

Fourth Session of the Assembly
25-26 November 2020, Virtual

Agenda Item 6.1

Introduction to the WFC Preparation status - contents for each theme

1. Under the “Building a Green, Healthy and Resilient Future with Forests”, the main theme of the XV World Forestry Congress (WFC), there are six sub-themes closely related to current issues on forestry, 1.Reversing deforestation and forest degradation; 2.Nature-based solution; 3.The green pathway to growth and sustainability; 4.Forests and human health; 5.Managing and communicating forest information and knowledge; 6.Enhancing forest management and cooperation. The FAO and the WFC Secretariat are working on the methods of detailed discussion, details, and the expected outcomes of each six sub-theme, and plan to complete this ongoing work by the end of this year.
2. Sub-theme 1, “Turning the tide: reversing deforestation and forest degradation” will be discussed in keynote speeches and other type of interactive discussions focused on UN agencies’ commitment to turn the tide on deforestation, the UN-REDD Program and the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration. Through in-depth discussions participants will get an opportunity to inform, analyze and discuss current trends of deforestation and forest degradation and highlight key initiatives and commitments to address and reverse these trends. In addition, participants will share how to increase the role of forestry in global narratives including climate change, trade in legal timber, and the aftermath of COVID-19 pandemic and recovery efforts.
3. Sub-theme 2, “Nature-based solution for climate change and mitigation and biodiversity conservation” will cover the scene of forests and trees as nature-based solutions, the role of SFM in the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, forest ecosystem restoration, forest-based solutions for strengthening urban resilience and biodiversity, and full potential of forest genetic resources for continued adaptation of forests and their restoration. Under the each session related to this theme, the potential of the NBS will be recognized as a holistic solution to build resilience, incorporating food security and addressing disaster impacts as well as the need for all stakeholders’ active participation and supporting dialogues and commitments to the NBS.
4. Sub-theme 3, “The green pathway to growth and sustainability” will focus on vital economic functions and trees, which are necessary for advancing inclusiveness and sustainable economic development. It will also address approaches to the creation of value, equality and resilience of forest products and ecosystem services, decent works including creating green jobs and innovations in the forest sector as well as the business cases for forestry. Discussions related to financing for forests will cover aligning fiscal policies for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the fundamentals for attracting finance to sustainable landscapes.

5. Sub-theme 4, “Forests and human health: revisiting the connections” will discuss the reliance of the global population either directly or indirectly on forests for their livelihood and general health and well-being. After the overview of the connection and interaction between forests and people, discussions will be followed on key aspects of cross-sectoral policy frameworks, disabling policies, other legal and regulatory impediments, and other important aspects. This sub-theme will be discussing the role of forests in food security, boosting resilient food systems, inclusive rural development and alleviating poverty for forest-dependent communities and family farmers in a way that shares knowledge and field experiences of participants.

6. Sub-theme 5, “Managing and communicating forest information and knowledge” will discuss the need for sound scientific research and information based on innovative monitoring techniques to support forest policy deliberations. It will also examine how best to enhance collaboration between science and policy and to better communicate forest issues to a wide range of audiences. The discussion will mainly cover monitoring the forest to restore ecosystems, accessing and disseminating data and communications, and importance of forestry education. As forest monitoring cases in action, examples related to field-base assessments and remote sensing technologies and innovations will be introduced together.

7. Sub-theme 6, “Forests without boundaries: enhancing management and cooperation” will draw attention to forest in the context of landscape dynamics and the multi-sectoral coordination and partnerships required to achieve meaningful SFM. In more detail, it will discuss forest management in a broader landscape, promoting cooperation among all stakeholders, and strengthening current and future partnerships. Each session under this sub-theme will cover SFM’s contribution to achieving SDGs, the introduction of new technologies, machinery and equipment, the challenges of forest management facing indigenous people and local communities.

8. In addition to the above six sub-themes, special events covering a wide range of global issues including forest fire, circular economy, forest finance, young forestry professionals, and post COVID-19 will be prepared. In particular with one of the highest priorities and consideration of the Korea Forest Service, a PFI high-level roundtable and a forest fire forum will be organized. The PFI high-level roundtable aims to consolidate partnerships and commitments for advancing the Initiative and to discuss strategic guidance and a future roadmap. It will provide a clear vision for future implementation, boosting collaboration on peace and confidence-building by rehabilitation and restoration of degraded lands in cross-border areas. The Forest fire forum will emphasize the importance of integrated fire management approaches through all phases of processes including fire prevention and preparedness, fire detection and responses, post-fire restoration and adaptation as a major global issue to be considered at a regional and global level.

Points for Consideration

9. The Assembly may wish to take note of the information.
