



**REMARKS ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY MR. SANTIAGO GARCÍA, DIRECTOR OF THE NATIONAL FORESTRY OFFICE OF ECUADOR, AT INFORMAL CONSULTATIONS CONVENED BY THE UNFF12 BUREAU ON THE DRAFT ELEMENTS FOR INCLUSION IN THE OMNIBUS RESOLUTION (New York, 4 May 2017)**

Distinguished UNFF12 Bureau Co-chairs,

1. I have the honor to deliver these remarks on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.
2. The Group wishes to present general remarks in regard to each of the four areas proposed in the document "Elements for Inclusion in the Omnibus Resolution", proposed by the UNFF12 Bureau.
3. Throughout the document, the Group request to replace the five mentions on "Member States", for "countries";
4. On Monitoring, assessment and reporting:
  - A reference to the summary report of the Expert Group Meeting on Reporting to the UN Forum of Forests, held in Brasilia, Brazil on 7 - 10 February 2017;
  - Flexibility when referring to the issue of "Voluntary National Contributions". UNFF Secretariat could provide a set of guidelines for the consideration of countries concerning the announcement of VNCs. The Secretariat might also consider, while developing work on national reporting, the results of pilot testing with interested countries and further consultations with countries on potential relevant outputs, taking into account national policies and priorities.
  - We restate the importance to avoid increasing the burden of reporting or creating overlaps in the process of communication through streamlined reporting on the implementation of the Forest Instrument, the Strategic Plan and voluntary national contributions.
5. On means of implementation:
  - We should welcome the adoption of the first United Nations Strategic Plan on Forests and its means of implementation framework, which represents new opportunities to strengthen Sustainable Forest Management, and to invite countries to consider relevant international instruments such as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement under the UNFCCC to enhance the provision of means of implementation for SFM and other forest-related initiatives as set out in the UNSPF.
  - While restating the importance of the UNFF Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network (GFFFN), to foster and capitalize new and emerging financing opportunities, including capacity building and technology transfer, the Group believes that an appropriate reference to it should be included.
  - Also, and while including the reference to the 6th replenishment of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) (2014-2018), the group believes that it would be better not to refer to specific areas but to leave a more ample reference, replacing the three specific areas for "among others".

- A clear reference for forest-related activities of the Green Climate Fund should also be included.

6. On Enhanced cooperation, coordination and engagement on forest-related issues:

- To underscore the importance of the Forest Resources Assessment (FRA), and enhanced cooperation among CPF Members.

- To emphasize future activities in support of the UNSPF and the 4POW, particularly regarding the participation of major groups.

- It could be useful for CPF to consider increase its Membership to relevant organizations, such as CITES, RAMSAR.

7. On the contribution to the High Level Political Forum:

- The Group believes it would be better not to restate the importance of forests to sustainable development, which has been already recognize in the UNSPF and Agenda 2030, but to establish clear linkages with the SDGs in the HLPF.

8. Finally, regarding the foreseen discussion during UNFF12 of the theme for the next celebration of the international day of forest, to clarify that this discussion has not been held yet.

I thank you.