



Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
15 December 2020

Original: English

United Nations Forum on Forests

Sixteenth session

26–30 April 2021

Item 2 of the provisional agenda

Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters

Provisional agenda and annotations

Provisional agenda

1. Election of officers.
2. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters.
3. Technical discussions on the implementation of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030:
 - (a) Thematic priorities for the biennium 2021–2022 in support of the implementation of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030;
 - (b) Contributions of members of the Forum to implementing the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030:
 - (i) New announcements of voluntary national contributions;
 - (ii) Updates on voluntary national contributions and their follow-up related to the thematic priorities;
 - (c) Contributions of and enhanced cooperation with partners to achieving the thematic priorities:
 - (i) Contributions of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests, its member organizations and the United Nations system to achieving the thematic priorities; progress on the workplan of the Partnership;
 - (ii) Contributions of regional and subregional organizations and processes to achieving the thematic priorities;
 - (iii) Contributions of major groups and other relevant stakeholders, including the private sector and the philanthropic community, to achieving the thematic priorities; progress on major group workplans;



- (d) Interlinkages between the global forest goals and targets and the Sustainable Development Goals under review by the high-level political forum on sustainable development in 2021, the work towards a post-2020 global biodiversity framework and other international forest-related developments;
 - (e) Implementation of the communication and outreach strategy of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030, including activities regarding the International Day of Forests in 2021;
 - (f) Means of implementation, including operations and resources of the Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network;
 - (g) Monitoring, assessment and reporting:
 - (i) Forum flagship publication;
 - (ii) Global core set of forest-related indicators;
 - (iii) Global Forest Resources Assessment 2020.
4. Forum trust fund.
 5. Emerging issues: impacts of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic on forests and the forest sector.
 6. Adoption of the Forum's programme of work for the period 2022–2024.
 7. Dates and venue of the seventeenth session of the Forum.
 8. Provisional agenda for the seventeenth session of the Forum.
 9. Adoption of the report of the Forum on its sixteenth session.

Annotations

1. Election of officers

Rule 15 of the rules of procedure of the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council provides that, at the commencement of the first meeting of a regular session, the United Nations Forum on Forests shall elect, from among the representatives of its members, a Chair and such other officers as may be required (see [E/5975/Rev.1](#)). In accordance with Council resolution 2000/35, by which the Forum was established, the Bureau of the Forum shall consist of a Chair and four Vice-Chairs, one of whom shall also act as Rapporteur, in accordance with the principle of equitable geographical distribution.

On 2 July 2020, the Forum, upon the recommendation of the Chair (Slovakia), elected, through a silence procedure pursuant to Council decisions 2020/205, 2020/206 and 2020/219, Kitty Sweeb (Suriname) as Chair and Javad Momeni (Islamic Republic of Iran) and Jesse Mahoney (Australia) as Vice-Chairs of the sixteenth and seventeenth sessions of the Forum (see the letter from the Chair dated 2 July 2020). The Forum is expected to elect two further Vice-Chairs, to be nominated by the Group of African States and the Group of Eastern European States, respectively, at the first meeting of the sixteenth session.

2. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters

In accordance with rule 7 of the rules of procedure of the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council, the Forum shall, at the beginning of the session, adopt the agenda and organization of work for that session on the basis of the provisional agenda.

Documentation

Provisional agenda and annotations ([E/CN.18/2021/1](#))

- 3. Technical discussions on the implementation of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030**
- (a) Thematic priorities for the biennium 2021–2022 in support of the implementation of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030**
- (b) Contributions of members of the Forum to implementing the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030**
 - (i) New announcements of voluntary national contributions**
 - (ii) Updates on voluntary national contributions and their follow-up related to the thematic priorities**
- (d) Interlinkages between the global forest goals and targets and the Sustainable Development Goals under review by the high-level political forum on sustainable development in 2021, the work towards a post-2020 global biodiversity framework and other international forest-related developments**
- (e) Implementation of the communication and outreach strategy of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030, including activities regarding the International Day of Forests in 2021**

In accordance with the guidance provided in annex I to Economic and Social Council resolution [2020/14](#), the Forum at its sixteenth session will hold technical discussions on the thematic priorities in support of the implementation of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030. The thematic priorities of the Forum for each biennium should be based on the global forest goals and targets, taking into account the post-2020 programme of the high-level political forum on sustainable development and relevant international forest-related developments. In the resolution, the Council invited the Bureau of the Forum, in close consultation with members of the Forum, to decide on the thematic priorities for the biennium 2021–2022.

In that context, the Bureau of the sixteenth session of the Forum decided that the thematic priorities for the sixteenth and seventeenth sessions of the Forum would be: (a) reversing the loss of forest cover (global forest goal 1); (b) enhancing forest-based economic, social and environmental benefits (global forest goal 2); and (c) mobilizing financial resources and strengthening scientific and technical cooperation; promoting governance frameworks to advance implementation; and enhancing cooperation, coordination and coherence for sustainable forest management (global forest goals 4, 5 and 6).

Those thematic priorities take into account the theme of the 2021 high-level political forum on sustainable development, “Sustainable and resilient recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic that promotes the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development: building an inclusive and effective path for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda in the context of the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development”, and other relevant international forest-related developments.

In accordance with the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030 (see General Assembly resolution [71/285](#)), Member States may, on a voluntary basis, determine their contributions towards achieving the global forest goals and targets of the strategic plan (voluntary national contributions), taking into account their national circumstances, policies, priorities, capacities, levels of development and forest conditions. In its resolution [2020/14](#), the Economic and Social Council invited

members of the Forum that had not had yet done so to announce their voluntary national contributions at the sixteenth session of the Forum and to communicate them to the Forum secretariat through diplomatic channels using the form contained in annex III to the resolution. Members of the Forum that wish to announce their voluntary national contributions at the sixteenth session may do so under item 3 (b) (ii).

The note by the Secretariat under item 3 (a), (b), (d) and (e) contains information on thematic priorities for the biennium 2021–2022; interlinkages between the global forest goals and targets and the Sustainable Development Goals under review by the high-level political forum on sustainable development in 2021;¹ the work towards a post-2020 global biodiversity framework and other international forest-related developments; new voluntary national contributions; and activities undertaken since the fifteenth session of the Forum to implement the communication and outreach strategy of the strategic plan, including those relating to the International Day of Forests.

Documentation

Note by the Secretariat on the implementation of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030: thematic priorities for the biennium 2021–2022; contributions of members of the Forum; interlinkages between the global forest goals and the Sustainable Development Goals under review by the high-level political forum on sustainable development in 2021; implementation of the communication and outreach strategy ([E/CN.18/2021/2](#))

- 3. Technical discussions on the implementation of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030**
 - (c) Contributions of and enhanced cooperation with partners to achieving the thematic priorities**
 - (i) Contributions of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests, its member organizations and the United Nations system to achieving the thematic priorities; progress on the workplan of the Partnership**
 - (ii) Contributions of regional and subregional organizations and processes to achieving the thematic priorities**
 - (iii) Contributions of major groups and other relevant stakeholders, including the private sector and the philanthropic community, to achieving the thematic priorities; progress on major group workplans**

The United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030 serves as a reference framework for the forest-related work of the United Nations system and for the fostering of enhanced coherence, collaboration and synergies among United Nations bodies and partners towards the plan's vision and mission. In its resolution [2020/14](#), the Economic and Social Council welcomed the adoption by the Collaborative Partnership on Forests of its strategic vision towards 2030 and invited the Partnership to develop its workplan for the period 2021–2024 in line with the quadrennial programme of work of the Forum for the period 2021–2024 and to report to the Forum at its annual sessions on the progress achieved in implementing the workplan. The contributions of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests and its member organizations to achieving the thematic priorities of the sixteenth session of the Forum will be considered under agenda item 3 (c) (i). The progress report on relevant

¹ At its 2021 session, the high-level political forum on sustainable development will review Sustainable Development Goals 1, 2, 3, 8, 10, 12, 13, 16 and 17.

activities of the Partnership regarding the thematic priorities, as well as the Partnership's achievements in developing its workplan for 2021–2024, are presented in the note by the Secretariat under agenda item 3 (c).

In its resolution [2020/14](#), the Economic and Social Council emphasized the importance of multi-stakeholder and cross-sectoral involvement in the activities of the Forum and requested the Forum secretariat to actively engage with major groups and other relevant stakeholders, including at the sixteenth session of the Forum. The Council also emphasized the importance of involving relevant regional and subregional organizations and processes in the activities of the Forum, including at its sixteenth session, to share lessons learned and best practices. Under agenda item 3 (c) (ii) and (iii), the Forum will consider the contributions of regional and subregional partners and major groups and other relevant stakeholders to achieving the thematic priorities in support of the implementation of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030, as well as the progress report on the implementation of the major group workplans. An overview of relevant activities undertaken by regional and subregional organizations and processes and major groups, as well as information on the involvement of the Forum secretariat in major meetings and conferences since the fifteenth session, are presented in the note by the Secretariat under agenda item 3 (c).

Documentation

Note by the Secretariat on implementation of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030: contributions of and enhanced cooperation with partners to achieving the thematic priorities ([E/CN.18/2021/3](#))

- 3. Technical discussions on the implementation of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030**
- (f) Means of implementation, including operations and resources of the Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network**

In its resolution [2020/14](#), the Economic and Social Council welcomed the assistance provided through the Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network in supporting eligible countries in mobilizing financial resources from all sources for sustainable forest management, as well as the support to the Network provided by members of the Forum through their voluntary contributions to the Forum trust fund. The Council underscored the importance of conducting the work of the Network, consistent with its mandate, and enhancing the effectiveness of its activities. The Council noted the progress achieved in developing the Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network clearing house and requested the Forum secretariat to continue to work closely with member organizations of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests and other data providers in designing the initial phase of the clearing house, with a view to avoiding duplication and increasing synergies and efficiencies, and to report to the Forum at its sixteenth session on the progress achieved in that regard, including on the possible budget implications. In the resolution, the Council invited the Collaborative Partnership on Forests to strengthen its joint initiative on forest finance facilitation, in particular in support of the clearing house in the context of the workplans of the Partnership. The Council also requested the Forum secretariat to provide regular updates with regard to the proposed United Nations Forum on Forests secretariat office for the Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network in Beijing, and to provide a progress report to the Forum at its sixteenth session.

The note by the Secretariat under this item provides information on key global developments relating to means of implementation, a summary of the activities of the Network since the fifteenth session, and information on the availability of resources

for its operation. The note also contains a progress report regarding the Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network clearing house, as well as an update on the proposed office in Beijing.

Documentation

Note by the Secretariat on means of implementation, including operations and resources of the Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network ([E/CN.18/2021/4](#))

3. Technical discussions on the implementation of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030

- (g) Monitoring, assessment and reporting**
- (i) Forum flagship publication**
- (ii) Global core set of forest-related indicators**
- (iii) Global Forest Resources Assessment 2020**

In its resolution [13/1](#), the Forum requested its secretariat to prepare a flagship publication on progress towards achieving the global forest goals of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030 by the end of 2021, using information contained in voluntary national reports.²

In its resolution [2020/14](#), the Economic and Social Council requested the Forum secretariat to continue to develop the Forum’s concise flagship publication, in close consultation with and taking into account the advice of the informal advisory group, as well as in consultation with members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests, and to launch the publication at the sixteenth session of the Forum and at the World Forestry Congress, to be held in May 2021, and invited the Forum at its sixteenth session to provide guidance on the next steps. In the same resolution, the Council invited the Collaborative Partnership on Forests to advance further its work on the global core set of forest-related indicators³ and to report to the Forum at its sixteenth session on the progress achieved in that regard.

Information regarding the preparation of the flagship publication and suggestions on the next steps, as well as a progress report by the Collaborative Partnership on Forests regarding the global core set of forest-related indicators, are contained in the note by the Secretariat under this agenda item.

Documentation

Note by the Secretariat on monitoring, assessment and reporting on progress towards implementing the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030, including the United Nations forest instrument and voluntary national contributions ([E/CN.18/2021/5](#))

² A total of 52 countries submitted national reports for consideration by the Forum at its fifteenth session.

³ The global core set of forest-related indicators consists of 21 indicators, the aim of which is to measure progress towards sustainable forest management, the global forest goals of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030 and other internationally agreed forest-related goals. Most of the indicators are well established and ready for use, except for five in relation to which there are data challenges (tier 2). Four of the indicators are classified as “tier 3”, which means that further work is required on concepts and/or definitions before they become operational.

4. Forum trust fund

In accordance with the programme of work of the Forum for its sixteenth session, as contained in annex I to Economic and Social Council resolution 2020/14, the Forum secretariat is to report to the Forum at its sixteenth session on the operation of the Forum trust fund. Relevant information on the operation of the trust fund for the year 2020 is presented in the note by the Secretariat under this agenda item.

Documentation

Note by the Secretariat on the Forum trust fund ([E/CN.18/2021/6](#))

5. Emerging issues: impacts of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic on forests and the forest sector

In accordance with the programme of work of the Forum for its sixteenth session, contained in annex I to Economic and Social Council resolution 2020/14, the Forum at its sixteenth session will discuss, as an emerging issue, the impacts of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic on forests and the forest sector.

In the same resolution, the Council also requested the Forum secretariat, in consultation with other members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests, and with input from members of the Forum, to compile an initial assessment of the impact of the coronavirus disease (COVID 19) pandemic on sustainable forest management, the forest sector, forest-dependent people, indigenous peoples and local communities, forest financing and international cooperation. The outcome of the assessment, and information on the related intersessional activities, are presented in the note by the Secretariat under this agenda item.

Documentation

Note by the Secretariat on the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on forests and the forest sector ([E/CN.18/2021/7](#))

6. Adoption of the Forum's programme of work for the period 2022–2024

In its resolution 2020/14, the Economic and Social Council requested the Forum at its sixteenth session to decide on its programme of work for the period 2022–2024, taking into account the proposal contained in annex II to the resolution. Relevant information is contained in the note by the Secretariat under this agenda item.

Documentation

Note by the Secretariat on the implementation of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030: thematic priorities for the biennium 2021–2022; contributions of members of the Forum; interlinkages between the global forest goals and the Sustainable Development Goals under review by the high-level political forum on sustainable development in 2021; implementation of the communication and outreach strategy ([E/CN.18/2021/2](#))

7. Dates and venue of the seventeenth session of the Forum

The Forum shall recommend to the Economic and Social Council the dates and venue of its seventeenth session.

8. Provisional agenda for the seventeenth session of the Forum

The Forum shall recommend to the Economic and Social Council, for adoption, a provisional agenda for the seventeenth session.

9. Adoption of the report of the Forum on its sixteenth session

In accordance with rule 37 of the rules of procedure of the functional commissions of the Council, the Forum shall submit to the Council a report on the work of its sixteenth session.
