FOREST AND WATER INTERACTIONS

Communicating forest science to policy-makers:
The example of GFEP

Presented by Gerda Wolfrum (IUFRO) at the FCN Annual Meeting, 22-24 May 2018, Wageningen, The Netherlands
What is GFEP?

GLOBAL FOREST EXPERT PANELS

✓ IUFRO-led initiative of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF) since 2006

✓ Supporting forest-related intergovernmental processes by producing **assessment reports** on emerging global issues of high concern

Members:

What does GFEP do?

- GFEP produces reports and policy briefs based on needs and requests coming from intergovernmental processes.
- GFEP does no new research but extensive assessments of existing scientific literature and information on a given topic.
- Reports are prepared by thematic Expert Panels consisting of internationally recognized scientific experts.
- Reports and briefs are written so that they are comprehensible to policy-makers and stakeholders. All reports undergo rigorous peer review.
- The GFEP coordination team at IUFRO HQ selects panel members keeping in mind the scientific, regional and gender balance.
- Scientific experts participate in their personal capacity and do not represent any organization or institution.

Knowledge synthesis

Scientific Information

Global Forest Expert Panels

Independent Interdisciplinary Peer-reviewed Scientific Assessments

International Policy Processes

Science - Policy Interface

UNFF, CBD

UNFCCC, UN-SDGs

GFEP Assessments

Five scientific assessments carried out by independent scientific expert panels to date, one underway:

✓ Adaptation to Climate Change (2009)
✓ International Forest Regime (2011)
✓ Biodiversity, Forest Management and REDD+ (2012)
✓ Forests and Food Security (2015)
✓ Illegal Logging and Related Timber Trade (2016)

▪ Forests and Water (2017-2018) - underway

All IUFRO-GFEP publications can be downloaded for free: https://www.iufro.org/science/gfep/
Outcomes

- GFEP Expert Panels have triggered multi-disciplinary approaches:
  - Involvement of scientists from various disciplines
  - Increased collaboration with non-forest sectors

- No advocacy research but information basis for policy options

- The publications have received considerable international media uptake worldwide (e.g. by BBC Online, Conversation, Mongabay, Voice of America, UN News Centre, Reuters, Science Daily, Deutsche Welle, and many others).
Outcomes

✓ **Briefing documents** for negotiators at the global level *(i.e. UNFCCC, CBD, UN-SDGs, UNFF etc.)*

✓ **Guidance for strategic policy development** *(e.g. for Global Environment Facility, GEF)*

✓ **Comprehensive, interdisciplinary and scientifically sound information source for scientists and communicators**

✓ **Teaching materials** for universities and courses

GFEP - selected impacts

Forests and Food Security (2015)

- The report served as a basis for the work of the High Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition (HLPE) of the United Nations Committee on World Food Security (CFS).

- Contribution to discussions on SDG 2 on food security during UNFF-12 (May 2017). Three of the five panelists presenting in the session were members of the GFEP Expert Panel on Forests, Food Security and Nutrition.
GFEP – selected impacts

Illegal Logging and Related Timber Trade (2016)

- Report and policy brief launched during High-Level Segment of the CBD COP-13 in Cancún, Mexico in December 2016; Policy Brief distributed to all the country delegations (187)

- CBD COP-13 formally recognized the need to address the problem of illegal logging and timber trade in the framework of the CBD paragraph 57 of the adopted CBD decision XIII/3
GFEP on Forests and Water


Goals of the assessment:

- Produce a comprehensive peer-reviewed scientific report and associated policy brief by July 2018
- Provide input to the UN High-Level Political Forum (HLPF 2018) on Sustainable Development, where both SDG 6 (“water”) and SDG 15 (“forests”) will be under review
- Contribute to the 13th session of the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF 13) in May 2018
Why? Because:

- Human demands for water resources are expected to increase in the future -> water stress and scarcity
- Forests and trees play an important role -> provide diverse environmental, social, economic and cultural benefits
- Social and economic perspectives increasingly important
Why? Because:

- Linkages between forests and water depend on a large number of influencing factors
- Management of forests and water -> need for integrated management and holistic policy responses
- Topic of forests and water interactions has been one of IUFRO’s priority areas for more than a decade
- Included in strategies; IUFRO Task Forces on the topic
GFEP on Forests and Water

Thematic aspects addressed

- Conceptual background and **overview** of the topic;
- **Factors influencing** eco-hydrological processes at regional, landscape and watershed levels;
- **Services related to forests and water, including monetary and non-monetary values**;
- **Management** of forests with a water perspective;
- Direct and indirect **drivers** of change, impacts and trends;
- **Policy context**, including governance frameworks, and response options at various levels.
GFEP on Forests and Water

Ecosystem services related to forests and water that are covered in the report can be divided into 4 categories:

- **Provisioning** – e.g. drinking water, irrigation, raw water (industry), hydropower, fisheries and aquaculture

- **Regulating** – e.g. water filtration, flood/drought control, erosion prevention, coastal protection

- **Supporting** – e.g. maintaining of terrestrial and aquatic species and habitats, micro and local climate regulation (including effects on air humidity, temperature, air quality and rainfall generation), soil formation and stability

- **Cultural** – e.g. recreation, intellectual and symbolic appreciation

These services contribute to sustaining good life, security, health and good social relations, which in turn are essential for ensuring human well-being.
GFEP on Forests and Water

Who are the experts on the panel?

- 19 internationally renowned scientists from Canada, Indonesia, South Africa, Sweden, Spain, Kenya, Nepal, Australia, United States, Switzerland, United Kingdom and China

- Plus 2 Co-Chairs:
  - Irena Creed, University of Saskatchewan, Canada
  - Meine van Noordwijk, ICRAF/University of Wageningen, Netherlands

- Full list of Panel Members on the GFEP website

The Launch

Launch of the report and policy brief during HLPF 2018
(New York, USA; 9-18 July 2018)

Communication activities: press release, videos, social media, post-launch presentation of report at major relevant events
Thank you for your attention!

GFEP video interview