

United Nations Forum on Forests 14  
06 – 10 May 2019  
United Nations Headquarters, New York

## **Major Group Statement on DESA REFORM**

### **Overall position:**

- The UNFFS should remain an independent division
  - Already with the UNFFS operational forests remain at second/third place
  - For MG and their constituencies having an operational secretariat is crucial to further push and advocate for the different working streams
  - How can we avoid that what has been built over the past years is being lost in a meaningless mess
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- Thank you Mr. Chair. All protocols observed
- We are making this statement on behalf of all Major groups.
- First things first, we want to thank the UNFF secretariat for the ongoing support they provide to Major groups and other stakeholders throughout the whole year to be part of forums activities
- Looking at the growing responsibilities and emphasis we put on forests and their contribution to tackle climate change and support sustainable development, we as Major groups are in strong support of the statements made by New Zealand, the African group the EU and others to make sure that the UNFF Secretariat remains fully operational to push forest topics in the way that it has been pushing these topics in the past.
- Even with the secretariat in place, forests remain at second or third place in the UN structure
- Like Australia said, we would like to emphasize the need for an informed approach and remain concerned with steps being taken that could diminish the UNFFS ability to fully and appropriately represent the role of forests in global processes.
- Looking at the ambitions we all set for ourselves through the UNSPF, it is clear that there is a need for a functional secretariat to support effective implementation and foster communication around the topic of forests.

- This would be a signal for youth, women and all civil society that the international community takes responsibilities to combat current and future problems with the biggest possible capacities
- Monitoring, assessment and report to inform Member States, MG and other stakeholders are key to improve transparency and positive impact of UNSPF
- We need to avoid seeing forests slide into irrelevance Forests matter. If a change needs to happen, we must be sure that the objectives, the functionality, and the resources of the UNFF won't be compromised but, instead, enhanced. This reform should empower us, and allow us to achieve more ambitious goals, not just for the current generation, but for the future generations to come. Forests are essential in mitigating climate change, preserve our terrestrial biodiversity, support 1.6 billion of people that depend on forests to various degrees, they provide food security and economic security. The forestry sector can empower women, y indigenous peoples, Forest dwellers and marginalized groups, and young generations all over the world. Let's not compromise on that.
- Lastly we would like to call on member states that this is a process in their hands and would encourage all member states to collaborate on this matter

On behalf of MG,  
Major Group Children and Youth Focal Point