompanied five other requests from regional and subregional organizations. As of February 2020, the Network had assisted 27 countries, with support to 14 countries completed and support to the other 13 underway. By 2021, the GFFFN will have completed its assistance to the Central African Forest Commission (COMIFAC) and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) subregional organizations.

The GFFFN's work shed light on an important link between national forest financing strategies and national forest programmes. A growing number of countries requested support in updating their national forest programmes as a first step in the development of their national forest financing strategies. **Botswana, Guinea-Bissau, Malawi, and Thailand** were examples of countries that followed this progression, which was a process aligned to the Strategic Plan's call for the design of national forest financing strategies to be within the framework of national forest programmes or other appropriate national frameworks.



The GFFFN's work helped improve cross-sectoral and multi-stakeholder coordination and interaction within and between countries. The Network made the reach across sectors and other dividers to bring all stakeholders to its national and regional workshops a critical component in developing forest financing strategies. This helped build national political and institutional capacity and ensured national ownership of financing strategies and plans. It also improved resource mobilization through other sectors, in particular, agriculture, energy, and environment.

The GFFFN also focused on drawing attention to the needs and conditions of countries in special situations. For instance, in 2019, the Network contributed to the High Forest Cover, Low Deforestation (HFLD) Conference on Climate Finance Mobilization. The meeting brought together leaders of HFLD countries and raised donor awareness of their needs for the first time in over a decade.

To help expand the Network's impact, the UNFF Secretariat is developing a GFFFN Clearing House. Once finalized, the Clearing House will include databases on existing, new, and emerging financing opportunities and provide a platform for sharing lessons learned and best practices from successful projects.

Country Action by Target

Target 4.1: Mobilize significant resources from all sources and at all levels to finance sustainable forest management and provide adequate incentives to developing countries to advance such management, including for conservation and reforestation

In their VNRs, countries discussed the measures they took to increase domestic forest financing towards implementation of the UN Forest Instrument and the UNSPF. It was noteworthy that 13 countries reported on the establishment and operation of national forest and other related funds that supported, *inter alia*, forest conservation, reforestation, forest management, community forestry, rural development, and efforts to address climate change. Generally, resource mobilization initiatives were either finance mechanisms, budgetary allotments, or efforts to engage the private sector.

Many countries, for example, **Argentina**, **Botswana**, **Central African Republic**, **Kenya**, **Morocco**, **Panama**, **the Philippines**, **Senegal**, and **Thailand** reported setting up financing mechanisms, such as trust funds, to support sustainable forest management. From 2010 to 2016, **Argentina's** National Fund for the Enrichment and Conservation of Native Forests (FNECBN) provided ARS\$985,698,549 to the management of native forests, targeting an area of more than five million hectares. In **Botswana**, the government established the National Environmental Fund (NEF) to help achieve its national environmental agenda and meet international obligations, while simultaneously improving community livelihoods. The trust fund in **Panama** also achieved results. As of 19 December 2018, Panama's Water, Natural Protected Areas and Wildlife Trust Fund provided US\$16 million for 66 projects on water security, climate change, natural protected areas, and reforestation, among others. Further, the Government of **the Philippines** allocated PHP 1 billion (approximately US\$19,230,770) per year through the Peoples Survival Fund to finance local/communal climate change adaptation activities. **Nigeria** reported that it too was in the process of establishing a fund.

In addition to trust fund initiatives, countries allocated money to their forestry initiatives. **Cameroon**, **China**, **Morocco**, **Myanmar**, and **Nepal** all reported committing substantial funds for SFM in their national public budgets. In **Cameroon**, the Ministry of Forests and Wildlife received an annual budget of approximately US\$40 million for its activities and operations. In **Morocco**, the budget allocated to the forestry sector increased from DH 650 million (approximately US\$80.29 million) to DH 1,150 million (approximately US\$119.63 million), an increase of 77% in Moroccan Dirhams, over the last decade. National funds mobilized in Morocco during the 2015-2019 period amounted to US\$600 million. The Directorate of Forests of **Serbia** contributed US\$10 million per year to the achievement of GFG4 through the Forest Fund as well as other budgetary allocations. The Government of **Myanmar**, in another example, implemented the Myanmar Rehabilitation and Reforestation Programme (MRRP) from 2017-2018 to 2026-2027. Approximately US\$500 million (589 billion Myanmar Kyats) were already pledged for the 10-year period of the MRRP project.

Japan, New Zealand, the Russian Federation, Switzerland, and the United States committed substantial financing to the sustainable management of forests within their countries:

- As part of its domestic measures to fund the conservation of forests, in 2019, the **Japanese** government introduced the Forest Environment Tax and the Forest Environment Transfer Tax.
- Launched in November 2018, **New Zealand's** One Billion Trees Fund contributed to achieving GFG targets 4.1 and 4.2. The Fund will provide NZ\$240 million (approximately US\$158 million) of funding over three years to support the forest sector. Of this amount, NZ\$140 million (approximately US\$92 million) will be allocated for partnership initiatives.
- **Switzerland** reported on substantial financing for its forests. In 2017, the total public budget to support the environmental performance of forests was CHF 169 million (US\$165.04 million).
- In 2018, The **Russian Federation's** Preservation of Forests project established strategic policies for forestry development and provided measures to achieve major targets related to restoration and forest protection. The budget of this federal project was RUB 151 billion, or approximately US\$2.2 billion.
- Domestically, the 2020 budget of **the United States** Forest Service was US\$5.14 billion. The budget included US\$1.9 billion for the management of National Forest System (NFS) lands.

Sometimes investments towards forests coupled with other environmental objectives like the rehabilitation of lands, addressing climate change, and community development. **China** reported that in 2018, the total investment from the central government in forestry and grasslands amounted to approximately US\$20.9 billion. In **Nepal**, in 2018, the government allocated US\$182 million for the implementation of the Emission Reduction Programme for the period 2018-2028, of which US\$11 million was to be utilized for SFM and US\$4.8 million for community-based forest management, with some funding also meant for reforestation.

Finally, two countries - **Kenya** and **Thailand** - implemented initiatives to engage the private sector more effectively in forestry investments. **Thailand** was one of the few countries to report increased forest financing from the private sector at the national level. To date, the forest rehabilitation fund managed by the Thai Royal Forest Department (RFD) has accrued approximately US\$20 million.

Target 4.2: Forest-related financing from all sources at all levels, including public (national, bilateral, multilateral and triangular), private and philanthropic financing, is significantly increased

Donor Country Actions

Nine donor countries - **Australia, Canada, Germany, Japan, New Zealand, the Republic of Korea, Switzerland, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the United States of America** - described their contributions towards the achievement of GFG target 4.2. Table 9 shows some examples of how this finance supported sustainable forest management in developing countries and countries with transition economies.



Table 9: Donor Initiatives Supporting GFG Target 4.2

Donor	Action
Australia	Australia mobilizes financial resources internationally through matched funding, contributing to capacity building and aid support. For instance, through its Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR) programme and associated projects, it provides core funding to ICRAF, CIFOR, and BIOVERSITY (CGIAR Research Institutions) to assist countries to fulfil the UN Forest Instrument and progress towards SFM more broadly. ACIAR has also funded projects to support development of effective systems for payment for environmental services in Laos and Indonesia.
Canada	In August 2019, Canada pledged C\$300 million (approximately US\$226.073 million) to the Green Climate Fund's first replenishment. Canada previously contributed the same amount during the GCF's Initial Resource Mobilization period (2015-2018). In 2017, Canada co-championed efforts leading to the adoption of the US\$500 million pilot programme for REDD+ results-based payments (GFG 4.1 and 4.2).
Germany	In Germany, the complete bilateral portfolio of development cooperation initiatives run by the BMZ for 2017 amounted to €1.5312 billion, in comparison to €1.5003 billion in 2016 and €1.5219 billion in 2015. Germany was the World Bank's Forest Conservation Partnership Facility (FCPF) co-initiator; and through 2017, it committed to providing €360.4 million (€350.4 million of this from the BMZ) or approximately 25% of the FCPF's entire budget.
Japan	Japan enacted the 'Act on Contributions to the Green Climate Fund and the Accompanying Measures,' in May 2015. Following this, it contributed US\$1.5 billion to the Green Climate Fund. With a contribution of 447.82 million SDR, ⁴⁰ Japan was also the largest donor to the seventh replenishment of the Global Environment Facility (GEF). Through its ODA, Japan implemented projects that promoted legal and sustainable forest management, in collaboration with international organizations such as the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO), UNFF and FAO, and development-assistance organizations such as the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA).
Republic of Korea	From 2015 to 2020, the Republic of Korea supported the implementation of the Forest Ecosystem Restoration Initiative (FERI), a collaborative project with the CBD, with financing of approximately 3.1 billion won (approximately US\$2,724,500).
Switzerland	The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation supported the implementation of the 2030 Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) framework strategy addressing climate change and food security. The strategy focused on community participation in managing and safeguarding forest goods and services with a view to alleviating poverty and climate change impacts.
New Zealand	In October 2019, New Zealand announced it would provide NZD \$15 million contribution to the first replenishment of the Green Climate Fund, which finances climate change mitigation and adaptation in developing countries.
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	The United Kingdom's primary mechanism for delivering international climate action is International Climate Finance (ICF). Three government departments (DFID, BEIS and Defra) invest the United Kingdom's £5.8 billion of ICF (2016-2021). From 2016 to 2021, Defra secured £210 million for ICF. Defra focused its ICF spending on protecting the world's most biodiverse forests. Its investments were expected to save 90 million tonnes of GHGs, foster sustainable livelihoods for more than 143,000 people, and protect and restore 550,000 hectares of forests. Further, the United Kingdom has a £20 million ICF investment in the eco.business Fund, a public-private partnership promoting business and consumption practices that contribute to biodiversity conservation, sustainable natural resources use, and climate change mitigation and adaptation.
United States of America	In the United States, USAID forestry investments totaled US\$195 million in approximately 40 countries, with US\$189 million focused on tropical forests. Other activities, including for the conservation of forests and wetlands, accounted for approximately US\$11.1 million of USAID's forestry investments in 2017.
GNU (Germany-Norway-UK)	During the 2015 Paris Climate Summit, Germany-Norway-UK (the GNU) pledged US\$5 billion from 2015 to 2020 to help developing countries protect forests, specifically through their REDD+ programmes.

Developing Country Actions

In their voluntary national reports, **Cameroon, China, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Morocco, Nepal, and Suriname**, among other developing countries, discussed their work with multilateral and bilateral donors to access critically important forest financing.

Cameroon benefited from funding mobilized for sustainable forest management in the Congo Basin by partners such as Central African Forestry Initiative (CAFI), the Congo Basin Forest Partnership (CBFP), and a German Corporation for International Cooperation (GIZ) supported project in the Central African Forest Commission (COMIFAC). Other projects underway included: the Management and Monitoring of Forests in Cameroon, funded by the French Development Agency; the South West Sustainable Management of Natural Resources project, funded by the German bank, KfW Group; the Sustainable Forest Management by Municipalities project, funded by the GEF; and the project to reduce carbon emissions in the southern Cameroon plateau, funded by JICA.

Forestry development in **China** received support from international financial organizations. Since 2015, The World Bank lent US\$17.84 million, the Asian Development Bank lent US\$140 million, the European Investment bank lent €408 million, and the Global Environment Facility provided US\$7.1525 million in grants. Cooperation between China and the World Bank in forestry development resulted in six loan projects totaling US\$1.724 billion, with US\$897 million provided by the World Bank. The Chinese government also cooperated with NGOs supporting sustainable forest management, afforestation, and reforestation. The government assisted nine external NGOs, including the Worldwide Fund for Nature (WWF), with their registration in China, and it conducted 220 forest-related projects in 2017.

In March 2018, the Forest Investment Programme (FIP) provided **Côte d'Ivoire** with US\$28.5 million for the conservation of national parks and reforestation in the southwest and center of the country. In addition, in July 2012, Côte d'Ivoire and France established the Debt Reduction and Development Contract (C2D). This innovative financing mechanism converted the debt owed to France into repayments by grants allocated to development projects in Côte d'Ivoire. In this arrangement, the country continued to service its debt until repayment. At each payment on the due date, the French Development Agency transferred the equivalent amount to the country in the form of a grant. This amount was then used to finance poverty reduction programs. The C2D has provided 4.4 billion FCFA (approximately US\$7,665,055) to the forest sector for the financing of a national forest and fauna inventory.

By 2020, **Ghana** mobilized US\$323,758,700 to support sustainable forest management. The funds were marshaled through financial strategies designed to access finance from the Forest Carbon Facility Programme (FCFP) and the Forest Investment Programme (FIP), both of the World Bank. Under the REDD+ Programme alone, Ghana accessed US\$273,758,700 to implement strategies and actions to address deforestation and forest degradation.

By 2030, **Morocco** is aiming to mobilize US\$2 billion for sustainable forest management through international cooperation. Towards this end, the government received £40 million (approximately US\$51.881 million) in financial assistance from the European Union for the period 2013-2020. The resources covered a component dedicated to the promotion of sustainable management and enhancement of heritage resources and forest products in partnership with local stakeholders. Additional projects were supported by other donors, including GIZ and UNDP, among others.

By 2025, **Nepal's** REDD+ Programme will receive US\$45 million from the World Bank's Forest Conservation Partnership Facility for results-based payments. This will, in turn, be spent on SFM and other activities related to the Global Forest Goals. Nepal is also developing a Forest Investment Programme amounting to US\$24 million under the World Bank's Forest Investment Fund (FIP). It will provide significant funding to community-based forest management.

Since 2016, **Suriname** mobilized forest financing from the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (US\$5.1 million) and the GEF (US\$14 million). The country also submitted a concept note to the Green Climate Fund for a proposed US\$20 million project.



Target 4.3: North-South, South-South, North-North and triangular co-operation and public-private partnerships on science, technology and innovation in the forest sector are significantly enhanced and increased

Forty-four countries reported that they cooperated directly with other governments, and a similar number noted working through intergovernmental organizations and processes. On international cooperation for SFM, a little over 40% of responding countries said that they engaged with the private sector, including private companies, industry associations, and professional and trade associations, among others. Thirty-two countries discussed their international cooperation with non-governmental organizations, the IUCN and the WWF among them.

North-South cooperation was the most common form of regional cooperation, as reported by 32 countries (61% of the reporting countries). These collaborations were both financial and technical. Twenty-five countries, with a little over half on the African continent, discussed their experiences with south-south cooperation. This was a particularly significant development, as it offered a way for countries with common budgetary constraints and common social, economic, and environmental challenges to share solutions and knowledge. Additionally, 10 countries reported participating in north-north cooperation. They were equally divided between the **European (Forest Europe) and the JUSCANZ countries of Australia, Canada, Japan, New Zealand, and the United States of America.**

Triangular cooperation offered an innovative conduit for transferring technical know-how from one developing country to another, financed by a donor country. Eighteen countries reported participating in triangular cooperation for SFM. Donor countries supporting such initiatives included **Australia, Austria, Canada, Japan, and the United States of America.** Nearly two thirds of the countries delivering or receiving technical cooperation were in Africa.

Thirty-one countries reported that the cooperation in which they participated was financial in nature. A much larger number, 47 reporting countries, indicated involvement in international technical cooperation. In this context, the capacity building activities and technical assistance provided by intergovernmental and international organizations such as FAO, the UN Environment Programme (UNEP), the World Bank, the UNDP, IUCN, and WWF, among others, contributed to fostering cooperation in this area.

In addition to reporting whom they cooperated with, countries also discussed the issues on which they cooperated. There were nine principal areas of cooperation for SFM, with forests and climate change topping the list. Almost all reporting countries partnered internationally to confront the critical, if not existential, threat of climate change. Countries also addressed technology transfer and capacity development; forest monitoring and data collection; forest degradation and rehabilitation; forest biodiversity; socio-economic issues; scientific cooperation; ecosystem services valuation; and the production of timber or non-timber products. Other areas of cooperation included forest health and fire management, forest governance, communal forest management, and the transboundary management of forests and wildlife resources.

Target 4.4: The number of countries that have developed and implemented forest financing strategies and have access to financing from these sources is significantly increased.

Forest financing strategies or equivalent policies at the national level beget sustainable forest management. With them, governments approach forest finance holistically, mainstream forests across the budgets of relevant sectors, and prioritize forests in development planning. All respondent countries reported having forest financing strategies in place. Twelve countries had a forest finance strategy for a window of two to five years; 20 had a time frame of five to 10 years; 14 countries had a time frame of 10 to 20 years; and six countries indicated that their strategies were programmed for a period of more than 20 years.

China, Guinea-Bissau, and Mexico were among the countries that reported on their forest finance strategies. In 2010, **China** prepared its *China's Strategy and Financing for Forestry Sustainable Development*. It also produced the 'Research Report on the Development Status and the Investment and Financing Planning of China's Forestry Development (2018-2023)', which offered references for forestry investment and financing. Meanwhile in **Guinea-Bissau**, in 2017, the government developed

a National Forest Investment Plan to mobilize substantial resources for the sustainable development of its forest sector. In **Mexico**, the country's Comprehensive Strategy for Financing the Forest Sector for the period 2014-2018 was implemented, and the National Financing Strategy for the Forestry Sector for the 2019-2024 period was under revision as of November 2019.

Target 4.5: The collection, availability and accessibility of forest-related information is improved through, for example, multidisciplinary scientific assessments

Countries discussed a range of interventions to improve the accessibility of and the diversity of actors contributing to forest-related information and data. Generally, country actions fell within five categories that described (1) platform development; (2) domestic research; (3) international network formation; (4) collaborative research; and (5) education. **Argentina, China, Switzerland, and the United States of America** developed web platforms to facilitate public access to national forest information and data, including monitoring and assessment. **China, the Republic of Korea, the Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Suriname, Switzerland, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the United States of America** invested in expanding domestic forest-related scientific research, including on more efficient conservation, management, and production of forest resources. Meanwhile, one country—**Canada**—established an international network of 31 countries, mainly in the developing world, to facilitate information sharing and best practices on sustainable forest management. **China and Germany** promoted collaborative forestry scientific research with other country partners. Two countries – **Kenya and the United States of America** – incorporated forest issues into education, especially for youth. **Kenya** integrated forests into vocational training curricula, while **the United States of America** incorporated it into citizen science initiatives.

The following highlights a few country interventions that spurred progress towards GFG target 4.5.

- To improve public access to information on native forests in the country, **Argentina** developed a web platform on the management of national Law 26,331 on forest financing, forest statistics, and plans financed by the National Fund for Enrichment and Conservation of Native Forests. Likewise, the platform of the National Native Forest Monitoring System was updated and improved, which supported consultations on the distribution of forest regions, the coverage of native forest and changes that have occurred, forest statistics, dynamic graphics on fires, and the evolution of forest cover, among other geo-data.
- The International Model Forest Network (IMFN), which began with 10 sites across **Canada** in the early 1990s, in 2020, totaled 61 Model Forests in 31 countries covering an area of more than 68 million hectares, the majority of which were in the developing world. All were linked through the IMFN whose Secretariat was funded by the Government of Canada. The Network facilitates knowledge exchange and the sharing of best practices between members, with a view to expediting implementation.
- **China** established several platforms to support access to forest-related information, including (1) the National 'One Map' Public Service Platform for forestry operated by the National Forestry and Grassland Administration; (2) the Platform for Shared Forestry Resources; (3) the Beidou Navigation Positioning System for emergencies such as forest fires, disease and pests, and sand storms; (4) the Forest Biological Diversity Monitoring System; and (5) the National Forest Resources Monitoring System.
- Since 2016, **Germany**, through its Federal Ministry for Food and Agriculture (BMEL), provided €2 million annually to bilateral research cooperation on forests and to knowledge exchange between German and foreign forest experts. In addition, in 2020, €4.5 million per year in funding went to approximately 25 research-cooperation projects in Asia, Africa, Latin America, and Europe to foster sustainable and multi-functional forest management. Another €3.5 million per year from BMEL went into pilot and demonstration projects involving non-state stakeholders and the scientific community.
- **The Republic of Korea** will establish one or more fixed survey sites for at least 90% of the 318 stations in government-owned forest genetic resource protection areas to conduct vegetation surveys in five-year cycles. Fixed survey sites will increase from 100 sites in 2017 to 300 sites by 2022.



- In 2019, **the Slovak Republic** funded the scientific project titled, 'Research of wood use as a renewable material in the transformation to a green economy' with resources from the Slovak Research and Development Agency. Other research projects undertaken included: 'Innovative Methods of Forest Management Planning in Close to Nature Forests – FORESTMAN,' 'Research and Development for Innovation and Support of the Competitiveness of the Forestry Sector,' and 'Innovative Methods of Optimizing Timber Felling in the Close to Nature Forests.'
- The **Slovenian** Forestry Institute supported numerous research and applicative projects that promoted the efficient management of wood as both a material and energy source, especially among private forest owners. The Network of Knowledge for Efficient Private Forests Project (Net4Forest), which educated trainers and private forest owners, was one example, as was the Slovenia Forest Service Viewer, a web-based GIS application that enabled forest owners and the general public to view and to search for forest-related information.
- The Government of **Suriname** worked with interior, forest communities to co-produce knowledge on current, desired, and expected land use within certain areas. This was done through mapping campaigns using GPS or through Participatory 3D Modeling. The maps have since facilitated dialogue within the communities, but also with external parties, and aided the planning process on community development.
- In **Switzerland**, the SwissForestLab served as a research platform and infrastructural network. The platform leveraged in-country expertise to promote cooperative research towards an in-depth understanding of the functioning, resilience, and adaptability of forest ecosystems.
- In 2018, the National Agroforestry Center (NAC) of the **United States** Department of Agriculture (USDA) partnered with public and private-sector entities to better understand and communicate the benefits of agroforestry to pollinators and crop pollination services, thus supporting food and nutrition security. Further, based on annual expenditures of over US\$200,000 in direct and partner funds, the USFS Citizen Science Competitive Funding Program provided grants of up to US\$30,000 each to fund citizen science activities in which local residents, often rural youth, engaged in research to support forest conservation and management.

Progress towards Global Forest Goal 4

Voluntary country reporting showcased country efforts to advance and diversify finance and to promote cooperation and partnerships across all levels of governance in support of forestry objectives. Countries marshalled financial resources for sustainable forest management, with most indicating that they had mobilized more public funds from national and international sources than from private sources, perhaps because stronger incentives were needed to invest in sustainable forest management. The majority of reporting countries developed and implemented financial strategies to achieve SFM, putting forth and reviewing legislation and policies on investment and finance. The actions taken signaled a growing commitment to increasing, accessing, and mobilizing forest financing at national and international levels.

All respondent countries pursued international cooperation as a way to foster innovation and partnerships in technology and science. Countries provided technical assistance, pursued innovation, shared information with the public through digital platforms, and strengthened forest governance. A greater emphasis placed on research and science in support of SFM indicated that the availability and multidisciplinary aspect of forest-related information was improving, although much more remained to be done in developing countries.

Despite these positive signs and outcomes, financing for forests remained well below what was needed to achieve the Global Forest Goals, especially in developing countries. Almost all developing countries identified a lack of resources, especially financial resources, as a major obstacle to reaching GFG1, and more than 25% of developing countries submitting national reports, reported that inadequate funding hindered their progress towards achieving GFG 2.

Progress towards Target 4.1

Many actions reported towards this target.

- ✓ In their voluntary reporting to UNFF, countries demonstrated their growing commitment to increasing, accessing, and mobilizing forest financing at national and international levels.
- ✓ The majority of countries reporting to UNFF shared that they were able to mobilize increased financial resources for the implementation of SFM.

Progress towards target 4.2

Many actions reported towards this target.

- ✓ Countries reporting to UNFF launched numerous initiatives to increase finance for SFM and their forestry objectives, indicating progress on this target.
- ✓ Assessing the full scale of global forest financing was difficult because information was dispersed over a wide range and a large number of public institutions, private sector entities, multilateral development organizations, international NGOs, and foundations.
- ✓ Further, protocols for providing information on forest finance had yet to be developed.

Progress towards target 4.3

Many actions reported towards this target.

- ✓ Countries reporting to UNFF shared that they used international cooperation to promote sustainable forest management.
- ✓ Initiatives highlighted engagement with other governments, the private sector, communities, and civil society organizations.
- ✓ Countries emphasized sharing lessons learned in SFM. The exchange of data and information supported progress towards the entire suite of GFGs under the UNSPF.

Progress towards target 4.4

Many actions reported towards this target.

- ✓ Most countries reporting to UNFF shared that they had developed or implemented forest financing strategies for SFM and the UN Forest Instrument.

Progress towards target 4.5

Many actions reported towards this target.

- ✓ Countries reported a wide range of initiatives for generating and disseminating technical and scientific information to strengthen sustainable forest management.
- ✓ Much more needed to be undertaken in developing countries to grow the development and use of science for SFM.



Challenges

Countries discussed a variety of challenges that hindered their ability to mobilize and access funding for forests and SFM. The difficulties, detailed below, included inadequacies in funding, information, capacity, and incentives along with unwieldy donor requirements and lengthy timeframes for returns from forest investments.

Inadequate Funding: 19 countries cited insufficient and decreasing funding from various sources as a problem, making it the most common challenge. Several countries, mostly developing countries, expressed concerns about the inadequacy of domestic funding, primarily from the public sector, for meeting forest sector needs. Some felt that the low priority given to the forest sector within their national economies impeded additional public financing from other sectors. While national reporting to the UNFF took place prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, initial analysis of the impact of the pandemic on funding for forests indicated that most low and middle-income countries faced increased challenges raising or maintaining adequate national public funding for forests. This was largely due to a sharp increase in public expenditures on health and unemployment benefits, coupled with declines in domestic public revenue.⁴¹

Limited Capacities: Accessing forest financing from major multilateral donor organizations was a challenge, with 13 countries indicating that they lacked the capacity required to develop “bankable” project proposals.

Funding Information: Countries found it difficult to access information on funding sources and application processes.

Private Sector Incentives: Countries noted that the private sector lacked sufficient incentives to invest in activities that would support the achievement of all six Global Forest Goals (GFGs).

Long-term Investment: The lengthy time frames for returns on investment in forestry were cited as a disincentive to investment in the sector.

Donor Requirements: Countries highlighted problems accessing forest financing from major multilateral donor organizations because, *inter alia*, of cumbersome criteria and procedural requirements. Twelve countries specifically noted this challenge.

Note: The UNFF’s Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network has been working to address some of these challenges in accessing forest financing by assisting countries in the development of national forest financing strategies and by providing technical assistance in the preparation of project proposals, but more work is needed in this area.

Success Stories



Mexico

PROGRAMME OF PAYMENT FOR ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

© Mita Sen / UNFFS



With an emphasis on developing payments for environmental services (PES), Mexico is making important strides to protect 138 million hectares of forests. As a first step, to address a paucity of rigorous PES impact studies, this programme created a multidisciplinary working group inclusive of renowned specialists in PES impact evaluations. The application of world-class standards and technical rigor resulted in a PES impact evaluation that was recognized twice – in 2015 and 2018 – as a best practice for the results monitoring and evaluation of public policy. As the PES programme commenced implementation, important results emerged. Highlights included an increase in sustainable forest management activities by approximately 50%; an increase of social capital of ejidos and communities by 8%; and a significant reduction in the loss of forest cover by approximately 40% within areas at high risk for deforestation. The programme also supported many marginalized and remote communities in the country, becoming an important source of income and investment for the ejidos and communities.



Philippines

A DEBT-FOR-NATURE SWAP FINANCING MECHANISM

© Tomasz Juszczyk / UNFFS



The Philippines is successfully using an environmental tax on urban water use to protect forests. In January 2016, the Bago City Government (Local Government Unit) passed an ordinance to collect an Environmental Protection Fee (EPF) from all of the city's water users. The estimated two to three million pesos raised per year are used to fund the conservation of forest and biodiversity initiatives, forest protection works to ensure sustained water flows, and alternative livelihood programs for forest communities. The initiative has inspired other Local Government Units (LGUs) to implement similar payment for environmental services (PES) schemes in their jurisdictions.





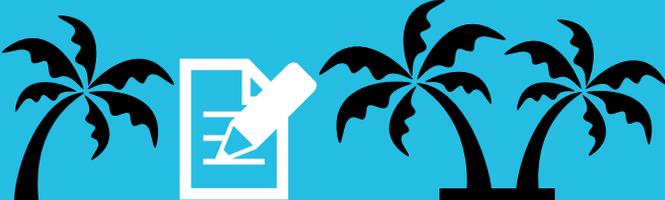


Global Forest Goal 5

Promote governance frameworks to implement sustainable forest management, including through the United Nations forest instrument, and enhance the contribution of forests to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The future of forests is in our hands

16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS



Most countries, representing **99%** of the world's forests, have formal forest policies and laws.

73% of the world's forests is publicly owned,
22% is privately owned.



1.5 billion local and indigenous peoples have community-based tenure over forest resources.



Market value of losses from illegal logging worldwide could be over **US\$ 10 billion/year.**

15 LIFE ON LAND





Overview

Global Forest Goal 5 (GFG5) recognizes the importance of promoting governance frameworks to achieve the Global Forest Goals overall. According to FAO, forest governance is defined as the way in which public and private actors, including formal and informal institutions, smallholder and indigenous peoples organizations, small, medium-sized, and large enterprises, civil-society organizations, and other stakeholders negotiate, make, and enforce binding decisions about the management, use, and conservation of forest resources.⁴²

Forest ownership, access, and management rights are crucial elements in how forest resources are managed. While the world's forests are largely publicly owned, according to FAO data, since 1990, the share of publicly owned forests has decreased and the area of forest under private ownership has increased. Currently, 73% of the world's forests is under public ownership, 22% is privately owned, and the remainder is categorized as either "unknown" or "other" (where ownership is disputed or in transition), according to FRA 2020. Oceania, North and Central America, and South America have the highest proportions of private forests. Further, it is estimated that 1.5 billion local and indigenous peoples have secured rights over forest resources through community-based tenure.⁴³ Some 142 countries reporting to FRA 2020 (representing 95% of the world's global forest area), reported they had platforms in place to enable stakeholder participation in forest policy development.

Policies and laws provide the foundation for forest governance. According to FRA 2020 data on forest policies (based on input from 187 countries and territories representing 99% of the world's forest area), most countries had formal forest-related policies and laws in place. Of these, 164 countries and territories (also representing 99% of the world's forest area) indicated that they had national forest policies, and 172 countries and territories (also representing 99% of the world's forest area) indicated that they had forest legislation.

The ability of countries to enforce their laws and policies impacts forest outcomes. A 2013 World Bank brief estimated the annual market value of losses from illegal logging globally to be over US\$10 billion.⁴⁴ The potential value of these losses were even higher (as high as US\$ 1 trillion) when the value of ecosystem services that were not currently priced by the market, such as carbon storage, biodiversity conservation, water filtration, and flood retention, were considered.⁴⁵ Towards the enforcement of laws and policies that protect forests, according to FRA 2020, 94 countries and territories said they had traceability systems – mechanisms that provided the ability to trace the origin, location, and movement of wood products by means of recorded identifications - at the national level. Such systems help combat illegal logging.

“ Our governance of critical global commons, not just public health but also peace and the natural environment, needs to be reinforced and reimagined.”

- UN Secretary General António Guterres speaking on his Ten Priorities for 2021

Country Action by Target

Target 5.1: Number of countries that have integrated forests into their national sustainable development plans and/or poverty reduction strategies is significantly increased

The majority of countries reporting to UNFF informed that they had integrated forests into their broader development or poverty reduction plans and strategies. In particular:

- 47 countries reported that forests were integrated into their national sustainable development plans and/or poverty reduction strategies;
- 46 countries reported that forests were integrated into their national sustainable development plans; and
- 25 countries reported that forests were integrated into their poverty reduction strategies.

Countries also increasingly recognized forests' contributions to national strategies to achieve the SDGs – an outcome that helped open up resources for forests and improve the overall visibility of forest issues across the governance spectrum. The country examples presented below show how countries integrated the implementation of the UN Strategic Plan for Forests 2030 and the Global Forest Goals with the SDGs, especially with regard to data gathering. The examples also illustrate how countries mainstreamed forest considerations into other arenas such as those for, *inter alia*, agriculture, economic growth/development, and land management.

- In **Australia**, the National Reporting Platform on the SDG Indicators offered a whole-of-government initiative containing national data for 118 of the 232 SDG indicators, including data on the forest-related indicators.
- In **Canada**, the Federal Sustainable Development Strategy (FSDS), the country's primary vehicle for sustainable development planning and reporting, referenced forests and trees throughout the strategy.
- The **Guinea-Bissau** National Agricultural Investment Plan included sustainable management of forest resources under the Plan's component on the sustainable management of natural resources.
- **Liberia's** Forestry Development Authority integrated the UN Strategic Plan for Forests 2030 into its Pro-poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development (PAPD) and its 10-year plan for Strategic Management for Sustainable Forest Management.
- In the **State of Palestine**, the Agriculture Sector Strategy 2017-2022 considered sustainable forest management in its second strategic objective on "natural and agricultural resources sustainably managed and better adapted to climate change."
- **Slovenia** included forests and renewable forest sources in its National Energy Climate Plan (NECP) and in its Renewable Resources Action Plan for the period 2010-2020, which aimed to lower the country's carbon footprint.
- In **Ukraine**, forests and forest-related measures were included in the National Plan on Combating Desertification and Soil Degradation and in the country's rural development strategies.
- Other countries, including **China, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Kenya, Nepal, Niger, Nigeria, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, South Africa, Suriname, Thailand, and Turkey** informed that forests and forest-related measures were integrated into their national socio-economic development and sustainable development plans and programmes.



Target 5.2 Forest law enforcement and governance are enhanced, including through significantly strengthening national and subnational forest authorities, and illegal logging and associated trade are significantly reduced worldwide

All countries reporting to the UNFF noted steps they had taken to prevent or reduce trafficking and illicit activities with regard to forests. In particular:

- 43 countries reported improved enforcement;
- 37 countries highlighted the use of export controls;
- 30 countries discussed their import controls; and
- 24 countries reported on new legislation or bilateral agreements.

Many countries, including **Algeria, Argentina, Botswana, Jamaica, Kenya, Morocco, Myanmar, Sudan, Thailand and the United States of America** strengthened the authority of their forest agencies, notably by increasing their law enforcement capacity. Often this meant stronger judicial powers or more resources and equipment for patrols such as cameras, drones, and computers. Reporting countries also described partnerships and cooperation with law enforcement agencies, including police, customs agencies, and the military. Other countries revised their legal frameworks to include decrees regulating logging and/or to devolve responsibility for forest law enforcement and governance from the central to the local level.

Countries used a variety of measures to assure markets traded in legal forest products. Timber importing countries, including **Australia, Austria, Canada, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Serbia, the Slovak Republic, Slovenia, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the United States** committed to preventing illegal timber access to their markets through instruments like the EU Timber Regulation, the Lacey Act, or other equivalent mechanisms, as well as trade agreements. **Australia, Bulgaria, Cameroon, Ghana, Madagascar, Suriname, and Ukraine** reported using technical measures to support legal harvesting and trade. These included monitoring and tracing wood flows, modern techniques for tracing, verification, and wood identification, and increased transparency (e.g. providing real time access to logging data for local communities).

Donors, including **Australia, Canada, the European Union, Japan, New Zealand, and the United States** also supported actions to improve forest law enforcement and governance, especially through established programmes. These included the EU-FLEGT as well as regional or global cooperation mechanisms like the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Expert Group on Illegal Logging and Associated Trade group (APEC EGILAT), the Timber Regulators Enforcement Exchange (TREE) meetings, Interpol's Forestry Crime Working Group, and the Global Timber Tracking Network (GTTN).

Finally, countries leveraged international cooperation agreements and instruments to help assure the legality of timber and forest-related industry. **Cameroon, Canada, Mauritius, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland** referenced the importance of CITES rules and regulations in controlling illegal logging and trade in threatened species. Other cooperation mechanisms helped reduced illegal logging and trade, namely the EU Voluntary Partnership Agreements (negotiated or under discussion with many tropical hardwood exporting countries) and INTERPOL. Countries also collaborated, for instance, under the APEC Experts Group on Illegal Logging and Associated Trade, or as in the case of **Botswana**, with neighboring countries.

Target 5.3 National and subnational forest-related policies and programmes are coherent, coordinated and complementary across ministries, departments and authorities, consistent with national laws, and engage relevant stakeholders, local communities and indigenous peoples, fully recognizing the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

All countries reporting to the UNFF described having mechanisms in place for cross-sectoral coordination between agencies. While the form of these varied widely in accordance with the administrative culture of each country, some mechanisms did appear repeatedly in national reporting. These included:

- “Top-down coordination” from the highest policy level. **Sri Lanka** pointed out that “cross-sectoral coordination starts at the level of the Cabinet of Ministers;”
- Formal and informal regular inter-ministerial committees and consultations (**Algeria, Côte d’Ivoire, Nepal, Niger, and Nigeria**);
- Mechanisms supporting coordination between the national, subnational, and field levels, including within and between agencies, as well as with subnational law-making and policy making bodies, especially for countries where forestry was a subnational responsibility; and
- National forest programmes or equivalent instruments that played a strong role in articulating cross-sectoral coordination. (One country also mentioned environmental impact assessment as a process that strengthened multi-sectoral coordination.)

Despite these mechanisms, coordination was not always successful. **The Slovak Republic**, for instance, noted that the instruments in place “did not achieve harmony with other sectoral policies.”

All countries also reported having mechanisms in place to involve stakeholders in the policy formulation, planning, and implementation processes. While these also varied as widely as the reporting countries themselves, there were a few common approaches. They included:

- Multi-sectoral platforms on forest issues that garnered the participation of a wide range of stakeholders, including environmental NGOs, civil society representatives, and official agencies;
- Regular high-level forums where stakeholders interfaced with ministers and other decision makers (**Ghana, Kenya, Nepal, and South Africa**);
- Structured dialogues, often in the context of a national forest programme, for instance in **Argentina, Austria, Ghana, Sri Lanka, and Suriname**;
- Stakeholder inclusion in policy advisory bodies and working groups preparing strategic documents (**Argentina, Ghana, Jamaica, Mauritius, and South Africa**);
- Public consultations on planning processes, including for forests (many countries); and
- Significant stakeholder participation in forest management at the local level, in various forms of community forest management.

Countries also noted that many international platforms, for instance REDD+, as well as national development strategies, supported stakeholder consultation in their approaches and processes.

Some countries pointed out the need to fund and support stakeholder involvement, alongside other challenges. The **Central African Republic** reported that regulations were in place to involve stakeholders but were not operational due to insufficient finance and materials – a possible constraint in other countries. **Serbia** discussed a different issue, noting that some stakeholders, in this case, the public enterprises for forest management, had real power and could misuse their monopolistic positions.



Many countries promoted community forest management, with several reporting that national legislation had set out the basic rules for community management of land and resources (not only forests and trees), addressing issues such as land rights, management, and administration. **Switzerland** reported constant interaction between its federal and cantonal levels on community forest policy and management. In **Kenya**, where communities were involved in the management of gazetted forests, they formed community forest associations. Some countries also discussed partnerships between communities and other agencies, such as those for police and justice, which fight forest crime (see target 5.2).

On the engagement of indigenous peoples in sustainable forest management, countries often referred to their international commitments, notably under ILO Convention 169, and described related processes that provided a framework for engaging indigenous peoples in forest issues. **Mexico** reported that CONAFOR (its national forest commission), in its current Rules of Operation and Program Guidelines, incorporated criteria on respect for the rights of indigenous peoples. In the context of developing national REDD+ strategies, countries noted that such strategies should be accompanied by efforts to strengthen the involvement of indigenous peoples in SFM.

Target 5.4: Forest-related issues and the forest sector are fully integrated into decision-making processes concerning land use planning and development⁴⁶

Many countries, including **Austria, China, Côte d'Ivoire, and Japan** reported on national land use planning processes that incorporated forest considerations and issues. In **Madagascar**, the Ministry of Public Lands Service, worked closely with the Ministry in charge of forests to create definitive statutes for protected areas as well as for other forests. In **Slovenia**, at both the state and municipality levels, the public forest service gave its opinion on plans for current and future land use, for instance, where to obtain or preserve forest land cover and where there was an option to change forest land to other uses without influencing surrounding forest ecosystems.

Land use planning and land tenure remained a complex issue in **Sudan** where trees and forest land could have different ownership, but local people as part of the tribal norms, could not be deprived of land ownership. The country's Forest National Corporation (FNC) was part of the coordination mechanism in state land committees and in land registration authorities. It coordinated with the relevant ministries by signing of Memoranda of Understanding.

Thailand established a National Land Policy Committee to coordinate among the land use authority agencies and holistically solve the problem of illegal forest land encroachment.

The United States of America maintained numerous national and state-level mechanisms to involve various actors in the forest sector and to coordinate among government agencies. The National Forest Management Act required the US Forest Service to develop land management plans for all national forest system lands. Many states also maintained Forest Advisory Committees, comprised of citizens and representatives of timber, environmental, and recreation groups.

Serbia reported that despite having land use planning mechanisms, the forestry sector was often minimized and forestry issues side-lined for "more important subjects" like energy security, social issues, and environmental constraints.

Progress towards Global Forest Goal 5

Countries informed on the actions they took to achieve GFG5, describing the governance frameworks in their countries to support sustainable forest management and enhance the contribution of forests to the 2030 Agenda. Overall, countries reported that:

- ✔ forests were integrated into national sustainable development plans and/or poverty reduction strategies;
- ✔ forest law enforcement and governance were enhanced;
- ✔ policies and legal frameworks were in place to promote sustainable forest management; and
- ✔ a wide range of measures were operating to improve policy coherence and involve stakeholders, communities, and indigenous peoples.

Countries increasingly recognized the contribution of forests to national sustainable development strategies, with all reporting countries making strides towards improved cross-sectoral coordination in government agencies and expanded stakeholder engagement in policy formulation, planning, and implementation. National forest programmes, or their equivalents, helped articulate this cross-sectoral collaboration. It became more common for national land use planning processes to integrate forest management issues alongside other land uses.

Further, donor countries highlighted their support for actions that improved forest law enforcement and governance. Countries demonstrated their commitment to dealing in legal timber and forest products by pursuing technical measures to monitor and trace wood flows and various other means to keep illegal products out of markets.

Progress towards Target 5.1

Many actions reported towards this target.

- ✓ Nearly all reporting countries shared that they had integrated forests into their national sustainable development plans and/or poverty reduction strategies.

Progress towards target 5.2:

Many actions reported towards this target.

- ✓ Countries enacted many complementary but varied measures to reach target 5.2, with the intention of significantly strengthening national and subnational forest authorities and combatting illegal logging and related trade.
- ✓ The absence of international standards or definitions made it difficult to compare and assess the effectiveness of measures meant to reduce illegal logging and related trade worldwide.

Progress towards target 5.3:

Many actions reported towards this target.

- ✓ Almost all countries in the world had policies and legal frameworks to promote sustainable forest management.
- ✓ Countries reported a wide range of measures meant to improve policy coherence and involve stakeholders, local communities, and indigenous peoples in these policies and frameworks.
- ✓ Further analysis was needed to determine the full impact of these policies, frameworks, and measures.

Progress towards target 5.4:

Many actions reported towards this target.

- ✓ Most reporting countries had land use planning systems in place that integrated forest issues.
- ✓ Further analysis was needed to ascertain the effectiveness of these land use planning systems and whether forestry issues/measures were successfully incorporated.



Success Stories

New Zealand ONE BILLION TREES PROGRAMME



© Government of New Zealand

In 2019, the Government of New Zealand launched the One Billion Trees Programme to improve environmental, economic, social, and cultural outcomes in the country. The programme aims to plant one billion trees by 2028. By November 2019: the programme accepted 229 tree planting grants spanning 10,722 hectares and representing the planting of 16 million trees; 42 partnership projects were approved, totaling \$42.6 million of funding; and approximately 149 million trees were planted towards the one billion goal. Further, the Matariki Tu Rākau programme was established to plant living memorials marking the end of the First World War as well as to honor valued members of communities. It has seen community groups plant 366,000 trees. Through Crown Forestry Joint Ventures, which enable Crown Forestry to enter into commercial joint venture arrangements to develop plantation forests on privately owned land, 38 forestry rights were executed, covering an area of 20,000 hectares.

Senegal MANAGEMENT OF TRANSBOUNDARY FORESTS



© Government of Senegal

Senegal has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the Gambia to improve the sustainable management of transboundary forests. The MoU focuses on stabilizing and strengthening forest carbon stocks, ensuring that forests and trees contribute more to the food security of local populations, and strengthening national and subnational forest authorities to improve forest governance and policing. Thus far, the MoU has reduced illegal timber trafficking and improved the sustainable management of cross-border forests.





Global Forest Goal 6

Enhance cooperation, coordination, coherence and synergies on forest-related issues at all levels, including within the United Nations system and across member organizations of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests, as well as across sectors and relevant stakeholders.

Sustainably managed forests are resilient and renewable ecosystems

12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION



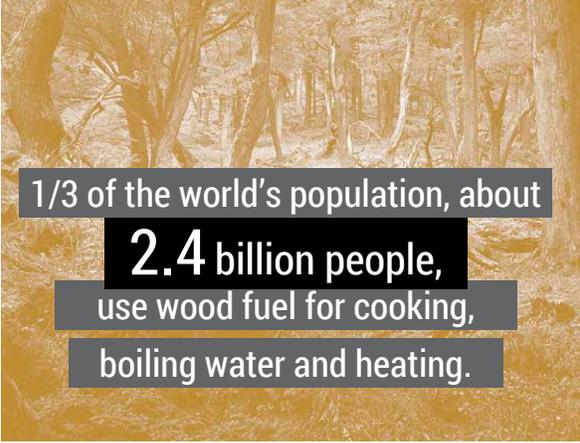
54% of the world's forests are managed through long-term plans.



About **1.15 billion ha** of the world's forests are managed primarily for the production of wood and non-wood forest products.



1/3 of the world's population, about **2.4 billion people**, use wood fuel for cooking, boiling water and heating.



40% of the world's renewable energy comes from forests - as much as solar, hydroelectric and wind power combined.



7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY





Overview

The International Arrangement on Forests (IAF) (see ECOSOC Resolution 2015/33) has five main components: the UN Forum on Forests (UNFF) and its 197 Member States, the UNFF Secretariat, the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF), the UNFF Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network (GFFFN), and the UNFF Trust Fund. The Forum is the United Nations body mandated to address forest-related issues in an integrated and holistic manner and oversees the follow-up and review of implementation of the Strategic Plan and the UN Forest Instrument, as well as the operation of the GFFFN.

Under the IAF, the UN Strategic Plan for Forests 2030 (UNSPF) houses the Global Forest Goals (GFGs). The Plan's adoption in 2017 by the UN General Assembly was a major step towards advancing collaboration and coherence on forest-related issues at the global level. The Plan provides a framework to support the forest-related work of the UN system and to foster greater cohesion among UN bodies and their partners on forest-related matters. One of the main goals of the International Arrangement on Forests is to enhance the cooperation, coordination, coherence, and synergies on forest-related issues at all levels, which is also the main objective of Global Forest Goal 6 (GFG6).

Fifteen entities with significant forest related activities, some outside the UN System, work together in the Collaborative Partnership on Forests. They include the: Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR); CITES; CBD Secretariat; FAO; GEF Secretariat; International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO); IUCN; International Union of Forest Research Organizations (IUFRO); UNCCD Secretariat; UNDP; UNEP; UNFF Secretariat; UNFCCC Secretariat; World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF); and the World Bank. The functions of the Forum, the UNFF Secretariat, and the CPF are set out in Economic and Social Council resolution 2015/33 of 22 July 2015.

There are many “forest related programmes” in the UN System. Some focus exclusively on forest issues, while others include a forest component within their broader programmatic areas, such as poverty reduction, biodiversity conservation, food security, and other areas. Despite the importance and variety of these programmes - and that some UN agencies, for instance FAO, have incorporated the GFGs into their programmes - no formal UN systemwide (or UN interagency) mechanism exists to enhance coordination and coherence among the many organizations addressing forest-related issues. The UN System has a wide range of coordination mechanisms that are also applied to forest related programmes although none appear, at present, to be specifically tasked with integrating the Global Forest Goals into their programmes.

The adoption of the 2030 Agenda highlighted the need to move away from historically fragmented approaches to sustainable development, and to instead, capitalize on the linkages between issues to spur synergistic progress. Achievement of the 2030 Agenda requires bridging sectoral silos, as well as forging links between the array of actors engaged in the sustainable development process. This is laid out most explicitly in SDG 17, which calls for partnerships to “strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development.” The Global Forest Goals are anchored in the SDGs and therefore share this common emphasis on achievement through enhanced coordination and synergy across sectoral objectives.

“ Now is the time to transform humankind’s relationship with the natural world – and with each other. And we must do so together. Solidarity is humanity. Solidarity is survival.”-

- UN Secretary General António Guterres speaking on the State of the Planet

Within this multilateral, intergovernmental, and cross-sectoral fabric, countries and territories made progress towards the achievement of GFG6. They did so against a complex landscape that demanded greater and much more integrated action on global issues. Record wildfire seasons and other impacts of climate change; the expiration of the Aichi Targets and the negotiation of a new global biodiversity framework; and the COVID-19 pandemic – were among many recent events that demanded more collaborative action. In parallel, is the focus on a ‘one UN’ approach across the UN family of organizations and agencies to support progress on multifaceted global issues. In a way, greater collaboration and cooperation on forest issues has occurred as part of a larger movement within the UN and across countries and territories looking to achieve a multidisciplinary development agenda in an era of increasingly complex and interrelated global challenges.

Country and CPF Action by Target

Target 6.1: Forest-related programmes within the United Nations system are coherent and complementary and integrate the global forest goals and targets, where appropriate

The UN System put in place a wide range of general coordination measures that had bearing on its forest-related programmes. However, no assessment or data existed to determine whether or not these systems improved the coherence of UN system forest-related programmes.

Target 6.2: Forest-related programmes across member organizations of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests are coherent and complementary and together encompass the multiple contributions of forests and the forest sector to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

Established in 2001, the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF) is “an innovative voluntary inter-agency partnership to support the UNFF and its member countries, and to enhance cooperation and coordination on forest issues.” The CPF has 15 international organizations⁴⁷ with significant forest programmes. CPF members regularly exchange knowledge, ideas, and information on their work, thereby improving coherence across their programmes.

CPF member organizations pursued a number of activities consistent with the achievement of target 6.2, among them adopting a new CPF Policy Document and Work Plan 2017-2020 and the CPF Strategic Vision towards 2030. The Strategic Vision states that “CPF will effectively enhance coherence and synergy on forest-related issues and values.” CPF Strategic Priorities, enshrined in the Vision, include calls to “support the achievements of the Global Forest Goals,” as well as to “enhance cross-sectoral collaboration, policy coherence, coordination, and integrated approaches.” The Policy Document and Work Plan 2017-2020 contributed to coherence and complementarity of the actions taken by CPF member organizations.

CPF member Joint Initiatives also resulted in key outcomes important to the achievement of target 6.2. For instance:

- The CPF Joint Initiative on Streamlining Forest Related Reporting developed the Global Core Set of Forest-related Indicators to minimize duplication and contradiction in monitoring, reporting, and analysis. The Global Core Set was a central part of this flagship publication, providing a framework for assessing progress towards most of the Global Forest Goals;
- The CPF Communicators Network and the Global Forest Information Service (GFIS) facilitated information sharing and coordinated outreach activities;
- With the UNFF Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network, CPF members undertook coordinated joint activities to support Member States of the UNFF to mobilize financing for forests;
- CPF worked to enhance synergies within the Global Forest Landscape Restoration (GFLR) process; and
- In 2018, the CPF organized a Global Conference titled, ‘Working across sectors to halt deforestation and increase forest area – from aspiration to action,’ which brought together a wide range of high-level actors to, among other things, improve the coherence of international forest-related programmes.



At the present time, it is difficult to objectively assess the extent of progress in achieving target 6.2 over the reporting period, 2015-2020. Following the adoption of the UN Strategic Plan for Forests in 2017, the CPF conducted a mapping and gap analysis in 2017 and a review in 2018. This analysis identified some gaps that included: the lack of special mechanisms to evaluate and demonstrate the efficiency and efficacy of collective CPF activities; and insufficient mechanisms to collate the strategic and policy work of the CPF and to communicate outcomes to countries, policymakers, and other forest-related forums. The CPF mapping and gap analysis also provided a number of recommendations, notably to develop a vision and work programme fully integrated with the UN Strategic Plan on Forests and the UNFF four-year programme, the implementation of which is discussed above.

Target 6.3: Cross-sectoral coordination and cooperation to promote sustainable forest management and halt deforestation and forest degradation are significantly enhanced at all levels.

Countries, in their voluntary national reports, discussed the steps they took towards implementing GFG target 6.3. Often these measures were attended to by the highest levels of governance and touched on efforts to address climate change. Some examples, discussed below, also highlight cross-country collaboration.

- In **Algeria**, priority issues were addressed at the highest level of governance to ensure intersectoral coordination. The inter-ministerial council (CIM) took up challenges such as combatting desertification, preventing and controlling forest fires, and implementing sustainable development, the national climate plan, and the national reforestation plan.
- In **Brazil**, the teams involved in reporting government forest information to the UNFCCC, FAO, and the CBD as well as on the SDGs, were interacting and cooperating more on data sharing, information, and tasks, with the aim of improving the quality of country information on forests.
- **Cameroon** established a REDD + Technical Secretariat that brought together representatives of the Presidency, the Prime Minister, and all stakeholders concerned with climate change-related issues. The Secretariat was responsible for examining and advising on all matters related to emission reductions from deforestation and forest degradation.
- **Canada**, in cooperation with **Australia** and other countries, developed a dynamic “next generation” platform for estimating emissions and removals of GHGs from the land sector. The tools provided a platform for the development and implementation of monitoring, reporting, and verification (MRV) systems for use in REDD+, the Paris Agreement on climate change, and other commitments.
- The **Central African Republic** established a national coordination body for the restoration of forest landscapes to define the baseline situation in terms of land degradation; assess opportunities for restoring forest landscapes; and to define national objectives to achieve a state of neutrality in terms of land degradation by 2030.
- **Côte d’Ivoire** cooperated with **Costa Rica** and **Mexico** as part of the implementation of its Strategy for the Preservation, Rehabilitation, and Extension of Forests. It also established contacts with **the Republic of Korea**.
- In **Ghana**, the National Development Planning Commission and the Environmental Protection Agency promoted effective cross-sectoral coordination through stakeholder dialogue, joint performance assessments, and the production of review reports on the implementation of the Ghana Shared Growth and Development Agenda 2015-2030.
- In **Madagascar**, the Inter-Ministerial Committee for the Environment brought together 17 ministries working for the protection of the environment.
- **South Africa** participated in the South African Development Community (SADC) Forest Law Enforcement and Governance and Trade (FLEGT) regional programme activities.
- The **Sri Lanka** National Forestry Sector Steering Committee engaged all forestry sector stakeholders as well as the National Forest Protection Committee and district forest protection committees to improve coordination among institutions charged with administering forest and other related legislation.

- Within **Switzerland's** National Adaptation Strategy (2012), the country implemented a cross-sectoral strategy integrating forests. Furthermore, the Swiss Sustainable Development Strategy 2016-2019 included many cross-cutting areas of work, in particular Action Area 3 on Energy and Climate, and Action Area 4 on Natural Resources.
- The **United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland** had a cross-government group working on areas that impact international forestry. In addition, three departments with an interest in international forestry and that participate in and contribute to the International Climate Fund – Defra (Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs), BEIS (Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy) and DFID (Department for International Development)— jointly managed this fund.

Target 6.4: A greater common understanding of the concept of sustainable forest management is achieved and an associated set of indicators is identified.

National contributions towards the achievement of GFG target 6.4 fell into two categories: (1) criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management and (2) the promotion of sustainable forest management through public awareness building, special outreach events, and youth education.

Criteria and Indicators for Sustainable Forest Management

Building on the extensive work on global and regional criteria and indicators (C&I) for SFM since the 1990s, the countries of **Algeria, Cameroon, Canada, Japan, Mexico, and Switzerland** discussed their efforts to further develop and refine these measures. They reported the following interventions, some of which expanded and improved the use and accessibility of data.

- In **Algeria**, two scientific and technical working groups monitored the measurement of certain indicators of SDG 15 using a remote sensing tool and geographic information system. The working groups collaborated with the Algerian Space Agency and the National Institute of Cartography and Remote Sensing.
- **Cameroon** developed principles and criteria and indicators (PCIs) for SFM. From these PCIs, it created a grid for monitoring the implementation of development plans. In addition, the government encouraged forest companies to engage in forest certification systems.
- In **Canada**, the 'Ottawa Collaborative Action Plan to Mobilize the Full Potential of C&I' was the outcome of an international expert workshop organized by Canada and FAO to strengthen collaboration on C&I and to promote and demonstrate sustainable forest management.
- In October 2019, **Japan's** Forestry Agency hosted the 'International Symposium of the Montreal Process Working Group' to consider the contribution of forests to the SDGs and the use of forest information and C&I.
- In **Mexico**, the Virtual Center of Excellence in Forest Monitoring in Mesoamerica (CEVMF) offered virtual knowledge management solutions to strengthen sustainable forest management in the Mesoamerican region through robust and transparent forest monitoring systems.
- In 2012, in **Switzerland**, the Swiss Forest Planning Programme developed a set of criteria and indicators for SFM, and these aligned to the C&I of FAO and Forest Europe.

Promoting SFM through Public Outreach

Other countries described how public outreach and awareness engendered progress towards GFG target 6.4. Notable communication initiatives undertaken by countries included:

- **Australia** developed a suite of communication products to promote and raise awareness of the national forestry industry and forests as a sustainably managed resource. This included its five-yearly publication 'Australia's State of the Forests Report (SOFR)' and videos showcasing the work of the national forestry industry.



- The **Brazilian** Forest Service website (www.florestal.gov.br) served as a platform to disseminate information on its SFM actions and to promote good SFM practices.
- In 2015, in **Guinea-Bissau**, state institutions, civil society, and international environmental protection organizations undertook concerted awareness and advocacy actions to protect forests – actions that resulted in a five-year moratorium on cutting forests.
- **Kenya's** Ministry of Environment and Forestry developed 'Sectoral Strategic Plans' and 'Service Charters' to inform the public on SFM.
- In **Mexico**, CONAFOR used social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and Instagram) to disseminate publications, promote actions carried out by the institution, and distribute materials to raise awareness on forest issues.
- **Morocco's** Department of Water and Forests adopted a communications action plan that included organizing thematic forums and scientific events, celebrating world days commemorated within the framework of international conventions and agreements, participation in national and international exhibitions and fairs, and the production and dissemination of awareness raising materials to the public.
- Te Uru Rākau (Forestry **New Zealand**) maintained a website that published various materials on SFM, including the National Environmental Standards for Plantation Forestry, export products, the 'Emissions Trading Scheme for Forestry', funding for forests, as well as information on how to get started in forestry.
- Since 2016, the Forestry Management Bureau (FMB) of **the Philippines** has published the yearly statistical handbook titled, 'Philippine Forests at a Glance,' which provides summary data on forests to complement the more detailed 'Philippine Forestry Statistics.' Information materials were also published to improve communications on FSM to the public.
- In **South Africa**, an Arbor Month Campaign has been held every year in October to build national awareness of the value of trees and forests, especially tree species threatened by extinction. Various communication platforms have been used including television, radio and newspapers, seminars, conferences, and public talks.
- Within **the United States of America**, every state had Forestry Best Management Practices (BMPs) to protect water sources during forest management activities. BMPs set standards for how practices such as timber harvesting, forest road use, and stream crossings were to be carried out, creating a framework for states to monitor and report on implementation.

Increasing SFM Awareness through Special Events

The International Day of Forests (21 March) has become a major event for promoting sustainable forest management worldwide. Forty-five of the reporting countries celebrated the Day, often with tree planting campaigns. Of these, 39 countries organized educational activities, such as workshops, symposiums, and field trips, and 38 countries used traditional media (newspapers, magazines, radio, and television) for outreach. Social media activities and internet promotions featured prominently for 25 countries. Twenty-four countries organized cultural activities such as art, music, film, and theatre festivals to elevate celebrations of the International Day. It is important to note that in addition to these celebratory activities held by countries, many other forest actors, including from intergovernmental organizations, the UN system, CPF members, regional and subregional organizations and Major Groups and other stakeholders also held robust celebrations. These, however, were not within the scope of this report.

Further to the International Day of Forests, countries organized other affairs to promote SFM. Fourteen governments discussed holding such events, among them national tree days, forest weeks, nature parks days, greening the country days, and annual nature fairs. These events made noteworthy contributions to GFG target 6.4, and a few are highlighted below. Where countries used these special events to plant trees, they often engaged a range of stakeholders with the intention of promoting awareness and extending outreach.

- **Algeria** created the National Green City Prize. It bestowed the first award on 25 October 2018 on the occasion of National Tree Day. The second award was given on 27 October 2019.
- On the National Tree Planting Day (12 March) and International Day of Forests (21 March), **China** organized commemorative activities, mainly focusing on planting trees, to enhance the general public's understanding of forest and sustainable forest management and to raise awareness on environmental protection.
- **Ghana** celebrated the International Day of Forests, national Forestry Week, and Greening Ghana Day. It also used a 'Meet the Press' series, news conferences, stakeholder dialogue platforms, Durbars (formal state meetings), and radio and television discussions, as well as other media programmes in schools and colleges to expand awareness of sustainable forest management.
- **Jamaica** celebrated Earth Day (22 April 2016) under the theme, 'Trees for the Earth.' This environmental event increased requests for tree seedlings for various tree planting exercises across the island. For its Labor Day (celebrated on 23 May) and National Tree Planting Day (celebrated annually on the first Friday in October), the Forestry Department partnered with the private sector, schools, and civil society groups to conduct various public awareness and educational activities on SFM. On National Tree Planting Day in 2019, the Prime Minister of Jamaica launched a National Tree Planting Initiative to plant three million trees (one for every Jamaican) over three years.
- **The Philippines'** Forest Management Bureau spearheaded various information education and communication (IEC) activities to promote forest conservation and widen its network of forestry champions to include students, academia, private sector, hobbyists (bikers and photographers), and local government units, among others. These activities were conducted annually, with special contests and competitions, symposiums and tree planting often organized to mark the International Day of Forests.
- In the **Russian Federation**, information campaigns and special events were held regularly to promote participation in the Preservation of Forests federal project, as well as to strengthen knowledge about forests and raise environmental awareness. From 2011 to 2018, 21.7 million people planted over 405 million new trees on National Forest Planting Days. In 2019, six million volunteers planted over 100 million trees through reforestation campaigns.

Rooting SFM in Education and Youth Outreach

Countries used their national education systems to reach youth and improve the next generation's understanding of SFM. Eleven countries highlighted the work they did to promote SFM through schools, such as through the establishment of green clubs, while nine countries integrated SFM directly into their school curricula and teaching materials. The activities of **Austria, Canada, Côte d'Ivoire, Jamaica, and the United States of America** were illustrative.

- **Austria** organized guided forest tours conducted by certified forest pedagogues for approximately 100,000 students annually.
- In **Canada**, the Saskatchewan Forestry Association (SFA), a non-profit organization developed and delivered the 'Focus on Forests' programme, which provided curriculum-based forest education materials and programming to schools; Inside Education in Alberta offered 22 experiential learning programmes in environmental and natural resource education to support teachers and inspire students; the Alberta Forest Products Association launched 'Love Alberta Forests' to increase public awareness of forests and sustainable forestry practices; and in British Columbia, the Great Bear Rainforest Education and Awareness Trust sponsored a website to help students in grades 7-9 and teachers explore the area's biodiversity.
- **Côte d'Ivoire's** Ministry of Water and Forests initiated an environmental education project called 'A School, 5 Hectares of Forests' in collaboration with the Ministry of National Education. Further, studies were underway to integrate teaching modules on forests and the environment into school curricula.



- **Jamaica's** Forestry Department undertook 1,100 school visits, engaging over 70,000 students between April 2015 and March 2019 across the island.
- In **the United States of America**, Project Learning Tree (PLT), an environmental education programme designed for educators, parents, and community leaders working with youth from preschool through grade 12, developed a special curriculum for the International Day of Forests 2019 theme, 'Forests and Education.' PLT's resources, coupled with the Sustainable Forestry Initiative, have helped over half a million educators integrate complex environmental issues into lesson plans for all grades.

Target 6.5: The input and involvement of Major Groups and other relevant stakeholders in the implementation of the Strategic Plan and in the work of the Forum, including intersessional work, is strengthened.

Countries reported on mechanisms to expand the role of Major Groups in multilateral, regional, and national platforms. For instance, **Ghana, Jamaica, Japan, Mexico, Suriname, and Thailand** created national multi-stakeholder dialogues and other advisory mechanisms to engage stakeholders more effectively in consultations on how to implement the UNSPF and pursue SFM. These entities often involved representatives from the forestry industry, labor, consumer groups, academia, local authorities, civil society, indigenous peoples, youth, and women. **Kenya, Mexico, and the United States of America** established similar multi-stakeholder advisory mechanisms at the regional level. Further, a number of countries, including **Germany, Ghana, Japan, Mexico, Nepal, Suriname, and the United States of America**, directly engaged the private sector to play a larger role in sustainably managing forests, especially in the agricultural and forest industrial sectors. Some of these reported country actions are detailed below.

- Since 2015, **Germany** has been committed to the Amsterdam Declarations Partnership to promote private initiatives that incentivize the agricultural sectors in developing countries to care for forests. In 2017, under German chairmanship, a 10-point plan was adopted.
- **Ghana** has used the Multi-stakeholder Forest Dialogue Platform to involve major key stakeholders – like the Ghana Timber Organisation, the Ghana Wood Workers Association, traditional authorities, and youth – in the implementation of the UNSPF.
- From 2016 to 2017, **Jamaica** undertook a series of stakeholder consultations to give “voice” to the diverse group of participants in the sector and to help the National Environment and Planning Agency determine priority national policy areas and implementation actions. An expert from the UNFF Secretariat supported these consultations, the participants for which drew from the public sector, local forest management community groups, academia, and private planters, among others.
- **Japan** established the Forestry Policy Council, an advisory body of the Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, to deliberate on matters such as the formulation of the Basic Plan for Forest and Forestry and the White Paper on Forest and Forestry. Various stakeholders, including local governments, academics, members from the forest, forestry and timber industries, private companies, consumer groups, and citizens appointed the Council's members.
- **Kenya** established regional forest conservation committees (FCCs) with broad stakeholder representation to guide forestry development in their respective regions.
- **Mexico's** National Forest Council convened representatives of the academic, indigenous, government (federal, state, and municipal), private (industrial), civil, professional, and social sectors through legally constituted, public or private organizations with national regional or specialized coverage.
- The Government of **Suriname** established mechanisms to strengthen dialogue with different stakeholder groups in forest-related decision-making processes. They included monthly dialogues between the Foundation for Forest Management and Production Control (SBB), the government entity responsible for Suriname's REDD+ Programme, and the Timber Sector Platform (PHS) comprised of large forestry enterprises.

- In 2018, **Thailand's** Royal Forest Department set up a National UNSPF Committee of approximately 22 governmental and non-governmental organizations to mobilize implementation of the Plan.
- In **the United States of America**, the 'Keeping Forests as Forests' initiative was a 13-state regional initiative focused on combating the loss of southern forests and maintaining their long-term economic and ecological viability. It drew support from a diverse coalition of private and public stakeholders working in, *inter alia*, health, forest product manufacturing, and conservation.

In addition to reported country initiatives, the UNFF supported progress towards GFG target 6.5 by working with focal points from each of the nine Major Groups: Business and Industry; Children and Youth; Indigenous Peoples; Local Authorities; Non-governmental Organizations; Scientific and Technological Communities; Small Forest Landowners / Farmers; Women; and Workers and Trade Unions. This focal point system helped facilitate coordination, planning, and discussion on UNFF-related issues within and between Major Group networks. In 2018, the Major Groups active in this focal point system developed work plans to support implementation of the UNSPF, and regularly provided progress reports to the annual sessions of the UNFF.

Progress towards Global Forest Goal 6

Adoption of the UN Strategic Plan for Forests in 2017 provided the foundation for advancing coordinated and collaborative actions globally, nationally, and locally on forest issues. Within and outside of this framework, countries reported on a variety of mechanisms to expand stakeholder involvement in reaching forest-related goals and objectives. At the national level, 47 out of 52 responding countries stated that forests were integrated into their national sustainable development plans and/or poverty reduction strategies: this included programmes implemented through the UN System. Many countries cited institutions, organizations, and agencies involved in collaborative work on forests and provided examples of best practices and existing cross-sectoral mechanisms canvassing forest-related issues. In nearly all reports, governments planned and implemented activities related to forests in close collaboration with civil society, the private sector, and local authorities.

The work of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF) also helped advance progress towards GFG6 at the international level. Achieving forest policy coherence and complementarity at the international level will largely depend on the guidance and resources provided by the governing bodies of the UN entities and CPF member organizations, many of which are comprised of largely the same Member States. Further studies are needed to explore additional areas for improving coordination and collaboration.

Progress towards Target 6.1

Many actions reported towards this target

- ✔ The UN System put in place a wide range of general coordination measures applicable to forest-related programmes.
- ✔ Further analysis was needed on whether forest-related programmes in the UN System "are coherent and complementary and integrate the global forest goals and targets, where appropriate." No agency was tasked with coordinating programmes that supported progress towards the Global Forest Goals.

Progress towards Target 6.2

Many actions reported towards this target.

- ✔ The fifteen-member Collaborative Partnership on Forests was instrumental in developing programmes for joint implementation and served as a coordination mechanism at the implementation level.
- ✔ The Collaborative Partnership on Forests carried out a number of activities to improve the coherence, complementarity, and comprehensiveness of international forest-related programmes, however further analysis was needed to assess progress towards this target.



Progress towards Target 6.3

Many actions reported towards this target.

- ✓ Nearly all reporting countries took action at the national and international levels to enhance cross-sectoral coordination and cooperation and to promote forests and sustainable forest management.
- ✓ Many countries provided numerous examples of existing cross-sectoral mechanisms for forest-related issues and cited the involvement of a variety of stakeholders.

Progress towards Target 6.4

Many actions reported towards this target.

- ✓ Reporting countries described an array of communication initiatives focused on outreach to the general public, special events, and youth education to improve understanding and awareness of sustainable forest management.
- ✓ Forest authorities were actively involved in creating educational and environmental programmes and developing entire suites of communication products showcasing the benefits of forests to society and the planet.
- ✓ Forest agencies provided open access to online data, which supplied details related to forest operations and standards for plantations as well as explanations of emissions-trading schemes for forestry and forest funding.
- ✓ Most countries reported using criteria and indicators (C&I) for sustainable forest management.

Progress towards Target 6.5

Many actions reported towards this target.

- ✓ Reporting countries highlighted how they were involving Major Groups and other relevant stakeholders in the implementation of the UNSPF 2017-2030 and in their sustainable forest management initiatives.
- ✓ Almost all countries reported planning forest activities in close collaboration with, and with the participation of, Major Groups and other relevant stakeholders.

Success Stories

Austria THE AUSTRIAN FOREST DIALOGUE



The Austrian Forest Dialogue of the Federal Ministry for Sustainability and Tourism is showing how inclusive decision-making and open participation can advance national policy on sustainable forest management. The Dialogue encourages diverse stakeholder participation and supports discourse on multilateral solutions that meet the needs of all interest groups with respect to forests. In addition to hosting key annual forest meetings and round tables (presided over at the ministerial level), the Dialogue supported the development of the Austrian Forest Strategy 2020+. The Austrian Forest Strategy 2020+ accounts for the political parameters contained in various national forest strategies like the Austrian Strategy for Adaptation to Climate Change as well as many international mechanisms like the UN Forum on Forests and the Convention on Biological Diversity. The Strategy was devised jointly by 85 organizations discussing forest policy in the framework of the Austrian Forest Dialogue, and its Work Programme is constantly adapted and further developed within the framework of the Forest Forums, also supported by the Dialogue.

Nepal PROMOTING COMMUNITY FORESTRY



Nepal is a leading example of what can be achieved when forest policy, laws, and guidelines are conducive to the development of community forestry. The country has transformed nearly 35% of its total forest area to community forests. Because annual programmes and budgets were allocated to support the formation of user groups, as of July 2019, some 22,266 community forestry user groups comprising of nearly half of the population in the country had formed. As a result, forest area in the middle hills increased by 10% over 15 years, while the rate of deforestation decreased in Siwalik hills from 1.3% to 0.8%. Income from forests also rose, along with women's empowerment, with at least 22,000 women, serving as either chairperson or secretary, leading community forestry governance. A pilot study of 35 community forests confirmed that these communities were meeting all FSC certification principles.



Issues for Future Consideration



The Global Forests Goals Report originated from Member States' submissions of national data and information in the form of 52 voluntary national reports (VNRs) and 19 voluntary national contributions (VNCs), representing 75% of forests in the world. These updates on progress towards the Global Forest Goals and targets paint a vibrant picture of ambitious and inspiring action on the ground and around the world. These narratives, combined with the quality data of the FAO Global Forest Resources Assessment 2020, indicate that despite the many challenges that countries face, progress is being made towards all six Global Forest Goals and their associated targets. It is expected that as more countries participate in future reporting cycles, a broader overall assessment of progress will emerge.

In their reporting, countries elaborated a number of obstacles they were working to overcome. Key challenges ranged from broader global issues such as the growing impacts of climate change, biodiversity loss, and land degradation to challenges like forest financing, illegal trade, and capacity building, all of which fell under the means of implementation for sustainable forest management.

When it comes to tracking progress towards the Global Forest Goals, a lack of standardized and comparable data and statistics remains a challenge for some targets. For instance, while many countries recognize forest degradation as a major issue, there is no agreed-upon standard definition of what constitutes forest degradation. Similarly, while the resilience and adaptive capacity of forest ecosystems is a desirable characteristic, especially in the context of climate change, biodiversity protection, and for preventing future pandemics, there is currently no objective and quantifiable way of measuring “resilience and adaptive capacity.”

Furthermore, a lack of data related to the socio-economic benefits that forests provide to critical development issues such as poverty eradication and income generation, employment, health, and food security are compounded by the fact that, often, these forest-driven benefits accrue to informal sector – where they are even harder to measure. Lastly, there is a lack of reliable data on forest funding due to limited understanding of the financial landscape associated with managing all types of forests, including forest contributions to local, national, and regional development.

With so much at stake, it is critical that countries continue to strengthen their capacities to capture data, and that they receive adequate and sufficient funding to do so. Towards this end, important data innovations are also taking place.

For instance, work on the Global core set (GCS) of forest relevant indicators is an important development for the assessment of progress. The GCS, which includes SDG indicator 15.2.1,⁴⁸ advances a common understanding of sustainable forest management by identifying key factors that need to be measured to assess global progress and trends toward sustainable forest management. It thus also helps provide a means for demonstrating the full contribution of forests to achievement of all the SDGs and the 2030 Agenda overall.

Further, the adoption of the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting—Ecosystem Accounting (SEEA EA) by the UN Statistical Commission in March 2021 was a major step to ensure that natural capital like forests is recognized in economic reporting. A key aspect of ecosystem accounting is that it allows the contributions of ecosystems to society to be expressed in monetary terms so these contributions can be more easily compared to other goods and services, thus expanding the notion or moving beyond GDP as an inclusive measure of wealth. As a result, decision-makers will soon have an integrated way to value the ecosystem services that forests provide to the local economy, social well-being, and livelihoods, as well as globally with regard to carbon storage, biodiversity protection, water filtration, and disaster risk reduction. According to some estimates, these values could reach the trillions.⁴⁹ Innovations such as these will support progress towards the Global Forest Goals, among many other environmental objectives.

Against this backdrop of challenges and possible solutions, the world is still contending with the COVID-19 pandemic. The 2021 Financing for Sustainable Development Report (FSDR) warns that COVID-19 could lead to a lost decade for development. The report notes that approximately half of the least developed and other low-income countries were at high risk of or in debt distress before COVID-19 – a situation set to worsen as tax revenues fall and debt levels rise due to the pandemic. In this context, developing integrated national financing frameworks (INFFs) can help countries to overcome impediments, manage risk, increase investment, and achieve longer-term sustainable development priorities.

While official development assistance rose in 2020 to help support pandemic responses in developing countries, there are growing concerns that the global recession, especially in donor countries, could eventually lead to reduced international public financing for forests. At the regional level, the pandemic is already creating challenges for forest financing in Africa, the Asia-Pacific region, and for some countries in Latin America, where limited public resources are being spent on the most immediate public health needs. Pandemic-related lockdown measures are also disrupting data collection on forests.

Looking ahead, countries have underscored that the challenges to achieving the Global Forest Goals are both numerous and enduring – with the pandemic serving as the latest global threat. But in Nature there is always hope. Forests are a solution to climate change. Their management and preservation will restore biodiversity and help protect us from future disease outbreaks. Healthy forests will also ensure we will have the clean air, freshwater, shelter, and food that all life on Earth needs to flourish.

The centrality of forests to global well-being has never been more evident – and now, above all, this recognition must be met with collective action. This report highlights a number of successes and positive trends towards achieving the Global Forest Goals – and this momentum must be accelerated and taken into the Decade of Action, because a more sustainable, equitable, and greener future must be one that is rooted in the world's forests.



Annex 1: National reporting to the UN Forum on Forests

Voluntary national reports are a vital source of information for assessing progress towards implementation of the United Nations Strategic Plan for Forests 2030. In 2018, the United Nations Forum on Forests adopted the reporting format (E/CN.18/2018/4, annex I) for the first cycle of voluntary national reporting on progress towards implementation of the Strategic Plan. The reporting format was structured around the six Global Forest Goals and targets and was largely narrative in style, reflecting the qualitative nature of many of the targets. Only information that was not already being provided to the member organizations of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests or that was not in other international databases, was requested.

52 countries participated in the first cycle of UNSPF voluntary national reporting in 2019-2020:

Algeria	Kenya	Serbia
Argentina	Lesotho	Slovak Republic
Australia	Liberia	Slovenia
Austria	Madagascar	South Africa
Botswana	Mauritius	Sri Lanka
Brazil	Mexico	Sudan
Bulgaria	Morocco	Suriname
Cameroon	Myanmar	Switzerland
Canada	Nepal	Thailand
Central African Republic	New Zealand	Tunisia
China	Niger	Turkey
Côte D'Ivoire	Nigeria	Turkmenistan
Eswatini	State of Palestine	Ukraine
Ghana	Panama	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
Guinea	Papua New Guinea	United States of America
Guinea Bissau	Philippines	Zimbabwe
Jamaica	Republic of Korea	
Japan	Senegal	

Voluntary National Contributions

The Strategic Plan invited Member States to, on a voluntary basis, determine their contributions towards achieving the Global Forest Goals and targets, taking into account their national circumstances, policies, priorities, capacities, levels of development, and forest conditions. These “voluntary national contributions” or VNCs, could include national actions and targets related to other international forest-related commitments and goals, such as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals, the Aichi Biodiversity Targets and actions to address climate change under the Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

19 countries have announced voluntary national contributions to date:

Australia	India	Russian Federation
Canada	Indonesia	Slovak Republic
China	Jamaica	Thailand
Ecuador	Liberia	Ukraine
Germany	Madagascar	Uzbekistan
Ghana	Morocco	
Guatemala	New Zealand	



Annex 2: Data sources and indicators

Global Forest Goal 1: The data for assessing progress towards Global Forest Goal 1 came from the 52 UNFF voluntary national reports, 19 voluntary national contributions, and from the FAO Global Forest Resources Assessment 2020.

- Target 1.1 is monitored by GCS Indicator 2 on Forest Area Annual Net Change Rate and GCS Indicator 7 on Area of Degraded Forests.
- Target 1.2 is monitored by GCS Indicator 3 on Net Greenhouse Gas Emissions (source)/removals (sink) of Forests and Carbon Balance of Harvested Wood Products and GCS Indicator 8 on Above Ground Biomass Stock in Forests.
- Target 1.3 is monitored by a combination of the GCS Indicator 2, GCS Indicator 4 on Proportion of forest area located within legally established protected areas, GCS Indicator 8, GCS Indicator 19 on Proportion of forest area under a long-term forest management plan and GCS Indicator 20 on Forest area under an independently verified forest management certification scheme.
- Target 1.4 is monitored by GCS Indicator Indicator 6 on Proportion of Forest Area Disturbed.

Global Forest Goal 2: The data for assessing progress towards Global Forest Goal 2 came from the 52 UNFF voluntary national reports, 19 voluntary national contributions, and from the FAO Global Forest Resources Assessment 2020.

- Target 2.4 is monitored by GCS Indicator 9; "Volume of wood removals."
- Target 2.5 is monitored by GCS indicator 4: "Proportion of forest area located within legally established protected areas."

Global Forest Goal 3: The data for assessing progress towards Global Forest Goal 3 came from the 52 UNFF voluntary national reports, 19 voluntary national contributions, and from the FAO Global Forest Resources Assessment 2020.

- Target 3.1 is monitored by GCS 4 on Proportion of forest area located within legally established protected areas.
- Target 3.2 is monitored by GCS Indicator 19 on Proportion of forest area under a long-term forest management plan.
- Target 3.3 is monitored by GCS indicators 20 on Forest area under an independently verified forest management certification scheme and 21 Existence of traceability systems for wood products.

Global Forest Goal 4: The data for assessing progress towards Global Forest Goal 4 came from the 52 UNFF voluntary national reports, 19 voluntary national contributions, as well as from OECD and World Bank sources.

Global Forest Goal 5: The data for assessing progress towards Global Forest Goal 5 came from the 52 UNFF voluntary national reports and 19 voluntary national contributions.

Global Forest Goal 6: The data for assessing progress towards Global Forest Goal 6 came from the 52 UNFF voluntary national reports, 19 voluntary national contributions, and CPF members.

Success stories: The information on the success stories included in this report came from the 52 UNFF voluntary national reports.

Annex 3: Global core set of forest-related indicators

The global core set of forest-related indicators (GCS) is a set of 21 indicators that address topics identified in high-level political commitments on forests and high-level forum discourse. While the GCS, inter-alia, supports measuring progress towards Global Forest Goals and their associated targets, it also aims to reduce the reporting burden of countries in reporting on other indicators, including those related to the SDGs and the Rio Conventions. Essentially, by offering core set with a limited number of forest-related indicators that address key policy topics, the GCS helps to focus data collection efforts and avoid duplication in reporting.

At present, most of the core indicators are established, and data are being provided by the FAO Global Forest Resources Assessment., the These indicators supported assessment of progress towards the Global Forest Goals and targets, as reflected in this flagship publication. In particular, GFG1 and GFG3 and all their associated targets have benefited from the GCS and the supplementary data provided by FRA. However, four of the GCS indicators are still classified as “Tier 3” and for these to become operational, further work is needed. These indicators, mostly socio-economic, require further work on concepts and methodology as well as on data sets that are currently unavailable.

The set of GCS indicators as contained in the table below was included as Annex II of the UNFF national reporting format.

Indicator	Thematic element	Unit	Tier	Data supplier	Linkages to globally agreed goals and targets
1. Forest area as a proportion of total land area	1. Extent of forest resources	Percentage	1	FAO Global Forest Resources Assessment	Measures progress towards target 15.1 of the Sustainable Development Goals and global forest goal 1. Sustainable Development Goal indicator 15.1.1
2. Forest area annual net change rate	1. Extent of forest resources	Percentage	1	FAO Global Forest Resources Assessment	Measures progress towards target 15.2 of the Sustainable Development Goals and target 1.1 of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030. Subindicator of Sustainable Development Goal indicator 15.2.1
3. Net greenhouse gas emissions (source)/removals (sink) of forests, and carbon balance of harvested wood products	1. Extent of forest resources 4. Productive functions of forest resources	Kilotons of carbon dioxide emissions per year	2	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change secretariat	Measures progress towards targets 1.2 and 2.5 of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030. Linkages with Sustainable Development Goal 13 and measuring, reporting and verifying requirements under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
4. Proportion of forest area located within legally established protected areas	2. Forest biological diversity	Percentage	1	FAO Global Forest Resources Assessment	Measures progress towards target 15.2 of the Sustainable Development Goals, targets 2.5 and 3.1 of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030 and Aichi Biodiversity Target 11. Subindicator of Sustainable Development Goal indicator 15.2.1
5. Change in area of primary forests	2. Forest biological diversity	Percentage	1	FAO Global Forest Resources Assessment	Measures progress towards target 1.3 of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030 and Aichi Biodiversity Target 5. Linkages with Sustainable Development Goal 15
6. Proportion of forest area disturbed	3. Forest health and vitality	Percentage of forest area	2	FAO Global Forest Resources Assessment	Measures progress towards target 1.4 of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030
7. Area of degraded forest	3. Forest health and vitality	Hectares	3	FAO Global Forest Resources Assessment	Measures progress towards target 1.3 of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030. Linkages with target 15.3 of the Sustainable Development Goals, as well as Aichi Biodiversity Target 15. Linkages to strategic objective 1 of the 10 year strategic plan and framework to enhance the implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa (2008–2018), and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
8. Above-ground biomass stock in forest	4. Productive function of forest resources	Tons per hectare	1	FAO Global Forest Resources Assessment	Measures progress towards target 15.2 of the Sustainable Development Goals and targets 1.2 and 2.5 of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030, as well as Aichi Biodiversity Target 7. Subindicator of Sustainable Development Goal indicator 15.2.1



Indicator	Thematic element	Unit	Tier	Data supplier	Linkages to globally agreed goals and targets
9. Volume of wood removals	4. Productive function of forest resources	Cubic metres	1	ECE/FAO/International Tropical Timber Organization/Eurostat joint forest sector questionnaire	Measures progress towards target 2.4 of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030
10. Wood-based energy share of total final energy consumption	4. Productive function of forest resources	Percentage	2	ECE and FAO	Linked to target 7.2 of the Sustainable Development Goals
11. Forest area with a designated management objective to maintain and enhance its protective functions	5. Protective function of forest resources	Hectares	1	FAO Global Forest Resources Assessment	Linked to target 1.4 of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030
12. Employment related to the forest sector	6. Socioeconomic functions of forest resources	Number of full-time equivalents	2	FAO Global Forest Resources Assessment	Measures progress towards target 2.4 of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030
13. Number of forest-dependent people in extreme poverty	6. Socioeconomic functions of forest resources	Number	3	FAO and United Nations Forum on Forests	Measures progress towards global forest goal 2 and target 2.1 of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030
14. Contribution of forests to food security	6. Socioeconomic functions of forest resources	To be decided	3	FAO and United Nations Forum on Forests	Measures progress towards global forest goal 2 and target 2.3 of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030
15. Financial resources from all sources for the implementation of sustainable forest management	6. Socioeconomic functions of forest resources	United States dollars	3	OECD, World Bank	Measures progress towards global forest goal 4 and targets 4.1 and 4.2 of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030. Linkages with targets 15.a and 15.b of the Sustainable Development Goals
16. Existence of national or subnational policies, strategies, legislation, regulations and institutions that explicitly encourage sustainable forest management	7. Legal, policy and institutional framework	References	1	FAO Global Forest Resources Assessment	Measures progress towards global forest goal 5 of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030
17. Existence of national or subnational forest assessment process	7. Legal, policy and institutional framework	References	1	FAO Global Forest Resources Assessment	Measures progress towards target 4.5 of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030
18. Existence of national or subnational stakeholder platform for participation in forest policy development	7. Legal, policy and institutional framework	References	1	FAO Global Forest Resources Assessment	Measures progress towards target 4.5 of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030
19. Proportion of forest area under a long-term forest management plan	7. Legal, policy and institutional framework	Percentage	1	FAO Global Forest Resources Assessment	Measures progress towards target 15.2 of the Sustainable Development Goals, targets 1.3 and 3.2 of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030 and Aichi Biodiversity Target 7. Subindicator of Sustainable Development Goal indicator 15.2.1
20. Forest area under an independently verified forest management certification scheme	7. Legal, policy and institutional framework	Hectares	1	FAO Global Forest Resources Assessment	Measures progress towards target 15.2 of the Sustainable Development Goals and targets 1.3 and 3.3 of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030. Subindicator of Sustainable Development Goal indicator 15.2.1
21. Existence of traceability system(s) for wood products	7. Legal, policy and institutional framework	References	2	FAO Global Forest Resources Assessment	Measures progress towards targets 3.3 and 5.2 of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030

Abbreviations: ECE, Economic Commission for Europe; FAO, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations; OECD, Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development.

* Tier 1: methodology and data in place. Tier 2: methodology in place, data challenges. Tier 3: methodology and data both present challenges.

Endnotes

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- 13 Target 1.3 and target 1.1 both call for measures to “halt deforestation, restore degraded forests and substantially increase afforestation and reforestation globally.” To avoid duplication, all changes in forest area as well as forest degradation are addressed under target 1.1.
- 14 REDD+ stands for countries’ efforts to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, and foster conservation, sustainable management of forests, and enhancement of forest carbon stocks.
- 15 To avoid duplication, actions to “halt deforestation, restore degraded forests and substantially increase afforestation and reforestation globally” were addressed in the section on target 1.1; This analysis is not repeated here. Although financial resources are mentioned under target 1.3, they are covered in greater depth under Global Forest Goal 4.
- 16 This is addressed under target 3.2, which is specifically devoted to these plans, and therefore, is not further discussed here.
- 17 Inclusion of stakeholders in decision processes is also addressed under target 5.3.
- 18 See, also, the discussion under GFG4.
- 19 It is difficult to measure “progress towards sustainable forest management” because there is no single quantifiable and measurable characteristic that fully encompasses all of its dimensions. For this report, the approach used was the same as that used to monitor progress towards SDG target 15.2.1, which is built on a “dashboard” of five sub-indicators: (i) Forest area annual net change rate; (ii) Above-ground biomass stock in forest; (iii) Proportion of forest area located within legally established protected areas; (iv) Proportion of forest area under long-term forest management plans; and (v) Forest area under independently verified forest management certification schemes.
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- 31 Shahbandeh, "Employment in the Forestry Products Industry in the U.S. 2018". Available at: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/252838/employment-of-the-us-forest-products-industry-2012/>
- 32 According to FRA 2020, the relatively low proportion of forest in protected areas in Europe was influenced heavily by the Russian Federation, which reported that 2.3% of its forest area was protected. This relatively low figure was not surprising for a country in which many forests were effectively protected by their remoteness; if the Russian Federation were to be excluded, the figure for Europe would rise to approximately 20%.
- 33 This refers to the volume of wood harvested from certified forests, which enters the supply chain, not the volume of certified and labelled wood products, subject to a chain-of-custody certificate, which reaches the consumer. The latter is considerably less than the harvest from certified forests but is not yet measured.
- 34 Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO), "Global Forest Resources Assessment 2020". Available at: <http://www.fao.org/documents/card/en/c/ca9825en/>
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- 46 There is overlap between target 5.4 focused on integration into land use planning and target 5.1, which addresses a wider range of integration at the policy level. Material already cited under target 5.1 is not repeated under target 5.4.
- 47 These include: Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR), Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), Global Environment Facility (GEF), International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO), International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), International Union of Forest Research Organizations (IUFRO), United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF), United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF), and the World Bank.
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- 49 World Bank Group, "Illegal Logging, Fishing and Wildlife Trade: The Costs and How to Combat It". Available at: <https://documents.worldbank.org/en/publication/documents-reports/documentdetail/422101574414576772/illegal-logging-fishing-and-wildlife-trade-the-costs-and-how-to-combat-it>



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