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# COMMITTEE ON FORESTRY

## TWENTY-FIFTH SESSION

5 - 9 October 2020

## DIALOGUE WITH STATUTORY BODIES IN FORESTRY

### Executive Summary

Statutory bodies are established under Article VI of the FAO Constitution to carry out specific tasks in support of the work of FAO and to provide specialist advice in high-priority areas or questions.

This document presents progress reports on activities of the three Forestry Statutory Bodies and the Working Group of the Committee on Forestry:

- Committee on Mediterranean Forestry Questions Silva Mediterranea
- Advisory Committee on Sustainable Forest-based Industries (ACFSI)
- International Poplar Commission (IPC)
- Working Group on Dryland Forests and Agrosilvopastoral Systems

The Committee may wish to engage in a dialogue with Chairpersons of the Statutory Bodies and provide further advice or guidance, as appropriate.

### Suggested action by the Committee on Forestry

The Committee on Forestry is invited to provide guidance on the way forward by referring to the Points for Consideration provided at the end of the progress reports of each of the Statutory Bodies (see Annexes I-V).

*Queries on the substantive content of the document may be addressed to:*

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## **I. INTRODUCTION**

1. Progress Reports from Forestry Statutory Bodies are presented for the Committee's consideration in Annex I-V of this document on:
  - Regional Forestry Commissions (RFCs)
  - Committee on Mediterranean Forestry Questions Silva Mediterranea
  - Advisory Committee on Sustainable Forest-based Industries (ACFSI)
  - International Poplar Commission (IPC)
  - Working Group on Dryland Forests and Agrosilvopastoral Systems
2. All these bodies, and in particular the Regional Forestry Commissions (RFCs), provided inputs to the 25<sup>th</sup> Session of COFO and made recommendations for FAO's programme in forestry.

Annex I**REGIONAL FORESTRY COMMISSIONS**

1. The current biennium's sessions of the Regional Forestry Commissions were held as follows:
  - 28<sup>th</sup> Session of the Asia-Pacific Forestry Commission (APFC), 17-21 June 2019, Incheon (Republic of Korea)
  - 31<sup>st</sup> Session of the Latin American and Caribbean Forestry Commission (LACFC), 2-6 September 2019, Montevideo (Uruguay)
  - 30<sup>th</sup> Session of the North American Forest Commission (NAFC), 9-12 September 2019, Missoula (United States of America)
  - 40<sup>th</sup> Session of the European Forestry Commission (EFC), 4-7 November 2019, Geneva (Switzerland)
  - 24<sup>th</sup> Session of the Near East Forestry and Range Commission (NEFRC), 25-29 November 2019, Antalya (Turkey)
  - 22<sup>nd</sup> Session of the African Forestry and Wildlife Commission (AFWC), 9-13 March 2020, Skukuza (South Africa)
2. Recommendations of the Regional Forestry Commissions (RFCs) are presented as a miscellaneous document. They served as a major input to document FO:COFO/2020/9.5 on 'FAO's work in forestry under the reviewed Strategic Framework'.
3. At the 24<sup>th</sup> Session of COFO (July, 2018), the Chairpersons of the RFCs took part in a High-Level Dialogue on 'Forests and the Sustainable Development Goals'. The Committee expressed its appreciation for the new exchange mechanism and proposed extending it to women, youth, indigenous communities and the private sector.

**Points for consideration**

4. The Committee may wish to:
  - Continue providing guidance on strategic issues to the Regional Forestry Commissions and other FAO regional bodies; and
  - Stress the importance for the regional bodies to have a more policy-relevant role in the FAO Regional Conferences.
5. The Committee may wish to request FAO to:
  - Review and consult with Members on further improving Regional Forestry Commissions as well-established mechanisms for policy dialogue and exchange, with a view to further strengthening coordination and collaborative action across sectors and stakeholders to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Paris Agreement and the Global Forest Goals.

Annex II**COOMMITTEE ON MEDITERRANEAN FORESTRY QUESTIONS - SILVA MEDITERRANEA****A. Twenty-third Session of Silva Mediterranea**

1. The Committee held its 23<sup>rd</sup> Session on 1-5 April 2019 in Brummana, Lebanon. The report of the session provides the recommendations made by the Committee<sup>1</sup>.

**B. Forest and landscape restoration in the Mediterranean**

2. On the initiative of the Working Group on 'Desertification and restoration of Mediterranean Drylands of Silva Mediterranea', FAO developed a global project entitled "The Paris Agreement in action: upscaling forest and landscape restoration to achieve nationally determined contributions". It includes a regional Mediterranean component implemented under the guidance of Silva Mediterranea and two national components in Lebanon and Morocco. The project supports restoration of degraded lands with a view to helping countries achieve their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) and other commitments, such as the Bonn Challenge on the restoration of degraded and deforested lands and the Aichi targets on biodiversity.

**C. Young entrepreneurship in the Mediterranean**

3. 'MedForYouth - Empowering Young Entrepreneurs around the Mediterranean' is a project proposal that has been developed to promote goods and services provided by Mediterranean forests, while favouring rural development. It aims to develop forestry and support youth employment and entrepreneurship in the Mediterranean region. The project proposal will be submitted to selected donors, while co-funding from countries is still required to complete the proposal.

4. MedForYouth was initiated by the Université Catholique de Louvain (UCL), the Mediterranean Facility of the European Forest Institute (EFIMED) and the International Centre for Advanced Mediterranean Agronomic Studies (CIHEAM), and could be further developed under Silva Mediterranea.

**D. Advocacy and sharing knowledge**

5. The second edition of the State of Mediterranean Forests<sup>2</sup> was published in November 2018 (English version) and January 2020 (French version). It highlighted the importance of Mediterranean forests in implementing solutions to tackle global issues such as climate change and population increase.

6. The 24<sup>th</sup> Session of Silva Mediterranea and the Seventh Mediterranean Forest Week is expected to be held in 2021 and will cover topics such as youth, the role of Mediterranean forests in green jobs creation, the social dimension of forests with participatory approaches and the involvement of populations in facing forest challenges.

**E. Points for consideration**

7. The Committee may wish to encourage Members of Silva Mediterranea to:

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[http://foris.fao.org/meetings/download/\\_2019/xxiii\\_session\\_of\\_the\\_committee\\_on\\_mediterranean\\_fo/misc\\_documents/report\\_session23\\_en.pdf](http://foris.fao.org/meetings/download/_2019/xxiii_session_of_the_committee_on_mediterranean_fo/misc_documents/report_session23_en.pdf).

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.fao.org/3/CA2081EN/ca2081en.PDF>

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- Support the project “MedForYouth-Empowering Young Entrepreneurs around the Mediterranean” and urge FAO to explore ways and means to further develop and implement it;
  - Contribute to the preparation and commit to high-level participation in the 24<sup>th</sup> Session of Silva Mediterranea and the Seventh Mediterranean Forest Week, planned to be held in 2021;
  - Review the activities of Silva Mediterranea to assess the impacts of COVID-19 on Mediterranean forest ecosystems and related livelihoods, and how forests and forestry can contribute to the recovery from the pandemic in the region.

Annex III**ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON SUSTAINABLE FOREST-BASED INDUSTRIES (ACSFI)****A. Introduction**

1. The Advisory Committee on Sustainable Forest-based Industries (ACSFI) is the only FAO Statutory Body composed exclusively of senior executives from the private industry sector worldwide. It meets yearly with the main mandate to provide guidance and advice to FAO in the field of sustainable production and consumption of forest products.

**B. Outputs of the 60<sup>th</sup> and 61<sup>st</sup> Sessions of ACSFI**

2. At its 60<sup>th</sup> Session, held in Vancouver, Canada on 7 May 2019, as well as at its 61<sup>st</sup> Session, held virtually on 31 March 2020, the ACSFI provided an update on the status of ACSFI activities related to recommendations from previous sessions and provided an opportunity to discuss FAO's programme of work in forestry.

3. Responding to the recommendations of its 60<sup>th</sup> and 61<sup>st</sup> sessions, ACSFI addressed the following main thematic areas: i) forest-based value chains in the bioeconomy; ii) public policies encouraging wood use in construction; iii) accounting for carbon mitigation potential of harvested wood products (HWP), iv) forest renewables replacing fossil-based and greenhouse gas (GHG) intensive products and v) ACSFI Strategic Framework 2020-2030.

4. ACSFI identified and documented examples of innovative forest product value chains from different geographical contexts, showcasing the impact of the forest sector on sustainable development. It supported efforts to promote sustainable wood value chains in the context of the Joint Sustainable Wood for Sustainable World (SW4SW) Initiative of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF). This included supporting two regional Dialogues in Africa, which took place in 2019 in Douala (Cameroon) and Johannesburg (South Africa). The Dialogues aimed to raise awareness and build capacity to strengthen wood value chains, thereby increasing their contributions to the SDGs and the bioeconomy.

5. ACSFI identified examples of public policies at national and decentralized level, promoting the use of wood as a construction material. Such policies are primarily focused on public procurement policies, but seek to encourage the increased use of wood products in both public and private buildings. They often also include projects and initiatives funded by the public administration, often common to areas with strong forest industries.

6. ACSFI also identified emerging opportunities in a synthesis of current practices for accounting for the carbon mitigation potential of harvested wood products (HWP). The report includes discussion on tools and techniques for estimating carbon emission reductions from HWP through storage and substitution of other materials.

7. ACSFI Members expressed their strong support and interest in the ongoing ACSFI initiative focused on forest renewables replacing fossil-based and greenhouse gas (GHG)-intensive products. This initiative seeks to: i) understand the benefits of the substitution effects provided by forest products; ii) describe the role that forest products may play in the emerging bioeconomy; and iii) provide high level insight into the supply and demand dynamics of the forest product sector.

8. ACSFI validated the key elements of its new Strategic Framework 2020-2030<sup>1</sup>, in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The Strategic Framework aims at providing guidance

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<sup>1</sup> Key elements of the ACSFI Strategic Framework 2020-2030: i) Strategic goal 2030: Over the next decade, the ACSFI will advise FAO in its work towards the achievements of the UN Strategic Development Goals and seek

for the effective delivery of the ACSFI mandate, as defined in its statutes<sup>1</sup> and rules of procedure<sup>2</sup>. In this context, ACSFI defined its purpose to provide a forum for dialogue between FAO and the private sector to enhance the understanding of emerging opportunities and to identify and stimulate strategic actions by FAO, the private sector and other stakeholders, that promote sustainable consumption and production patterns related to forest products.

9. During its 61<sup>st</sup> session, ACSFI Members recognized the impact of COVID-19 on the forest sector and highlighted the essential services it provides, including a range of forest products being used such as hygiene and sanitary products, biomass for energy, ethanol for sanitizer, respirator paper and packaging materials to address the critical health and safety needs caused by the pandemic.

### **C. Key messages of ACSFI**

10. During its 61<sup>st</sup> Session, ACSFI endorsed the following key messages to the 25<sup>th</sup> Session of COFO:

#### **The ACSFI**

- recognizes FAO's engagement to promote sustainable forest management and strengthen capacities of stakeholders to ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns related to forest products;
- underlines the commitment of the ACSFI to serve as an advisor and catalyser promoting strategic partnerships between the private sector, FAO and other relevant stakeholders to support country efforts to achieve the SDGs;
- calls upon the private sector to fully engage with FAO and other stakeholders to: i) promote transformational change and ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns related to forest products through joint action; and ii) take joint and coordinated action to address the COVID-19 impacts by Building Back Better together and informed through the promotion of joint research efforts and actions to inform responsible supply and demand systems, as well as strategic communications;
- invites FAO to support the private sector to: i) continue providing up-to-date information on forest resources and the production and trade of forest products; and ii) carry out capacity building initiatives to promote the sustainable production and consumption of and trade in forest products; and
- requests the ACSFI Secretariat, provided by FAO, to continue facilitating the effective implementation and monitoring of the ACSFI Strategic Framework 2020-2030, including its biennial work plan 2020-21.

### **D. Points for consideration**

11. The Committee may wish to:

- Endorse the ACSFI outputs and key messages arising out of its 60<sup>th</sup> and 61<sup>st</sup> sessions;
- Request FAO to facilitate, as Secretariat of the ACSFI, the finalization and implementation of the ACSFI Strategic Framework 2020-2030, including identifying key action to address the impacts of COVID-19 on the forest sector;

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to enhance FAO's impact by catalysing innovative forest-related actions through partnerships between FAO, the private sector and other stakeholders; ii) Expected outcome 2024: Strategic actions stimulated and partnerships facilitated to promote a circular forest-based bioeconomy and healthy and productive ecosystems.

<sup>1</sup> ACSFI Statutes: <http://www.fao.org/forestry/44835-064fa1143c7a39a915e0fe6cfbbec71e9.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> ACSFI Rules of Procedure: <http://www.fao.org/forestry/48653-0ec2964d1ea8f31abbcefc792ce3fc0c.pdf>.

- Invite ACSFI to continue catalyzing strategic partnerships between FAO and the private sector to support country efforts to achieve the SDGs.



Annex IV**The International Commission on Poplars and Other Fast-Growing Trees Sustaining People and the Environment (IPC)****A. The IPC Reform**

1. The IPC has been working to reform its Convention and organization so that it can better contribute to the SDGs. At its 5<sup>th</sup> Special Session (February, 2019), the IPC adopted amendments to its Convention, with the subsequent approval of the Conference at its 41<sup>st</sup> Session (June, 2019). The amendments to the IPC Convention are therefore in force. These amendments include expansion of the IPC scope to all fast-growing trees that sustain people and the environment, from a prior exclusive remit in the poplars and willows. The new title of the IPC is the "International Commission on Poplars and Other Fast-Growing Trees Sustaining People and the Environment". At its Fifth Special Session, Members of the IPC encouraged the IPC Executive Committee to continue its work, making the IPC an effective instrument in light of the expansion of the IPC's scope.

**B. Developing an IPC Vision and Strategy**

2. The IPC has prepared a Vision Statement that articulates its mission and planned contribution to the Decade of Action for the 2030 Agenda, the UN Decade for Family Farming, and the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration. The vision articulates:

- a) **IPC Mission:** the IPC improves livelihoods and facilitates production of ecosystem goods and services by fostering the sustainable management of fast-growing trees worldwide.
- b) **Actions to achieve this Mission:** 1) the IPC will seek to foster innovation in production systems involving fast-growing trees; 2) the IPC will rigorously assess innovations to establish best management practices of fast-growing trees; and 3) it will make recommendations to Members and FAO so that good practices achieve scale.
- c) **Means to achieve the Mission:** The IPC will seek to work with existing Members through the IPC National Commissions, and will work with any new member nation that wish to establish a National Commission affiliated with the IPC.

**C. The 26<sup>th</sup> Session of the IPC Session in Rome**

3. Co-hosted with Italy, the 26<sup>th</sup> Session of the IPC, initially planned to be held in Rome, Italy, at FAO headquarters from 6 to 9 October 2020, has been postponed to 4 to 8 October 2021. The meeting is open to all FAO Members.

4. The IPC Session will include discussions on the IPC Vision, a draft IPC Strategy and draft terms of reference for the IPC Executive Committee. The Session will include thematic and technical presentations on fast-growing trees that support livelihoods and the provision of ecosystem services.

**D. Points for consideration**

5. The Committee may wish to:

- Take note of the achievements of the IPC Reform process;
- Encourage the IPC Executive Committee to take concrete actions through fast-growing tree species to support the UN Decade of Action for the SDGs, UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration and UN Decade on Family Farming;
- Encourage participation in the 2021 IPC Session and membership in the IPC in view of the expansion of the IPC scope.

Annex V**WORKING GROUP ON DRYLAND FORESTS AND AGROSILVOPASTORAL SYSTEMS****A. Introduction**

1. The establishment of the Working Group on Dryland Forests and Agrosilvopastoral Systems and its Terms of Reference were endorsed at the 23<sup>rd</sup> Session of COFO in 2016.
2. The Inaugural Session of the Working Group was convened from 16 to 17 July 2019 at FAO headquarters in Rome. The session was attended by 20 Members and five international organizations. The Working Group elected its Chairperson from the United Republic of Tanzania, and the two Vice-Chairpersons from Lebanon and France. The Working Group welcomed the offer by the United Republic of Tanzania to host the next meeting.
3. The Working Group reviewed its Rules of Procedure, proposed amendments to the text (see Appendix) and requested its secretariat to submit the revised draft Rules of Procedure for approval by the COFO at its 25<sup>th</sup> Session.

**B. Progress of the Working Group**

4. The Working Group developed its work plan for 2019-2021, based on the three main work areas requested by the Committee: (1) advancing the assessment and the monitoring of dryland forests and agrosilvopastoral systems; (2) enhancing partnership collaboration for scaling up good and proven practices and lessons learned on dryland forests and agrosilvopastoral systems; and (3) strengthening the knowledge based on implementation, strategies, guidelines and tools.
5. The Working Group supported FAO's efforts in producing the Global Dryland Assessment<sup>1</sup> with a view to better prioritizing investment needed for dryland restoration and management.
6. The Working Group's Steering Committee will be coordinating closely with the Steering Committee of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) GEF-7 Sustainable Forest Management Impact Programme on Dryland Sustainable Landscapes, of which FAO is the lead agency with country projects in Africa and Central Asia, in addition to a global programme for coordination. As an inter-governmental and multi-stakeholder body established under COFO, the Working Group has the vital role to: (i) provide technical advice on the implementation of the Impact Program at regional and global levels; (ii) help enhance its overall coherence; (iii) ensure South-South cooperation; and (iv) and strengthen dialogue with relevant regional actors.
7. Given the vulnerability of dryland forest and agrosilvopastoral systems to climate change, the Working Group, is producing a publication on "Managing dryland forest and agrosilvopastoral systems for sustainable production in the context of climate change: A model for transformative action to meet global food security under climate change". The model of transformative action seeks to provide currently missing simple and practical guidance to initiate and accelerate the transformation required to ensure climate resilient and sustainable dryland forest and agrosilvopastoral food production systems.
8. For the Working Group report and documents, please visit:  
<http://www.fao.org/forestry/95962/en/>

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.fao.org/documents/card/en/c/ca7148en/>

**C. Points for consideration**

9. The Committee may wish to:
- Approve the revised Rules of Procedure, as proposed by the First Session of the Working Group;
  - Take note of the progress made in the work of the COFO Working Group on Dryland Forests and Agrosilvopastoral Systems;
  - Encourage countries that have not yet done so to nominate their national dryland experts to serve on the Working Group.

Appendix**RULES OF PROCEDURE OF THE WORKING GROUP ON DRYLAND FORESTS AND AGROSILVOPASTORAL SYSTEMS**

1. At its 23<sup>rd</sup> Session, considering the relevance and benefits of having a Working Group on dryland forests and agrosilvopastoral systems, the Committee on Forestry established the Working Group based on Rule XXXI, paragraph 10 of the General Rules of the Organization, as a subsidiary body of the Committee and decided on its Terms of Reference.
2. In accordance with paragraph 11 of Rule XXXI of the General Rules of the Organization, the Working Group may adopt or amend its own Rules of Procedure, which shall be approved by the Committee on Forestry and shall be consistent with the rules of the Committee.

**Rule I  
Officers**

1. When electing its officers, the Working Group shall give due consideration to the desirability of ensuring equitable rotation of the offices among the regions and to gender balance.
2. At the first session in each biennium, the Working Group shall elect a Chairperson and two Vice-Chairpersons from among the representatives designated in accordance with paragraph 6 of its Terms of Reference at the end of the session, who shall remain in office until the election of the new Chairperson and new Vice-Chairpersons at the next session. The Chairperson and two Vice-Chairpersons are not permitted to run for re-election for consecutive terms.
3. The Chairperson and the two Vice-Chairpersons shall act as a Steering Committee during their mandates.
4. The Chairperson, or in his absence one of the Vice-Chairpersons, shall preside at meetings of the Working Group and exercise such other functions as may be required to facilitate its work. In the event of the Chairperson and the Vice-Chairpersons not being able to preside at a meeting, the Working Group shall appoint a Member of the Working Group, to take the chair.
5. Between sessions, the Steering Committee shall facilitate consultation with Members in relation to agendas, formats and other matters, and perform other actions relevant for ensuring preparations for the sessions.
6. The Director-General of the Organization shall appoint a Secretary who shall perform such duties as the work of the Working Group may require.

**Rule II  
Sessions**

1. The Working Group shall normally hold one session every two years, unless otherwise requested by a majority of the Members of the Working Group. Sessions shall be convened by the Director-General in consultation with the Chairperson of the Working Group taking into account any proposals made by the Working Group.
2. Notice of the date and place of each session shall normally be communicated formally at least two months in advance of the session to all Members and international organizations as may have been invited to attend the session.

3. Presence of a simple majority of the Members of the Working Group shall constitute a quorum for any action by the Working Group.

### **Rule III**

#### **Attendance**

1. Attendance at sessions of the Working Group shall be governed by the principles provided in Rule XXXI, paragraph 10 of the General Rules of the Organization.

### **Rule IV**

#### **Agenda and documents**

1. The Director-General, in consultation with the Chairperson of the Working Group, shall prepare a provisional agenda and shall normally circulate it at least two months in advance of the session to all Members and international organizations invited to attend the session.

2. All Members in the Working Group may request the Director-General, normally not less than 30 days before the proposed date of the session, to insert an item in the provisional agenda. The Director-General shall thereupon circulate the proposed item to all Members, together with any necessary papers.

3. The Working Group in session may by general consent amend the agenda by the deletion, addition or modification of any item.

4. Documents not already circulated shall be dispatched with the provisional agenda, or as soon as possible thereafter.

### **Rule V**

#### **Voting**

1. Each Member of the Working Group shall have one vote.

2. The decisions of the Working Group shall be ascertained by the Chairperson who, upon the request of one or more Members, shall resort to a vote, in which case the pertinent provisions of Rule XII of the General Rules of the Organization shall apply *mutatis mutandis*.

### **Rule VI**

#### **Records and papers**

1. The reports of the Working Group shall be made available for information to all of its Members, all Member Nations and Associate Members of the Organization, non-member States invited to the sessions, and to interested international organizations entitled to be present at the sessions.

### **Rule VII**

#### **Suspension of Rules**

1. The Working Group may decide to suspend any of the foregoing Rules of Procedure, provided that 24 hours' notice of the proposal for the suspension has been given. Such notice may be waived if no Member objects.

### **Rule VIII**

#### **Amendment of Rules**

1. The Working Group may, by a two-third majority of the votes cast, amend its Rules of Procedure, provided that such amendment is consistent with the Rules of Procedure of the Committee on Forestry and be adopted by the Committee.

2. No proposal for the amendment of these Rules shall be included in the agenda of any session of the Working Group, unless notice thereof has been dispatched by the Director-General to Members of the Working Group at least 30 days before the opening of the session.