



# COMMITTEE ON FORESTRY

## TWENTY-THIRD SESSION

Rome, 18 - 22 July 2016

### FOLLOW-UP ON THE OUTCOME OF THE XIV WORLD FORESTRY CONGRESS: ACHIEVING THE 2050 VISION FOR FOREST AND FORESTRY

#### I. Introduction

1. The XIV World Forestry Congress, held on 7–11 September 2015 in Durban, South Africa, produced as its main outcome document the Durban Declaration: 2050 Vision for Forests and Forestry.

2. The FAO Council at its 153<sup>rd</sup> Session welcomed the Vision as a milestone to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and a sustainable future to 2050 and beyond. The Council also recommended that FAO "actively support strengthening the contributions of its work on forests to the Organization's Strategic Objectives, including alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), by means of inter alia technical support and promoting best practices and dialogue."

#### II. The 2050 Vision on Forests and Forestry

3. The Vision for forests and forestry outlines forestry's contribution to achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and a sustainable future to 2050 and beyond. It emphasises that:

- Forests are fundamental for food security and improved livelihoods. They will increase the resilience of communities by providing food, wood energy, shelter, fodder and fibre; generating income and employment to allow communities and societies to prosper; harbouring biodiversity; and supporting sustainable agriculture and human wellbeing by stabilizing soils and climate and regulating water flows.
- Integrated approaches to land use provide a way forward for improving policies and practices to: address the drivers of deforestation; address conflicts over land use; capitalize on the full range of economic, social and environmental benefits from integrating forests with agriculture; and maintain multiple forest services in the landscape context.
- Forests are an essential solution to climate change adaptation and mitigation. Sustainably managed forests will increase the resilience of ecosystems and societies and optimize the role

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of forests and trees in absorbing and storing carbon while also providing other environmental services.

4. The Vision calls for new partnerships among the forest, agriculture, finance, energy, water and other sectors, and engagement with indigenous peoples and local communities. It calls for further investment in forest education, communication, capacity building, research and the creation of jobs, especially for young people. It also points out that gender equality is fundamental, with women participating fully in decision making on forestry.

5. In summary, the Vision seeks to ensure that forests are managed and used in a way that balances the three dimensions of sustainable development. It links forest actions with efforts to achieve food security and integrates them with other forms of land use and with efforts to combat climate change. The international juncture in which the last Congress took place allowed for a more direct contribution to current intergovernmental dialogues on forests and key international agreements. In this regard, because of its comprehensive and forward looking nature, the Vision could provide a solid input to the international forest agenda nationally and internationally, including in FAO.

6. The Organization's current Strategy for Forests and Forestry was adopted in 2009 as a dynamic document with an anticipated timeframe of 10 years. However, FAO itself has gone through a fundamental reform process leading to the adoption of its reviewed Strategic Framework in 2015, putting cross-sectoral thinking in the focus to achieve its global goals and strategic objectives. In this new international and internal environment there is an increasing need for reviewing the strategic thinking guiding the forestry programme. Several Regional Forestry Commissions recognized this in their recent meetings and called for a process to revise the Strategy.

7. The 2030 Agenda, the Paris Agreement, the 2050 Vision and the reviewed FAO Strategic Framework provide an excellent basis for a new strategic document for forestry. Such a document could help guide FAO's work in forestry in the broader context of the Organization's reviewed Strategic Framework, as requested by COFO and the FAO Conference. At the same time, it could also outline how FAO can support its Members in achieving global goals and objectives by unlocking forests' full potentials in this regard. A new strategic document could also ensure that actions on forests are fully aligned and coordinated with key sectors affecting forests and forestry and bring in the needed coherence and coordination across sectors.

### **III. Points for consideration**

8. The Committee may wish to request FAO to:

- strengthen the contributions of its work on forests to the Organization's Strategic Objectives, in particular on forests' fundamental role for food security and nutrition, sustainable agriculture, improved livelihoods and increased resilience of communities;
- strengthen work on integrated approaches to land use by supporting improved policies and practices to address the drivers of deforestation and conflicts over land use; capitalize on the full range of economic, social and environmental benefits of integrating forests with agriculture; and maintain multiple forest services in the landscape context;
- initiate a process for reviewing the FAO Strategy for Forests and Forestry in the light of recent developments, elaborate a new strategic document that is fully aligned with the corporate Strategic Framework and present it to the 24<sup>th</sup> session of the Committee after consultation with the Regional Forestry Commissions.

9. The Committee may also wish to:

- invite the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF) and its member organizations to strengthen their collective action to integrate forests with other aspects of sustainable development, in line with the cross-sectoral nature of the SDGs.