

**IMPLEMENTING THE NON-LEGALLY  
BINDING INSTRUMENT ON ALL TYPES OF  
FORESTS**

## 1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Forests cover one third of the world's land area, constituting the largest terrestrial ecosystems. They provide a wide range of economic, social, cultural and environmental services. More than 1.6 billion people depend, to varying degrees, on forests for their livelihood, and use forest resources for fuel, timber, food, medicine and income. Forests and woodlands also provide important global environmental services that include watershed protection, wildlife habitats, bio-diversity, carbon sequestration and maintenance of ecosystem functions. Although the local, national and global importance of forests to human well-being, socio-economic development, poverty reduction, biodiversity and environmental conservation, and achievement of the Millennium Development Goals is widely acknowledged, the forests continue to decline due to deforestation and forest degradation. Forests now cover 31% (4 billion ha) of the total land area but were lost, between 2000 and 2010, at an average rate of 13 million ha annually (FAO, 2010). Every year, forest loss and degradation is costing the global economy between USD 2 and 4.5 trillion in lost revenues, according to a global study published by The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity (TEEB) in 2010. Furthermore, deforestation and forest degradation are estimated to produce 17% of worldwide greenhouse gas emissions. At the same time forests have a huge potential as carbon sinks accounting for an estimated 289 Gt of carbon in 2010 (FRA 2010). The significance of forests on a global scale reinforces the importance to manage them in a sustainable way and finding ways to ensure forests benefit present and future generations, which is the essence of sustainable forest management.

The importance of forests to sustainable development was brought into sharp focus at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in 1992. During the conference countries had intense negotiations over whether or not to have a forest convention to promote the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests. Although the countries eventually failed to agree on a forest convention they managed to agree on the Non-legally Binding Authoritative Statement of Principles for a Global Consensus on the Management, Conservation and Sustainable Development of all Types of Forests, also known as the Forest Principles, as well as Chapter 11 of Agenda 21: Combating Deforestation. The international dialogue on forest policies was continued under the United Nations through the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests (IPF, 1995-1997) and the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests (IFF, 1997-2000). These processes culminated in the over 270 IPF/IFF proposals for action, and the establishment of the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF). The UNFF was established as part of a new international arrangement on forests, to carry on the work building on the IPF and IFF processes. In 2006 the UNFF adopted the four shared Global Objectives on Forests.

Following nearly 3 years of intense negotiations, Forum members agreed on and adopted the Non-Legally Binding Instrument on all Types of Forests (NLBI) also commonly known as the Forest Instrument. This was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 2007. The adoption of the Forest Instrument is an important step to move forward in achieving sustainable forest management globally. It is the first time since UNCED in 1992 that the member states of the UNFF have been able to agree – albeit on a voluntary basis – on a series of measures at the international and national levels to strengthen forest sector governance, technical and institutional capacity, policy and legal frameworks, forest sector investment and stakeholder



## **2: INTRODUCTION TO THE FOREST INSTRUMENT**

Overview of what will be covered:

- Origin and purpose of the NLBI-
- Global objectives on forests
- Guiding Principles of the NLBI
- National policies and measures

### **2.1 Origin and purpose of the NLBI**

The importance of forests to sustainable development was brought into sharp focus at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (2002-04) (188575376857612900297910947470)

- To enhance cooperation as well as policy and programme coordination on forest-related issues
- To foster international cooperation and
- To monitor, assess and report on progress of the above functions and objectives
- To strengthen political commitment to the management conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests.
- Enhance the contribution of forests to the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, and to the implementation of the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development and the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, bearing in mind the Monterrey Consensus of the International Conference on Financing for Development;
- Encourage and assist countries, including those with low forest cover, to develop and implement forest conservation and rehabilitation strategies, increase the area of forests under sustainable management and reduce forest degradation and the loss of forest cover in order to maintain and improve their forest resources with a view to enhancing the benefits of forests to meet present and future needs, in particular the needs of indigenous peoples and local communities whose livelihoods depend on forests;
- Strengthen interaction between the United Nations Forum on Forests and relevant regional and subregional forest-related mechanisms, institutions and instruments, organizations and processes, with participation of major groups, as identified in Agenda 21 and relevant stakeholders to facilitate enhanced cooperation and effective implementation of sustainable forest management, as well as to contribute to the work of the Forum;

## 2.2 Global Objectives on Forests

In 2006, at its sixth session, the Forum agreed on four shared Global Objectives on Forests, providing clear guidance on the future work of the international arrangement on forests. The four Global Objectives seek to:

- Reverse the loss of forest cover worldwide through sustainable forest management (SFM), including protection, restoration, afforestation and reforestation, and increase efforts to prevent forest degradation;
- Enhance forest-based economic, social and environmental benefits, including by improving the livelihoods of forest-dependent people;
- Increase significantly the area of sustainably managed forests, including protected forests, and increase the proportion of forest products derived from sustainably managed forests; and
- Reverse the decline in official development assistance for sustainable forest management and mobilize significantly-increased new and additional financial resources from all sources for the implementation of SFM.

## 2.3 The Non-legally Binding Instrument on All Types of Forests (NLBI)

In May 2007, the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) adopted the Non-legally Binding Instrument on All Types of Forests (NLBI), which is also commonly known as the "Forest Instrument". This significant international consensus was reached to boost the implementation of sustainable forest management (SFM), and thus to maintain **and enhance the economic, social and**

- There is existing consensus on forests such as the Forest principles, the proposals for action of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests/Intergovernmental Forum on Forest and resolutions and decisions of the United Nations Forum on Forests;
- Sustainable forest management, is a dynamic and evolving concept, that aims to maintain and enhance the economic, social and environmental values of all types of forests, for the benefit of present and future generations,
- The impact of climate change on forests and sustainable forest management, as well as the contribution of forests to addressing climate change
- The need to strengthen political commitment and collective efforts at all levels,
- Effective implementation of sustainable forest management is critically dependent upon adequate resources, including financing, capacity development and the transfer of environmentally sound technologies, in particular the need to mobilize increased financial resources,

***Purpose of the Forest Instrument***

**The purpose** of the NLBI according to the UNFF resolution (UNFF A/RE

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implement a series of policies and measures that are necessary to the achieve sustainable forest management. These are presented below in abridged version (see full text);

### **Monitoring, assessment and reporting**

Member states also noted the importance of monitoring and reporting and agreed as follows:

- Member States should monitor and assess progress towards achieving the purpose of this instrument.
- Member States should submit, on a voluntary basis, taking into account availability of resources and the requirements and conditions for the preparation of reports for other bodies or instruments, national progress reports as part of their regular reporting to the Forum.

**Exercise 2.1:** *Ask participants by country to indicate the type of forest development framework they*



### 3 WHY SHOULD COUNTRIES IMPLEMENT THE FOREST INSTRUMENT?

#### Overview of what will be covered

- *Introduction and Exercise*
- *NLBI as a forestry development framework*
- *Linking the NLBI to national and other development frameworks*
- *Linking NLBI to international forestry related agreements and development goals*
- *The NLBI as a framework for enhancing inter-sectoral coordination*
- *The NLBI as a basis for resource mobilisation*

#### **Introduction**

Most countries are already implementing forest development plans and programmes at various scales that include at least some of the policy measures adopted in the Forest Instrument. For example many developing countries are implementing community-based forest management programmes as part of their national forest management plans. (FAO, 2002) (p. 11).



e) ***A basis for resource mobilisation***







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**Exercise 4.1:** *Assessment of extent to which the 25 national policies and measures are being*

**Exercise: 4.2 Action Plan:** Based on the outcomes of the exercise 4.1 above participants are to develop in develop an action plan for implementing the five top priorities. The plan should cover what is to be done, when, by whom and with what. Instructions for the exercise are given in Appendix 1



## **5: MONITORING IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NLBI**

### ***Introduction and session overview***

- **Why monitor**
- **What to monitor**
- **How to monitor-**
- **Monitoring and reporting**

### ***5.1 Why monitor the implementation of the NLBI?***

Monitoring and evaluating progress in implementation is an important component of implementing the Forest Instrument (FI) as it will assist the stakeholders to continuously assess their progress towards achieving their goals and objectives. In addition it will help the stakeholders gain a better understanding of the enablers and challenges encountered in implementing the FI. It will also help in identifying the strengths and weaknesses of the overall national forest programme and stakeholders will be able to pinpoint those areas that need the most urgent attention. Thus the monitoring information will be useful to stakeholders in reviewing the nfp and in planning and other decision-making processes. Depending on the scope of the national policies and measures being implemented by a country at a given time, the data and information collected through the FI monitoring system can be used for reporting on forestry activities and achievements to various national and international processes such as programmes under the multilateral environmental conventions and the UNFF.

The information on NLBI implementation generated through monitoring at country level will also be useful at the international level. In 2015, at the occasion of the Eleventh Session of the UNFF, the effectiveness of the NLBI will be reviewed and its contribution to SFM and to the achievement of the

for establishing the monitoring system. In particular it provides a basis for establishing or determining the baseline information required for assessing changes as a result of implementation of the NLBI process. It provides a basis for designing a more comprehensive baseline that is informed by what is existing and the identified priority actions. The M&E system, including the baseline survey, to be

ensure that the methods and frequency of measuremen

specific parameters to be measured or monitored, frequency of monitoring and who will be responsible. Instructions for the exercise are provided in Appendix 1.

*Ask participants by country to indicate the type of forest development framework they are using i.e NFP, Master plan, forest policy statement, forest law or other equivalent and when it was developed or adopted.*

**2 Questions:**

- *Which of the policies and measures are included in your forest policy framework?*
- *Which of the policies and measures are actually implemented in your country?*

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<b>Included in forest policy framework</b>	<b>Actually implemented</b>
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