



Forest Partnership

between the European Union and Uganda

Conclusions of the first Political Working Group

I. Introduction

The European Union (EU) and the Republic of Uganda (Uganda), hereinafter 'the Partners' concluded in November 2022 a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for a **Forest Partnership**. The Forest Partnership reflects their **shared vision** for a holistic and integrated approach to forests implemented on the basis of **formal strategic dialogue and policy cooperation bilaterally and in the international arena**. The overall **aim** is to enhance the role of Ugandan forests in sustainable and inclusive national development, and address challenges related to deforestation, climate change and biodiversity loss.

In order to operationalise the MoU, the Partners undertook to jointly agreed on quantified **targets**, develop a **Roadmap**, and institute the **Working Groups**.

II. Targets

The Partners agreed to lay out a set of **targets** to be reached **by 2030** to help sustain momentum and steer action towards the achievement of the objectives set in the MoU, as well as facilitate the mobilization of appropriate resources and attract the necessary investments:

- (1) Increase the area of protected, restored or sustainably managed forests:
 - Sustainably managed forests: 1.56 million ha
 - Protected & Conserved forests: 0.76 million ha
 - Planted forests: 0.4 million ha
 - Restored forests: 0.4 million ha
- (2) Increase the number of forest-related decent jobs: 150,000
- (3) Reduce the annual rate of deforestation of natural forests: 20,000 ha/y deforestation

The implementation e.g. baselines, risks/challenges, specific timeframes, associated actors and financing means in a **Work plan**. This will serve as the **tactical** tool to help ladder up to the attainment of the objectives and targets.

III. The Roadmap

With the quantified targets in mind, the Partners agreed to develop a Roadmap, structured around the four key workstreams of the Partnership with concrete **actions**, **milestones** and **associated responsibilities** being identified at this stage to allow a full exploration of investment opportunities in the course of implementation. The special role of **investments** in rolling out the workstreams towards achieving the objectives is highlighted as is the pertinence of international climate and biodiversity finance. The Roadmap is set out in [Annex I](#).

The Roadmap was developed **jointly** by the Partners (*and in consultation with relevant stakeholders*) in the course of six (6) months from the conclusion of the Forest Partnership. It was **endorsed** by the Technical Working Group during its meeting of 13 June 2023.

This Roadmap represents the **operational arm** of the Forest Partnership with the purpose of advancing its vision and deliver development impact for Uganda in line with the National Development Plan III. The Roadmap is firmly anchored in the Team Europe approach and further underpinned by strategic EU initiatives including the European Green Deal and the Global Gateway.

The Roadmap is a **living document** with regular reviews to ensure effectiveness, efficiency, feasibility and implementability. The Political Working Group will guide and steer its implementation and address

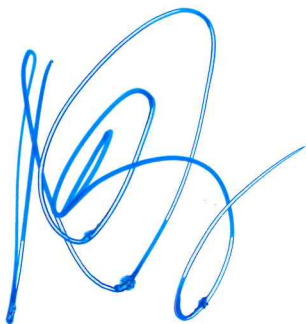
proposals by the Technical Working Group towards the fulfilment of the aims and objectives of the Forest Partnership. The Technical Working Group will on the basis of the Work plan monitor and evaluate progress, identify opportunities for additional actions and investments as well as options to tackle challenges and mitigate unintended consequences.

IV. Working Groups

In the context of the development of the Roadmap, the **composition of the Political Working Group (PWG)** was agreed between the Partners to include: the Minister of Water and Environment and/or The Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Water and Environment, Representatives from the Ministry of Water and Environment and relevant Ministries, Departments and Agencies including Ministry of Lands Housing and Urban Development, Ministry of Wildlife Tourism and Antiquities, Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs, Ministry of Trade Industry and Cooperatives, Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development, Ministry of Finance Planning and Economic Development, National Forestry Authority, Uganda Wildlife Authority, National Environment Management Authority, the Head of Cooperation of the EU Delegation to Uganda, Representatives from the EU Delegation to Uganda, and EU Member States

The composition of the **Technical Working Group (TWG)** was agreed to include: Representatives from the Ministry of Water and Environment and relevant Ministries Departments and Agencies including those enlisted in the political working group as well as Representatives from the EU Delegation to Uganda, EU Member States and members of the Development Partner Group in Uganda
The Partners also agreed on the Working modalities of the Working groups ([Annex II](#)).

Done in Kampala on **29 JUN 2023**

Rt. Hon. Prime Minister	Head of EU Delegation to Uganda
	

Annex I

MILESTONES	ACTIONS	LEAD ACTOR (UG & EU)	TIMEFRAME
Policy Strategy & Dialogue			
Roadmap operationalised	Validate the roadmap at political level Review progress Agreement on priorities for each semester	FP focal points	June 2023
Implementation entities established and operational	Establish PWG and appoint focal points Establish TWG and appoint focal points Establish intersectoral coordination mechanism (new one or existing one)	PM Office and EUD MWE and EUD PM Office	June 2023
Communication strategy developed and launched	Appointment of communication coordinator Prepare a communication strategy Organise a launch event of the roadmap Organise in-country events to support the implementation of the roadmap Establish common position/messages in view of international events	MWE and EUD MWE and EUD EU HQ, EUD, PM Office, MWE Communication Coordinator, MoICT Communication Coordinator	June 2023 June 2023 June 2023 From 2024 Sep 2023 onwards
Monitoring system agreed and operational	Develop information systems for data management: baselines, sources for verifying performance, integrated with the Water and Environment Information System Programme under MWE Develop the forest inventory system to feed data for the monitoring system	MWE	Jan 2024

Conclusions of the first Political Working Group of the Memorandum of Understanding on a Forest Partnership between the European Union and the Republic of Uganda

MILESTONES	ACTIONS	LEAD ACTOR (UG & EU)	TIMEFRAME
National Dialogue	Establish stakeholder engagement mechanism (new one or existing one) Hold meetings of Programme Working Groups, Technical Working Groups and other identified stakeholders as scheduled	FP focal points	From October, 2023
Cooperation in the international arena	Align the agreement with multinational protocols, subscriptions, develop national reports, domestication of international frameworks on climate change and biodiversity	MWE	Continuous
WORKSTREAM 1. Improved governance and sustainable use and management of forests			
Sustainable forest management in place as per the targets	Collection of Data and development of Information Systems Closing gaps in committed targets (NDCs and policy goals)	NFA, UWA, MTWA, Local Governments	2024
Participation of stakeholders in the policy process	Develop/operationalise networks/platforms to enable stakeholder participation -mechanisms to effectively consider the stakeholder inputs	MWE, MMAIF, MoJCA MWE, NFA, UWA, CSOs, DLGs, Media	Continuous
Improved Legality System - Improved forest adjudication - Improved forest law enforcement - Successfully prosecuted forest crimes and disputes resolved	Identify legal gaps and areas in need of legal and policy reform relating to the sector Improve capacity of the judiciary to prosecute forest crime	MWE Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs, The Judiciary Officers of courts)	Continuous 2024 2024 2025 2025 2025 2024

MILESTONES	ACTIONS	LEAD ACTOR (UG & EU)	TIMEFRAME
Improved business environment	Improve capacity of the law enforcement agencies related to forest crime	MWE(Environmental Police) Ministry of Internal affairs	2024
	Recruit and train staff for local authorities in districts	Ministry of Public Service, MoLG, MoFPED	
	Develop guidelines and prosecutor's manual(s) for reviewing fines stipulated for forest related offenses and penalties, as well as effective application and prosecution of offenders	Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs, Judiciary, MWE, EPP	
	Resolve boundary disputes and compensation mechanisms	NFA, UWA, MLHUD, district local government	
	Expansion of the responsibilities of the Standards, Utilities and Wildlife Court	Judiciary; Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs, MWE	
	Operationalize an Environment Protection Force	Ministry of Internal Affairs, MWE	
	Improve monitoring and reporting of illegal activities	Law enforcement agencies	
	Develop protocols for accessing and processing forest products and services.	Ministry of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives, MWE, URA, MEMD	
	Single window shop enabling trading/exports		
	Enable efficient export licensing(Pursuing tax regimes and concessions for forest inputs such as equipment and tax incentives for non-wood products such as briquettes)		
Accountability and Anti-corruption	Promote accountability of forest officials to stakeholders	MWE, OAG, IGG	Continuous

MILESTONES	ACTIONS	LEAD ACTOR (UG & EU)	TIMEFRAME
Transparency and access to information	Promote accountability within the MWE	MWE, OAG, IGG, Local Gov'ts	Continuous
	Enhance corruption control within the forest sector	Police, IGG	
	Increase transparency in decision-making processes through digitization of processes and information	MWE, NFA,NEMA,	
Forest Tenure/ land titles	Facilitate access to information	Communications coordinator	Continuous
	Stabilise tenure	MLHUD, MWE,NFA,UWA	
	Ensure land Titling		
Traceability	Develop and implement land Use Planning		Continuous
	Develop tracing and verification systems of forest resources	Ministry of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives, MWE, MEMD and UNBS	
	Tracing of raw material sources		
WORKSTREAM 2: Forest and tree-based value chains (wood and non-wood forest products)			
Key value chains selected, and their actors mapped (wood and non wood)	Assessment of the value chains covering wood and NTFPs (e.g. pine, resin, shea, cashew nuts, apiary, mushrooms)	MWE, Ministry of Trade and Cooperatives, UNBS, MEMD	
	Assessment of market opportunities and inventory of actors in the forestry value chain		
Gaps in skills/capacities/technologies identified with proposed support measures	Assessment and support the capacities of value chain stakeholders and actors	UNBS, Ministry of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives, Ministry of Works and Transport, Private sector	2024
	Standardization: grading wood assortments and products/construction		

MILESTONES	ACTIONS	LEAD ACTOR (UG & EU)	TIMEFRAME
	standards/standards for non-wood products (Improve the infrastructure for promoting quality of non- wood products) Improve regulations/processes/standardization for selected NTFPs Product development based on available raw materials and markets covering wood and NTFPs		
Increased number of forest related decent jobs (in # of jobs) generated by wood and non-wood based value chains (considering gender and other dimensions of inclusivity)	Enable Investments in new technologies to add value (bankable business plans and appropriate finance) Support producers and SMEs in with mentoring - for profitable and sustainable business Support means that employ youth Support investments in women-led business	Ministry of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives, Private sector, MWE and URSB	2024
Increased value added and revenues from wood and non-wood-based on inclusive value chains	Promote resource utilisation efficiency and optimization for cleaner production Integrate smallholders and SMEs into value chains Diversify income streams to cover non-wood and agroforestry production	Ministry of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives, Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development, MAAIF, MWE, Private sector	2024
Decrease in bush meat consumption and its trade	Provide capacity for UWA and MAAIF to regulate consumption.	Ministry of Tourism, Wildlife and Antiquities, UWA, MAAIF	2025

MILESTONES	ACTIONS		LEAD ACTOR (UG & EU)	TIMEFRAME
WORKSTREAM 3: Address deforestation and forest degradation				
Identified measures to address forest disturbances: firers, pests, diseases, wind and other climate related damages	Identify and implement measures to control forest fires.	MWE/NFA	Continuous	
	Identify and implement measures to pests, diseases and other climate related damages	NaFORRI, NARO, MAAIF		
Identified measures to address the EU Regulations	Assess compliance with the Regulation on Deforestation	Ministry of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives, MAAIF, MWE	2024	
	Access compliance with the EU Directive on Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence and Propose additional measures to address gaps in complying with the regulations on deforestation and degradation.			
	Develop measures to access the gaps			
Sensitization and Awareness creation	Raise awareness about the natural environment, the value of ecosystem services and forest products	MWE	Continuous	
WORKSTREAM 4: Conservation and restoration of Natural Forest and ecosystems corridors				
Protected and conserved areas are operational	Strengthen management of government forest reserves and national parks at all levels	NFA, UWA, MWE, MTWA	Continuous	
	Ensure sufficient resources for management (recruitment of personnel)	MoFPED, Ministry of Public Service		
Collaborative Forest Management implemented and operationalised	Supporting communities in negotiating CFM agreements	NGOs, DLGs	Continuous	

MILESTONES	ACTIONS	LEAD ACTOR (UG & EU)	TIMEFRAME
	Signing of CFM agreements with communities and supporting Community-led initiatives under the signed CFM agreements	NFA, DLGs, MWE	
	Monitoring compliance with governmental laws and regulations	MWE	
Restoration established including ecological corridors and their buffer zones	Clear policy for restoration established	NFA, MWE, UWA	2024
	Restoration implemented with stakeholders	MWE, MTWA, NFA, UWA	
Implementation of the National Biodiversity Strategy	NBSAP updated to reflect Post 2020 GBF targets	NEMA, MWE	2024

Annex II

WORKING MODALITIES of the Working Groups established under the Forest Partnership between the European Union and the Republic of Uganda

Role and responsibilities

1. The Political Working Group hereinafter "PWG", established pursuant to the Memorandum of Understanding on a Forest Partnership between the European Union and the Republic of Uganda hereinafter "Forest Partnership" will oversee the management and implementation of the Forest Partnership and ensure the effective dialogue and cooperation between the Partners in this context.
2. The PWG will guide and steer the implementation of the Roadmap, address proposals by the Technical Working Group towards the fulfilment of the aims and objectives of the Forest Partnership.
3. The PWG will address any issues that may arise in relation to the interpretation and implementation of the Forest Partnership and facilitate their resolution in good faith and in accordance with the context, purpose and objectives of the Forest Partnership.

Chairmanship

4. The PWG will meet at least twice a year.
5. The PWG will be jointly chaired by the Prime Minister of the Government of Uganda and the Head of the EU Delegation to Uganda. The Chairpersons may arrange to be represented by designees who will exercise all their rights.

Technical Working Group

6. The PWG will be assisted by a Technical Working Group, hereinafter "TWG".
7. The TWG will be chaired jointly by the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Water and Environment and the Head of Cooperation of the EU Delegation to Uganda.
8. The TWG shall prepare the meetings and the deliberations of the PWG, supervise and coordinate the implementation of the actions agreed by the PWG, consider any matter referred to it by the PWG as well as any other matter which may arise in the course of the day-to-day implementation of the Forest Partnership.
9. The TWG will be reviewing progress with the implementation of the Roadmap and identify options and opportunities for additional actions or change of action or, ways to mitigate challenges that it will put forward to the PWG.
10. The TWG will meet on a quarterly basis and at minimum prior to the PWG meetings.

Transparency

11. The PWG and the TWG will ensure that their work is transparent and that all relevant information about its work is made available to the public.

Representation

12. The Parties will notify each other in writing the list of its representatives to the PWG and TWG.

Official communications

13. The representatives of the Partners responsible for official communications concerning the implementation of the Forest Partnership and all dialogue and cooperation in this context, including in relation to the PWG and the TWG will be:
 - For Uganda: the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Water and Environment
 - For the EU: the Head of the Cooperation of the EU Delegation to Uganda.

Meetings

14. The meetings of the PWG or TWG may be held physically or by videoconference.
15. A provisional agenda for each meeting shall be drawn up jointly by the Partners and agreed by the Chairpersons no later than 10 working days before the beginning of the meeting unless otherwise agreed.
16. The agenda will be adopted by the PWG or TWG at the beginning of each meeting. Items other than those appearing on the provisional agenda may be included if the Partners agree.
17. Draft minutes of each meeting shall be drawn up jointly by the Partners or as designated by them. The minutes shall be approved by the Partners at the end of the meeting under the title "Aide-Memoire".
18. Unless otherwise decided, the meetings of the PWG or TWG will not be public.
19. Information or documents considered as confidential under national laws and regulations of a Partner will be treated as confidential.

Participation

20. The Chairpersons of the PWG or the TWG may agree to invite to their respective meetings where appropriate, private sector actors, social/non-state partners, local communities, indigenous peoples, youth, women, international public organisations, interested financial institutions, academia, research institutions and/or donors.
21. The invited stakeholders will notify their representatives as requested in the invitation.

Observers and Experts

22. The Chairpersons of the PWG or the TWG may agree to invite observers and experts to their respective meetings on an *ad hoc* basis and in relation to specific subjects.

Facilitation

23. The Partners will agree on the need, role and responsibilities of a Facilitator to accompany the implementation of the Forest Partnership and the functioning of the PWG and TWG.

Expenses

24. Each Partner will meet any expenses it incurs as a result of participating in the meetings of the PWG or TWG.
25. Expenses in connection with the organisation of meetings and reproduction of documents shall be borne jointly by the Partners.

