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Technical discussions on the implementation of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030: contributions of and enhanced cooperation with partners to achieving the thematic priorities

**Contributions of the Collaborative Partnership on
Forests, its member organizations and the United Nations
system to achieving the thematic priorities, and progress
on the workplan of the Partnership**

**Contributions of regional and subregional organizations
and processes to achieving the thematic priorities**

**Contributions of major groups and other relevant
stakeholders, including the private sector and the
philanthropic community, to achieving the thematic
priorities, and progress on major group workplans**

Enhanced cooperation with partners and the contributions of such partners to achieving the thematic priorities

Note by the Secretariat

Summary

In accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution [2021/6](#), the United Nations Forum on Forests, at its eighteenth session, should consider the contributions of and enhanced cooperation with partners to achieving the thematic priorities, namely, (a) contributions of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests, its member organizations and the United Nations system to achieving the thematic priorities, and progress on the workplan of the Partnership; (b) contributions of regional and subregional organizations and processes to achieving the thematic priorities; and (c) contributions of major groups and other relevant stakeholders, including the private sector and the philanthropic community, to achieving the thematic priorities, and progress on major group workplans. The present note provides the background information and highlights the result of the intersessional activities undertaken since the seventeenth session of the Forum by its partners and stakeholders and serves as the basis for discussions at the Forum's eighteenth session on agenda item 3 (c) and its sub-items (i)-(iii).

* [E/CN.18/2023/1](#).



I. Introduction

1. In accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution [2021/6](#), the United Nations Forum on Forests, at its eighteenth session, will hold technical discussions on the implementation of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030. Under these discussions, the Forum will consider agenda item 3 (c), on the contributions of and enhanced cooperation with partners to achieving the thematic priorities, and its sub-items (i) on contributions of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests, its member organizations and the United Nations system to achieving the thematic priorities, and progress on the workplan of the Partnership; (ii) on the contributions of regional and subregional organizations and processes to achieving the thematic priorities; and (iii) on the contributions of major groups and other relevant stakeholders, including the private sector and the philanthropic community, to achieving the thematic priorities, and progress on major group workplans.

2. The present note serves as the basis for discussion on the above-mentioned issues. It provides an overview of the relevant intersessional activities undertaken since the seventeenth session of the Forum and includes some proposals for discussion by the Forum at its eighteenth session.

II. Background

3. The Collaborative Partnership on Forests plays an important role in supporting the Forum and its members in advancing the global forest goals and targets, including through cooperation and partnership among its members, implementation of its joint workplan in line with the Forum's programmes of work and identification of collective actions by all or subsets of the Partnership's member organizations.

4. Based on the outcome of seventeenth session of the Forum, the Economic and Social Council, through its resolution [2022/17](#), invited the Partnership to continue to strengthen its collaboration with and support to the work of the Forum and its members for the implementation of the quadrennial programme of work of the Forum for the period 2021–2024 and the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030. The Council further invited member organizations of the Partnership to enhance cooperation and collaboration and strengthen their support to the Forum and its members to implement the global forest goals, thereby contributing to the implementation of forest-related multilateral instruments, processes, commitments and goals.

5. The Council emphasized that effective implementation of sustainable forest management depended on the contributions of all relevant stakeholders, including but not limited to the following: regional and subregional organizations and processes; forest owners; Indigenous Peoples; local communities; local authorities; the private sector, including small, medium and large forest-based enterprises; non-governmental organizations; women, children and youth; and scientific, academic and philanthropic organizations at all levels. The Council encouraged those stakeholders to continue to advance the implementation of the strategic plan and the achievement of the global forest goals, and to keep the Forum informed of their progress. It further recognized the important role played by small-scale landowners, micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises, local communities and Indigenous Peoples in the conservation, sustainable management and protection of forests.

6. The Council further decided on the actions to be taken in preparation for the midterm review in 2024 of the effectiveness of the international arrangement on forests in meeting its objectives. The Council decided that the preparatory actions which have been set out in the annex to Council resolution [2022/17](#) should be

implemented in a transparent and independent manner and in close consultation with members of the Forum, as well as member organizations of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests and other relevant stakeholders, including through questionnaires, where appropriate. Detailed information about the progress made in the implementation of intersessional activities in preparation for the midterm review of the international arrangement on forests, including the involvement of the Partnership, regional and subregional partners of the Forum and major group stakeholders in, and their contributions to, the midterm review are contained in the note by the Secretariat on the update on the preparations for the midterm review in 2024 of the effectiveness of the international arrangement on forests (E/CN.18/2023/6).

III. Technical discussions on the implementation of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030: enhanced cooperation with partners and the contributions of such partners to achieving the thematic priorities

7. According to the guidance provided by the Economic and Social Council in its resolution 2021/6, the eighteenth session, as a technical session, will include an interactive exchange of experiences and lessons learned on thematic priorities among Members of the Forum, the Collaborative Partnership on Forests and its member organizations, regional and subregional organizations and processes, and major groups and other relevant stakeholders. The interactive exchange will include consideration of the science-policy interface and cross-sectoral and emerging issues and will take youth, gender and regional perspectives into account.

8. The Bureau decided that the thematic priorities for the eighteenth and nineteenth sessions of the Forum would be (a) enhancing forest-based economic, social and environmental benefits; (b) increasing 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; 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.¹ Detailed information about the thematic priorities of the Forum for the biennium 2023–2024 and their interlinkages with the global forest goals, the sustainable development goals and international forest-related developments is contained in note by the Secretariat on technical discussions on the implementation of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030: activities in support of the thematic priorities for the biennium 2023–2024 (E/CN.18/2023/2).

A. Contributions of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests, its member organizations and the United Nations system to achieving the thematic priorities, and progress on the workplan of the Partnership

1. Implementation of the workplan of the Collaborative Partnership for the period 2021–2024 and the Strategic Vision towards 2030

9. The Partnership plans and implements its joint activities and seeks to support the thematic priorities of the Forum through its workplan. The recurrent activities and

¹ For more information about the thematic priorities for eighteenth and nineteenth sessions of the United Nations Forum on Forests, see www.un.org/esa/forests/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/UNFF18-19-Thematic-Priorities-web.pdf.

joint initiatives of the Partnership are aimed at enhancing cooperation, coordination, coherence and synergies on forest-related issues across member organizations of the Partnership. Through its joint initiatives and other activities, the Partnership also seeks to provide scientific and technical cooperation.

10. In 2021, the Partnership formulated its workplan for the period 2021–2024, taking into account paragraph 22 (e) of Economic and Social Council resolution [2015/33](#) and the guidance received from the Forum and other governing bodies of its member organizations.

11. The workplan contains the planned activities of the Partnership for the period 2021–2024 to facilitate their implementation and provide information on intended activities to States members, governing bodies and stakeholders of the Partnership’s member organizations.

12. The planned activities are aimed at contributing to the implementation of the guiding frameworks of the workplan, most notably the core functions of the Partnership, the strategic priorities of the Partnership contained in its Strategic Vision towards 2030, the global forest goals and the Forum’s thematic priorities, and the Sustainable Development Goals, among other forest-related goals, instruments, processes and international developments.

13. Information on progress achieved in implementing the current workplan since the seventeenth session of the Forum is provided below.

2. Recurrent activities of the Partnership

14. The Partnership held meetings on 7 April and 6 October 2022 to discuss its activities in support of the implementation of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030 and the achievement of its global forest goals and targets. In addition, a meeting of the Friends of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests was held on 11 May on the margins of seventeenth session of the Forum.

15. The Partnership held events during the fifteenth World Forestry Congress, held from 2 to 6 May 2022 in Seoul in a hybrid format, including the following: “Collaborative Partnership on Forests dialogue: climate change, conflicts and food insecurity – forest solutions to tackle effects of crises” on 2 May; “The role of forests in a post-coronavirus disease (COVID-19) recovery: reimagining the future of forests” on 4 May; and the Wangari Maathai Forest Champions Award ceremony and “The forest champion’s view: a special panel of Wangari Maathai Award winners” on 5 May. Members of the Partnership contributed to a variety of thematic sessions and events during the Congress.

16. On 30 May, the Partnership held an event entitled “Protect, restore and sustainably use forests: building blocks for environmental and economic recovery” on the margins of the international meeting entitled “Stockholm+50: a healthy planet for the prosperity of all – our responsibility, our opportunity”, held on 2 and 3 June 2022 in Stockholm. The event provided the Partnership with an opportunity to present its perspective on how development can work with the environment, with a particular focus on the potential of trees and forests. It further demonstrated the commitment of the Partnership to supporting countries in scaling up efforts to build back better and greener towards more efficient, more inclusive, more resilient and more sustainable agrifood systems and to further integrate the protection, restoration and sustainable use of forests in this transformation.

17. On 11 July, the Partnership held an event entitled “Building back better: forest pathways for a green recovery advancing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development” on the margins of the 2022 high-level political forum on sustainable

development.² The event brought together representatives from international organizations, ministers, youth and the private sector for a discussion focused on how the scaling up of locally adapted solutions, innovations and investments in young talents and ideas could be integrated in efforts to build back better from the COVID-19 pandemic and lead to a whole-of-society mobilization as envisaged in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

18. On 17 November, the Partnership held a high-level dialogue on “Turning the tide on deforestation” during the twenty-seventh session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.³ The event brought together the senior representatives of six member organizations of the Partnership and provided an opportunity to discuss actions, transparency and finance to accelerate efforts to turn the tide on deforestation in the context of current global pledges, including the forest and climate leaders’ partnership launched during the twenty-seventh session of the Conference. The dialogue also provided an opportunity to identify next steps to be taken to realize enhanced ambition and global commitments, including through the accelerated implementation of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030 and its global forest goals. The discussions highlighted, among other things, the potential of the Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network and the Partnership in supporting developing countries to build capacity and access multilateral funding opportunities; the critical role of forests in the transformation of agrifood systems; the achievement of the objectives of the three Rio conventions, including under the post-2020 global biodiversity framework; and the critical need to engage youth, Indigenous Peoples and local communities in efforts to turn the tide on deforestation.

19. The Partnership will also hold a meeting in conjunction with the organization-led initiative of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests scheduled to be held in February 2023 at the headquarters of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations in Rome.

3. Joint initiatives of the Partnership

20. Since the conclusion of the seventeenth session of the Forum, the Partnership has continued to work on advancing the joint initiatives described below.

Team of Specialists on Forest Communication (Forest Communicators’ Network)

21. The Team of Specialists on Forest Communication (Forest Communicators’ Network) of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests directly contributes to global forest goal 6 and indirectly to all other global forest goals.

22. With regard to the celebration of the International Day of Forests in 2022, events were held by the Forum secretariat, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and other members of the Partnership. FAO prepared a video spot, which was aired for one month on major global television channels, and created a dedicated website for the International Day.

23. Communication and outreach efforts were amplified, designed and supported through the five regional Forest Communicators’ Networks (for Africa, Europe and Central Asia, Asia-Pacific, the Mediterranean and the Near East, and Latin America and the Caribbean) at the regional and national levels, in particular with regard to the

² See <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/index.php?page=view&type=20000&nr=7392&menu=2993>.

³ See www.un.org/esa/forests/events/cop27-cpf-high-level-dialogue/index.html and www.fao.org/collaborative-partnership-on-forests/meetings/cop27-high-level-dialogue-of-the-collaborative-partnership-on-forests-on-turning-the-tide-on-deforestation.

fifteenth World Forestry Congress, the Wangari Maathai Forest Champions Award and the International Day of Forests.

24. The Forest Communicators' Network will propose themes for the International Day of Forests in 2024 and 2025. FAO and the secretariat of the Forum are offering various outreach products for use in communicating with States members of the Forum. The timely communication of the annual themes of the International Day allows for coordinated and concerted global, regional and national communication on forest-relevant topics with a broad, general audience.

25. The regional Forest Communicators' Networks are meanwhile supporting an awareness-raising initiative related to the benefits of wood products, with the objective of changing a general public perception that does not recognize the benefits of forest management and use, as opposed to promoting strict conservation and protection, under the Collaborative Partnership on Forests Joint Initiative on Sustainable Wood for a Sustainable World and in support of the global forest goals. FAO has produced several videos and animations, two of which (on building with wood in a changing climate) were released during the twenty-seventh session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and have so far been viewed more than 1.2 million times.

Forest education

26. The joint initiative on "Forest education: building capacity and knowledge for sustainable forests" is led by FAO, the International Union of Forest Research Organizations, the International Tropical Timber Organization and the Centre for International Forestry Research-World Agroforestry Centre, with the collaboration of the secretariats of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Forum. The initiative is linked closely with the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030 and all six global forest goals. The lead organizations have periodically held meetings, facilitated by the International Union of Forest Research Organizations, to further develop activities.

27. The joint initiative provided input on forest education to the planning of sub-theme 5 of the fifteenth World Forestry Congress. Emerging findings and recommendations of a global assessment on forest education that was to be published later in 2022 were presented and discussed in a Congress session on strengthening communication and education. Also during the Congress, FAO, the International Tropical Timber Organization and the International Union of Forest Research Organizations organized a side event on harnessing the full potential of tertiary forest education globally in which particular emphasis was placed on Indigenous and local knowledge. In the Seoul Forest Declaration, participants in the Congress noted the need for greater investment and capacity-building in forest communication and education and more research so as to strengthen understanding and awareness of the benefits of sustainably managed forests and trees. These events also provided input to the global assessment on forest education.

28. Emerging findings of the assessment were also shared by the International Tropical Timber Organization and the International Union of Forest Research Organizations in sessions dealing with Sustainable Development Goals 4 and 17, respectively, at the high-level political forum on sustainable development held in July 2022.

29. The final version of the assessment, entitled *Global Assessment of Forest Education*, was presented during the twenty-sixth session of the FAO Committee on Forestry, held in October 2022 in Rome. The *Assessment* is based on the results of the 2020 global forest education survey, supplemented by the findings of six regional assessment reports on forest education, carried out under the project entitled

“Creation of a global forest education platform and launch of a joint initiative under the aegis of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests”, with funding support from the Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture of Germany. The report includes recommendations to national Governments, educational institutions, international donors and organizations, and regional cooperating bodies on how to strengthen forest training and education with regard to content and materials, teaching and learning approaches, and social dimensions.

30. As a contribution to this initiative, the International Tropical Timber Organization produced four training modules on legal and sustainable tropical timber supply chains in the Congo Basin, in cooperation with the Network of Forestry and Environmental Training Institutions of Central Africa, with the aim of expanding market access for tropical timber produced in the subregion and increasing the contributions of the sector to sustainable development, climate-change mitigation and other challenges. These modules are outputs under the International Tropical Timber Organization’s legal and sustainable supply chains programme.

31. The International Tropical Timber Organization and the International Union of Forest Research Organizations have released a free series of learning modules and accompanying PowerPoint presentations for high school and university students to guide further understanding of forest landscape restoration. Moreover, the Union continued to test the prototype for the forestra online platform for information-sharing and networking on forest education, which was developed with support from Germany.

Forest finance facilitation

32. The Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network was established in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution [2015/33](#) and is led and coordinated by the secretariat of the Forum. The Network works in close cooperation with States members of the Forum and members of the Partnership to implement its priorities, as outlined in the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030. Detailed information on this matter is provided in the note by the Secretariat on means of implementation, including operations and resources of the Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network ([E/CN.18/2023/4](#)).

Global Forest Expert Panel

33. The Global Forest Expert Panel⁴ initiative is coordinated by the International Union of Forest Research Organizations. The initiative periodically assembles international expert panels to synthesize and assess existing scientific information on forest-related issues of high global concern in an interdisciplinary, comprehensive and transparent manner and produce assessment reports to support more informed decision-making. Since its launch in 2007, the initiative has completed seven thematic assessments.

34. The Global Forest Expert Panel initiative contributes to achieving all global forest goals. The initiative is relevant in particular for achieving target 5 of global forest goal 4, which is aimed at approving the collection, availability and accessibility of forest-related information through, for example, multidisciplinary scientific assessments, as well as global forest goal 6 on enhancing cooperation, coordination, coherence and synergies in forest-related programmes among members of the Partnership. Reports of the Panel also address the contribution of forests to the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development (global forest goal 5). For example, the latest

⁴ See www.iufro.org/science/gfep/.

Panel assessment on forests and poverty⁵ provided input during the sixteenth session of the Forum in 2021 and contributed to Sustainable Development Goal 1 on ending poverty and target 1 of global forest goal 2, on eradicating poverty for all forest-dependent people. Similarly, the Panel assessment on forests and water⁶ contained an exploration of the interlinkages between Sustainable Development Goal 6 on water and Goal 15 on forests and contributed to the thirteenth session of the Forum, in 2018.

35. In 2021, the Global Forest Expert Panel initiative started a new assessment on forests and human health.⁷ The assessment will provide reliable scientific information that is crucial to efficiently utilizing the synergies and achieving optimal trade-offs between human health and the conservation, restoration and sustainable management of forest ecosystems and trees in other land uses. This assessment will contribute to global forest goals 2 and 4, as well as to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, by highlighting the interlinkages between Sustainable Development Goal 3, on good health and well-being, and Goal 15, on life on land, as well as relevant links to other Goals.

36. Following the establishment of the expert panel and the development of the first draft manuscripts in 2021 and early 2022, the authors submitted a refined draft for peer review in June 2022. The draft of the assessment was then rigorously reviewed by 10 peer reviewers and technical experts from relevant fields. The third meeting of the expert panel, with 23 participants, was convened in a hybrid format in Vienna from 26 to 28 September to discuss and address the review comments, refine and align chapter manuscripts and discuss further steps. The chapter manuscripts were finalized in November 2022 and edited in January 2023, with layout design and printing to be completed by March 2023.

37. The final assessment on forests and human health is expected to be published in March 2023 in the context of the International Day of Forests. The assessment will provide input to the eighteenth session of the Forum, the 2023 high-level political forum on sustainable development and other international forums considering forest-related issues, such as the sixteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity.

Green finance for sustainable landscapes

38. Created under the initiative on green finance for sustainable landscapes, the Good Food Finance Network is working in collaboration with four other partner institutions to mobilize public and private financial actors to address the financing gap for sustainable food systems, including through deforestation-free commodity production, regenerative agriculture and agroforestry. The Network's leadership initiative, the High Ambition Group, composed of public and private financial institutions, including global environmental funds, banks, asset managers, financial technology (fintech) firms and agribusinesses, publicly announced institution-specific and time-bound targets across different impact areas, such as a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions, no deforestation, land restoration and adaptation

⁵ *Forests, Trees and the Eradication of Poverty: Potential and Limitations: A Global Assessment Report*, Daniel C. Miller, Stephanie Mansourian and Christoph Wildburger, eds., International Union of Forest Research Organizations World Series, vol. 39 (Vienna, International Union of Forest Research Organizations, 2020). Available at www.iufro.org/science/gfep/gfep-initiative/panel-on-forests-and-poverty.

⁶ *Forest and Water on a Changing Planet: Vulnerability, Adaptation and Governance Opportunities: A Global Assessment Report*, Irena Creed and Meine van Noordwijk, eds., International Union of Forest Research Organizations World Series, vol. 38. (Vienna, International Union of Forest Research Organizations, 2018). Available at www.iufro.org/science/gfep/gfep-initiative/panel-on-forests-and-water.

⁷ See www.iufro.org/science/gfep/gfep-initiative/panel-on-forests-and-human-health.

investments, during the session co-hosted by the Network on financing a sustainable and just food system transition, held during the twenty-seventh session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, setting the stage for sector-wide ambition, transparency, accountability and action.

39. The Land Finance Hub was launched in November 2022. The Hub is designed to enable forestry and agricultural micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises to more easily connect with various types of financiers, including banks, impact investors and financial institutions. Right after the launch, a registration workshop enabled the first such enterprises to register on the platform.

40. Updated information on the results of this initiative can be consulted on the Good Food Finance Network website.⁸

Streamlining global forest-related reporting

41. The joint initiative on streamlining global forest-related reporting focuses on harmonizing reporting on forest resources and their management and using reports for various processes and conventions. The initiative is aimed at improving the coverage, quality and transparency of forest-related data and information and reducing the forest-related reporting burden of countries.

42. Recently, work under this initiative has focused on improving the methodology for reporting on primary forests, streamlining the reporting content for the *Global Forest Resources Assessment 2025* and advancing the global core set of forest-related indicators. FAO, with inputs from the members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests, has prepared a report entitled *Status of, and Trends in, the Global Core Set of Forest-related Indicators*⁹ and a separate analysis on the uptake of those indicators.¹⁰

43. Further information on forest-related reporting is contained in the note by the Secretariat on monitoring, assessment and reporting (E/CN.18/2023/5).

Sustainable Wood for a Sustainable World

44. The Sustainable Wood for a Sustainable World initiative is led by the Centre for International Forestry Research-World Agroforestry Centre, FAO, the International Tropical Timber Organization, the secretariat of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, the World Bank and the World Wide Fund for Nature International. The objective of the initiative is to strengthen sustainable wood value chains to enhance their contributions to the Sustainable Development Goals.

45. Since its launch in 2018, the initiative has promoted multistakeholder policy dialogues on sustainable wood-based value chains at the global, regional and national levels to discuss opportunities for and challenges to the development of the sector in line with national priorities and globally agreed objectives, resulting in road maps, action plans and resources mobilization.

⁸ See <https://goodfood.finance>.

⁹ See Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and Collaborative Partnership on Forests, *Status of, and Trends in, the Global Core Set of Forest-related Indicators* (Rome, FAO, 2022). Available at <https://doi.org/10.4060/cb9963en>.

¹⁰ See FAO and Collaborative Partnership on Forests, *An Assessment of Uptake of the Global Core Set of Forest-related Indicators* (Rome, FAO, 2022). Available at <https://doi.org/10.4060/cc2223en>.

46. Under the initiative, FAO is collaborating with the Centre for the Promotion of Wood of Cameroon and the World Wide Fund for Nature International to enhance the institutional framework for wood production in Cameroon through value chain assessments and the institutional restructuring of the Centre, with the objective of enhancing its role in domestic wood value chains, in particular for the sustainable and legal inclusion of artisanal producers. In the Congo Basin, FAO is working with the International Technical Tropical Timber Association, in consultation with Cameroon, the Congo, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Gabon, to develop road maps for increased sustainability, productivity and legality of wood production in domestic and regional markets. Such collaborations at the country and regional levels resulted in the organization of the second Sustainable Wood for a Sustainable World dialogue in Cameroon, which was held in December 2022 and focused on sustainable wood as part of climate change strategies, including discussions on production oriented towards domestic and African markets.

47. The joint work of the Sustainable Wood for a Sustainable World initiative and the Forest and Farm Facility of FAO was focused on capacity development for smallholders and producer associations to build business plans and access finance, including through in-person training on the development of bankable businesses for forest producers in Kenya and Uganda. With support from FAO, an assessment in Kenya of forest value chains mapping financing sources that target smallholder producers and small and medium-sized enterprises, and a wood dialogue that was focused on an action-oriented strategy to catalyse investments, led to a request by that country to develop a forest finance strategy. Also under the initiative, FAO provided technical assistance on the application of a value chain approach to the recently formulated forest finance strategy in Suriname as part of that country's activities under the Joint Sustainable Development Goals Fund.

48. In 2022, the Sustainable Wood for a Sustainable World initiative developed normative work to support policymaking through the "Global forest sector outlook for 2050", which was jointly produced with the International Tropical Timber Organization and which provided an assessment of future demand for and sources of timber for a sustainable economy, and through the generation of information and data for six country case studies (Brazil, Finland, Ghana, Hungary, Malawi and the Republic of Korea) on the economic importance and linkages of the forest sector within their national economies. Normative work also included the launch of a learning guide to bankable forest projects and its associated e-learning module, which is currently under development in collaboration with the Forest and Landscape Restoration Mechanism of FAO. Through the initiative, efforts are also being made to prepare a document focused on operationalizing a value chain approach in forestry for enhanced sustainability and increased finance, and to integrate socioeconomic layers in the System for Earth Observation Data Access, Processing and Analysis for Land Monitoring for global restoration planning.

49. Also under the initiative, the International Tropical Timber Organization implements projects aimed at promoting sustainable wood use in domestic wood markets in Indonesia, Thailand and Viet Nam. The Organization also implements activities of the Legal and Sustainable Supply Chains programme, including its two new activities funded by the Macao Trade and Investment Promotion Institute of Macao, China, in 2022 related to: (a) supporting the establishment and operation of the Global Timber Index platform for building legal and sustainable forest product supply chains and (b) supporting pilot collaborative operation of the blockchain-based Timber Traceability System for building legal and sustainable forest product supply chains. The implementation of the two activities commenced in June 2022 and are all on track according to their workplans. Significant progress has been made for

both activities, and the first Global Timber Index monthly report was released on 8 December 2022.

50. In addition, the Sustainable Wood for a Sustainable World initiative and the joint initiative on the Forest Communicators' Network contributed to the organization of the 2022 International Day of Forests under the theme "Forests and sustainable production and consumption" and proposed a global "Grow the solution" awareness-raising initiative at the fifteenth World Forestry Congress, with the objective of accelerating the uptake of benefits from sustainable wood in policy, investment and consumption decisions. FAO has produced several videos and animations. Two of them, both on building with wood in a changing climate, were released during the twenty-seventh session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and have so far been viewed more than 1.2 million times.

Wangari Maathai Forest Champions Award

51. The Partnership periodically bestows the Wangari Maathai Forest Champions Award on individuals who have helped preserve, restore and sustainably manage forests. The Award was established in 2012 in memory of Kenyan environmentalist and Nobel Peace Prize winner Wangari Maathai.

52. Cécile Ndjebet of Cameroon won the 2022 Award in recognition of her outstanding contribution to preserving forests and improving the lives of people who depend on them. Along with international recognition and prestige, Ms. Ndjebet received a cash prize of \$20,000 and travel support to participate in the award ceremony, which was held during the fifteenth World Forestry Congress on 5 May.

53. A panel of renowned forestry experts selected Ms. Ndjebet based on her outstanding contribution to conserving, restoring and sustainably managing forests, and to raise awareness of the key role of forests in supporting local communities and rural livelihoods. The panel considered nominees' efforts in empowering women, youth and civil society, fostering social commitment, promoting networks and improving the visibility and sociocultural value of forests.

54. In addition to the winner, the jury honourably mentioned two runners up: Constantino Auca Chutas, President of Asociación Ecosistemas Andinos of Peru, and Thais Corral, co-founder of the Women's Environment and Development Organization, of Brazil.

55. The communication campaign of the Forest Communicators' Network for the 2022 Wangari Maathai Forest Champions Award included a revamped tribute video, social media teaser videos, interviews with the winner, press releases, broad media coverage of the winner and award, a social media campaign and the above-mentioned award ceremony and champions' panel.

56. The Green Belt Movement, which was founded by Wangari Maathai, is an environmental organization that empowers communities, and women in particular, to conserve the environment and improve livelihoods. The Movement has planted over 51 million trees in Kenya. The spirit of the Movement is carried on through the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration 2021–2030, a rallying call for the protection and revival of ecosystems all around the world, for the benefit of people and nature.

57. The previous Wangari Maathai Forest Champion Award winners are Nepalese community forestry movement leader Narayan Kaji Shrestha (2012), Mexican environmental campaigner Martha Isabel "Pati" Ruiz Corzo (2014), Ugandan forestry activist Gertrude Kabusimbi Kenyangi (2015), Brazilian forestry activist Maria

Margarida Ribeiro da Silva (2017) and Burundian forestry activist Léonidas Nzigiympa (2019).

Turning the tide on Deforestation

58. In response to the call of the Secretary-General, and complementing the efforts of countries to halt deforestation, the Partnership has continued its global advocacy efforts on halting deforestation as a contribution to the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030 and its global forest goals.

B. Contributions of regional and subregional organizations and processes to achieving the thematic priorities

59. Since the seventeenth session of the Forum, the Forum secretariat has continued to strengthen engagement with relevant regional and subregional partners. The secretariat actively participated in several regional meetings and addressed the twenty-ninth session of the Asia-Pacific Forestry Commission of FAO, held from 22 to 25 February 2022; the twenty-third session of the African Forestry and Wildlife Commission, held from 22 to 26 August 2022; and the eightieth session of the Committee on Forests and the Forest Industry of the Economic Commission for Europe, held from 2 to 4 November 2022.

60. Representatives of the Forum secretariat also attended Forest Europe's expert-level meeting held on 31 August 2022 and the expert group meeting on green jobs held on 5 October 2022. During the second Global Bamboo and Rattan Congress, held on 7 and 8 November 2022, the Forum secretariat organized a parallel session on strengthening resource mobilization for sustainable forest management and forest restoration.

61. During the seventeenth session of the Forum, representatives of the Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization met with the Forum's secretariat and agreed to hold a workshop from 6 to 10 February 2023 to familiarize participants with the work of the Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network and discuss the development of the region's forest financing strategy and capacity-building of regional experts in the mobilization of forest financing from all potential sources. In addition, the Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network team held a regional forest financing strategy validation workshop and provided a project concept note for the Commission for the Forests of Central Africa in September 2022. Additional information is contained in the note by the Secretariat on means of implementation, including operations and resources of the Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network ([E/CN.18/2023/4](#)).

62. At its twenty-sixth session, the Committee on Forestry invited FAO to continue supporting the participation of its regional forestry commissions in regional dialogues related to the Forum, as appropriate and within the mandate of FAO.¹¹

63. During that session, representatives of the Forum secretariat met with the secretaries of the FAO regional forestry commissions to exchange ideas on how the existing collaboration with the Forum could be enhanced, taking into consideration the respective mandates.

¹¹ See the report of the Committee on Forestry on its twenty-sixth session, para. 30 d). Available at www.fao.org/3/nk728en/nk728en.pdf.

C. Contributions of major groups and other relevant stakeholders, including the private sector and the philanthropic community, to achieving the thematic priorities, and progress on major group workplans

64. The Forum secretariat continued to strengthen engagement with major groups and other relevant stakeholders. It further developed engagement with the business and industry major group through the group's focal point in the International Council of Forest and Paper Associations, attending meetings of the Advisory Committee on Sustainable Forest-based Industries and engaging with individual forest-related business and industry entities such as Reforest'Action, a private sector entity based in France whose mission is to preserve, restore and create forestry and agroforestry ecosystems around the world to help address climate change and biodiversity loss. In consultation with the Forum secretariat, and with the subsequent approval of the Bureau of the eighteenth session of the Forum, the business and industry major group focal point and Reforest'Action conceived and proposed a panel discussion on regenerative agriculture and its role in the promotion of sustainable forest management, which will be held during the eighteenth session of the Forum. The Forum secretariat continued its efforts to secure the engagement of philanthropic partners in the work of the Forum.

65. The Forum secretariat kept major group representatives actively engaged in several activities during the intersessional period. These included the observance of the International Day of Forests on 21 March 2022; the fifteenth World Forestry Congress in May 2022; the regional workshop on guidelines to address the impacts of COVID-19 on sustainable forest management in Africa, held in October 2022; the Forum expert group meeting on the Forum's contribution to the 2030 Agenda, the involvement of regional and subregional entities, and the involvement of major group and other relevant stakeholders, held in January 2023; and the organization-led initiative on the assessment of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests, held in February 2023. Major groups also responded to the survey questionnaire on the assessment of the international arrangement on forests in preparation for the midterm review of its effectiveness by the Forum, specifically on topic J, on the involvement of major groups and other relevant stakeholders.¹²

66. The Youth Call for Action, developed by the children and youth major group, was adopted at the fifteenth World Forestry Congress.¹³ The Youth Call for Action was the result of a two-year effort, four regional consultations and the participation of over 600 youth organizations and young experts between the ages of 18 and 35 years from all over the world, which identified the challenges and the recommendations related to the meaningful inclusion, participation and recognition of young people in the forest sector. All future workplans of the International Forestry Students' Association and the children and youth major group will be based on this call.

IV. Conclusion

67. Forum partners, including member organizations of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests, regional and subregional partners and major groups and other relevant stakeholders, continue to play an important role in the work of the Forum,

¹² For additional information, see [E/CN.18/2023/6](#).

¹³ See www.fao.org/3/cc0249en/cc0249en.pdf.

including in the ongoing preparations for the midterm review of the international arrangement on forests and other Forum activities.

68. Since the conclusion of the seventeenth session of the Forum in May 2022, these partners have been fully engaged in the intersessional activities of the Forum and continued to implement their activities in support of implementation of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030. These partners have the potential to contribute even further to the achievement of the global forest goals and the Sustainable Development Goals. Efforts are being made to further ensure wider participation of regional and subregional partners, and major groups, in Forum activities. In this regard, it is necessary to consider ways and means to further promote mutual collaboration between the Forum and these partners.

V. Proposals

69. The following points are suggested for discussions during the eighteenth session of the Forum and for inclusion in the Chair's proposals for submission to the nineteenth session of the Forum:

(a) To take note of the efforts of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests and its member organizations, and to invite the Partnership and its member organizations to take additional concrete steps to support the work of the Forum, including by sharing information on their contribution to the thematic priorities of the Forum and by providing specific technical support to accelerate the achievement of the global forest goals, and to report its progress to the Forum at its nineteenth session;

(b) To invite the governing bodies of the member organizations of the Partnership to fully integrate the global forest goals into their respective operational programmes of work and to scale up support for the implementation of the work plan of the Partnership and the strengthening of its secretariat;

(c) To invite member States to consider supporting regional and subregional partners of the Forum, as well as major groups and other stakeholders, including by strengthening their technical and resource mobilization capacities and participation in Forum sessions and intersessional meetings.
