



## **Intervention by International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO)**

### **Agenda Item 3 (b) Policy discussions on the implementation of the UNSPF 2017–2030**

#### **UNFF19**

11:00-13:00, 5 May 2024, New York

Thank you, Mr. Chairman for giving me the floor.

Excellencies,  
Distinguished delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

The International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO) extend our gratitude to the UNFF Secretariat for organizing this pivotal 19th Session of the UNFF and preparing various supportive documents that underpin our discussions.

Under Agenda Item 3, I express our sincere appreciation for the enlightening presentations & congratulate delegations who have shared the outcomes of several impactful initiatives, reflecting the progress on sustainable forest management on a global scale.

I congratulate India for their commendable endeavours in hosting the Country Led Initiative discussions on two crucial thematic areas: forest fires/wildfires and forest certification. Supported by the ITTO, it is clear that fostering the exchange of best practices in these thematic areas is instrumental in bolstering global efforts in advancing the Global Forest Goals outlined in the UN Strategic Plan for Forests (UNSPF).

Mr. Chairman,

It is essential to underscore the pressing need for heightened collaboration and action, both locally and globally, to mitigate the impacts of wildfires in tropical countries. Effective capacity building is critical for this endeavour, encompassing knowledge exchange and the development of robust strategies for integrated landscape fire management.

I wish to inform the Forum, in this connection, that ITTO has been actively addressing the challenges posed by tropical forest wildfires since the 1980s. ITTO has facilitated producer member countries in bolstering their fire management capabilities and engaging in collaborative initiatives on a global scale.

Our recent endeavours in fire capacity building include significant projects such as "Capacity Building on Forest and Land Fire Management in Indonesia" in partnership with the Ministry of Environment and Forestry, and "Forest Fire Prevention and Response in Tropical Forests and Forest Plantations in Peru" in collaboration with SERFOR. Each of these projects received generous funding of US\$1.2 million through Japan's Emergency Support Programme, for which we express our gratitude to the Government of Japan.

These initiatives underscore the invaluable insights gained over the past three decades. The ITTO remains committed to prioritizing investments and providing continued support for capacity building in fire management across our member states. It is indeed the ITTO's proposal for a CPF Joint Initiative on Forest Fire Management. We heard the requests from the distinguished delegate from the United States of America and I am sure they will definitely be discussed within the CPF membership.

Mr. Chairman,

Forest certification and legality verification are tools reflected in ITTO's commitment to promoting SFM practices, ensuring a balance of environmental, social, and economic benefits. Through extensive support for capacity building projects and policy discussions on forest certification systems, ITTO continues to promote responsible forestry practices in the tropics, aligned to our pioneering work on Criteria and Indicators for sustainable forest management (SFM).

In this regard, ITTO's work over the years and more recently the ITTO's Legal and Sustainable Supply Chains (LSSC) Programme has played a pivotal role in combating illegal logging, promoting tracking and traceability, and advancing SFM practices in collaboration with numerous partners. Through working with Initiatives such as the APEC Expert Group on Illegal Logging and Associated Trade (EGILAT), the CPF Joint Initiative SW4SW and others, ITTO's LSSC Programme has significantly enhanced partnerships promoting transparency, accountability, and legality in the timber trade.

In September, ITTO, its partners and key stakeholders, will convene the 2<sup>nd</sup> Global Legal & Sustainable Timber Forum (GLSTF) in Macao, to further foster networking, collaboration, and business exchange among stakeholders in the timber industry, aimed of enhancing SFM practices, promoting legal and sustainable wood product supply chains, and facilitating the transparent and sustainable trade of wood products.

Mr. Chairman,

The ITTO will host two side events during this session of the UNFF. The first event on forest fires, will follow shortly after this session in CR4, while the second event, focusing on legal and sustainable supply chains will be tomorrow, Tuesday, also in CR4. Distinguished delegates are cordially invited to attend both events, where lunch will be provided.

Mr Chairman,

I am delighted to announce that ITTO has achieved accreditation as an accredited entity of the Green Climate Fund (GCF) in March 2024, having undergone a rigorous review process. We express our gratitude to the GCF and its Accreditation Panel for their thorough assessment. The ITTO eagerly looks forward to collaboration with the GCF to address members' priorities in the three tropical regions.

I am happy to hear Australia's comment on the need to ensure wood security, something the ITTO had highlighted from 5 years ago. As an intergovernmental organization with a broad mandate in promoting the sustainable management and utilization of tropical forests and timber products, ITTO remains steadfast in its commitment to collaborate with countries, the UNFF, the CPF, and other international, regional, and national organizations to advance SFM globally, supporting the implementation of the UNSPF, the Global Forest Goals towards achieving the SDGs.

Thank you for your kind attention.