

CONCEPT NOTE

“Advancing Sustainable Wood Policy and Science for Carbon-neutral and Resilient Economies”

Global Policy Dialogue

WOOD for GLOBE Project and Sustainable Wood for a Sustainable World (SW4SW) Initiative

March 25, 2024, FAO Headquarters, Rome, Italy

1. Background

Increasing evidence indicates that wood and non-wood forest products (NWFP) and their associated value chains significantly contribute to the livelihoods of people in rural and urban areas. They also play a crucial role in directly helping us achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. These goals encompass critical targets related to climate action, halting land degradation, and conserving biodiversity. Notably, the sustainable use of wood as a carbon-neutral material in construction and as a renewable energy source has a substantial potential to be a cost-effective and innovative contribution to achieving carbon neutrality and promoting more resilient economies at scale¹.

Choosing to use, build, and live with wood aligns with the increasing demand for eco-friendly materials and serves as a catalyst for environmentally responsible economic recovery efforts. Sustainably produced wood provides versatile solutions across various industries, including construction, furniture production, packaging, renewable energy generation, the development of biomaterials for clothing, and bio-chemicals.

Significant forest commitments have been made at major international fora, such as the United Nations Strategic Plan for Forests 2017-2030 and its Global Forest Goals, the New York Declaration on Forests, United Nations Food Systems Summit (UNFSS), the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change Conference of the Parties (UNFCCC COP26), the United Nations Environment Assembly 5.2 (UNEA 5.2), the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF17), and the adoption of the Seoul Forest Declaration² and the Ministerial Call on Sustainable Wood³ at the 2022 World Forestry Congress (WFC).

In particular, the Ministerial Call on Sustainable Wood calls for the expansion of sustainable wood-based pathways to address issues like a lack of awareness, foster global and regional dialogues, more effective mechanisms for sharing technical knowledge and experiences, and a substantial increase in the utilization of sustainable wood-based solutions within the Nationally Determined Contributions by the year 2030.

More recently, the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF)⁴ unveiled a "Joint Call to Action for Forests towards 2030" at the 2023 SDG Summit and Climate Action Week in New York. The event, called "Forests for

¹ FAO. 2022. The State of the World's Forests 2022. Forest pathways for green recovery and building inclusive, resilient, and sustainable economies. Rome, FAO. <https://doi.org/10.4060/cb9360en>

² [The Seoul Forest Declaration \(fao.org\)](https://www.fao.org/forestry/2022/03/cpf-seoul-forest-declaration)

³ [Ministerial Call on Sustainable Wood \(fao.org\)](https://www.fao.org/forestry/2022/03/ministerial-call-on-sustainable-wood)

⁴ <https://www.fao.org/collaborative-partnership-on-forests/about/en>

our Future," highlighted the crucial role of forests in achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the urgent need to unlock their full potential, especially regarding Global Forest Goals (GFGs). The "Joint Call to Action" urges increased commitment, political will, and collective efforts to strengthen forest-based solutions and fully utilize the potential of forests for global progress and addressing forest-related challenges.

In 2022, the International Union of Forest Research Organizations (IUFRO), in collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the Centre for Bioeconomy at the University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Vienna (BOKU), engaged with the WOOD for GLOBE project, funded through the Forest Fund, Republic of Austria, an initiative by the Austrian Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Regions and Water Management (BML). The project's primary goal is to strengthen global dialogue and networking to support the increased use of sustainable wood with a view to create a carbon-neutral bioeconomy worldwide. To achieve this, the project will pilot the concept of the global wood policy platform through three key activities: i) Exchanging technical knowledge and policy experiences (WP1), ii) Sharing scientific knowledge and experiences (WP2), and iii) Facilitating global and regional policy dialogues (WP3).

2. Objective

This global policy dialogue will generate insights and recommendations from the CPF organizations, governments, and civil society to accelerate the uptake of sustainable wood as part of policies to achieve climate neutrality and resilience. The speakers will discuss preliminary results of the WOOD for GLOBE project and exchange lessons learned to provide actionable recommendations to unlock the benefits of increased use of wood in the bioeconomy globally.

The conclusions from the Dialogue will inform future events and dialogues (i.e., 26th IUFRO Congress 2024, 27th COFO, UNFCCC COP 29).

3. Outputs

- Awareness raised and experiences shared on up-scaling the contribution of sustainable wood-based materials and bioenergy.
 - Scientific evidence on opportunities and trade-offs in increased uptake of wood-based materials and energy disseminated.
 - Actionable recommendations to integrate sustainable wood-based materials and energy pathways as part of global and country-level policies and investment programmes, in line with international commitments on climate actions and sustainable development.
 - Recommendations for improved sustainable wood policy international exchange, including consideration of existing networks and regional/global wood policy platforms to foster global collaboration.
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4. Audience

The meeting is planned as a hybrid event with a capacity for **100 in-presence** participants, reaching out to a wide range of policymakers, international organizations, forest producers, forest consumers, the scientific community, and civil society, including women leadership, and youth.

5. Date and Venue

Monday 25 March 2024, 10:00-16:30, FAO Headquarters, Rome, Italy

[Zoom link for online registration](#)

6. Registration

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7. Contacts

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- The Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF) website <https://www.fao.org/collaborative-partnership-on-forests/en>
- Sustainable Wood for a Sustainable World (SW4SW) Initiative website <https://www.fao.org/forestry/sustainable-wood/en/>
- Wood for Globe webpage: <https://www.iufro.org/science/partnership-projects/wood-for-globe/>