



International
Labour
Office

A photograph of a forestry worker wearing a red helmet and dark clothing, using a chainsaw to cut a log. The worker is in the foreground, and a large pile of cut logs is visible in the background. The image is framed by a green grid.

Decent Work in Forestry

**DECENT WORK IN THE RURAL ECONOMY
POLICY GUIDANCE NOTES**

Global policy agendas acknowledge the important role that forests play in poverty alleviation, job creation, food security, action on climate change and biodiversity conservation, among others. Despite its potential to promote growth and employment in rural areas, forestry is among the most hazardous sectors for workers, often characterized by decent work deficits including high incidence of informality, occupational safety and health risks, and the lack of social protection. This policy guidance note highlights the sector's potential to contribute to rural development, poverty alleviation and sustainable development, and presents the ILO's approach to promoting decent work in forestry.



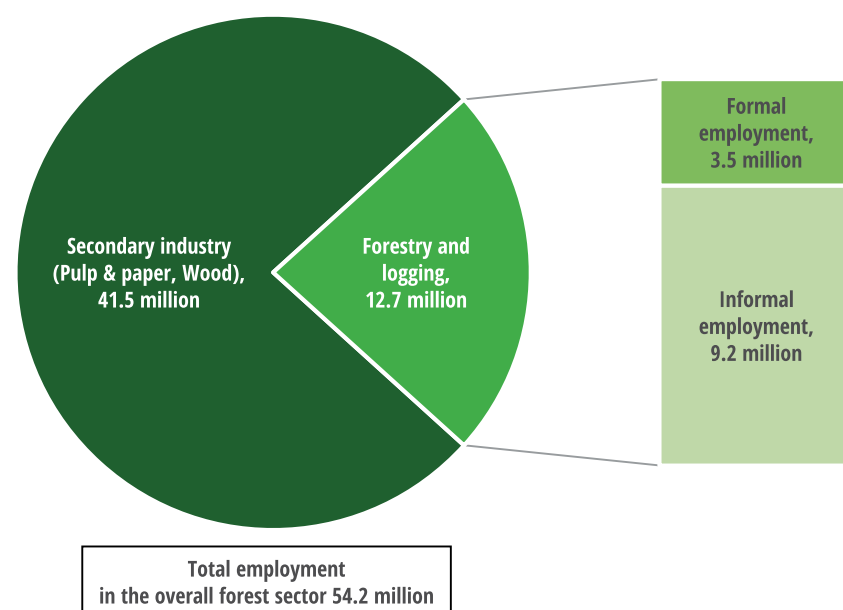
1. Rationale and justification¹

Globally, forests provide employment, food, income, shelter and ecosystem services to at least 1.5 billion people, many of whom are poor, depend largely on forests, and belong to indigenous and tribal peoples.² Forests are threatened by degradation and deforestation resulting from the conversion of forest land to agriculture or other economic activities, unsustainable logging, woodfuel harvesting and forest fires, which are among the main sources of greenhouse gas emissions. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development clearly recognizes the importance of sustainable management and use of natural resources, including forests, to social and economic development. Forests are specifically highlighted in the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 15 on “life on land”, and they play an essential role in helping achieve a number of other SDGs. Land use, land-use change and forestry (LULUCF) constitutes one of the workstreams under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), and

the impact of forests on climate change is recognized in the Paris Agreement. By implementing the principles of sustainable forest management (SFM), the forest industry contributes towards conserving biodiversity and protecting the environment, while providing employment and job opportunities, including new jobs in the green economy.

However, despite some improvements during the past decades, forestry remains a dangerous sector for workers. For it to fully contribute to a just transition to the green economy, in which sustainable new and emerging uses of forest products are exploited, decent work deficits need to be addressed. These include poor and unsafe working conditions; obstacles to the right to freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining; high levels of informality; inadequate occupational safety and health (OSH) measures; low productivity; low wages; and lack of access to social protection.

Estimated global employment in forestry, 2010-11 (in full-time equivalent)



Source: FAO: *Contribution of the forestry sector to national economies, 1990–2011* (Rome, 2014); FAO: *State of the World's Forests: Enhancing the socioeconomic benefits from forests* (Rome, 2014); FAO: *Global Forest Resources Assessment 2015: How are the world's forests changing?*, second edition (Rome, 2016).

¹ This policy guidance note builds upon: ILO: *Promoting decent work and safety and health in forestry. Report for discussion at the Sectoral Meeting on Promoting Decent Work and Safety and Health in Forestry* (Geneva, 6–10 May 2019), available at: https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_dialogue/---sector/documents/meetingdocument/wcms_679806.pdf

² M. Verdone: *The world's largest private sector? Recognising the cumulative economic value of small-scale forest and farm producers* (Gland, Switzerland, IUCN, FAO, IIED and AgriCord, 2018), available at: <https://portals.iucn.org/library/sites/library/files/documents/2018-025-En.pdf> <http://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/forests/overview>. According to the FAO, some 840 million people collect woodfuel and charcoal for their own use, see: FAO: *State of the World's Forests 2014: Enhancing the socioeconomic benefits from forests* (Rome, 2014). According to the Forest Peoples Programme: “forest peoples depend primarily and directly on the forest both for subsistence and trade in the form of fishing, hunting, shifting agriculture, the gathering of wild forest products and other activities.” (Forest Peoples: *Forest peoples: Numbers across the world*, Moreton-in-March, United Kingdom, 2012)

Decent Work in Forestry

It is estimated that, in 2011, the overall forest sector employed a total of 54.2 million people, both in the formal and informal forest sector in subsectors of forestry and logging, wood manufacturing, and pulp and paper production.³ About 12.7 million of these workers were engaged in the forestry and logging subsector, in which the global employment trend has slightly declined over the past few decades. Many forestry workers are employed on an informal basis, and the prevalence of outsourcing, contracting and subcontracting, as well as casual and seasonal work, may exacerbate decent work challenges in the sector. The availability of reliable and comparable data on employment in the sector remains scarce in many countries, which is further hampered by high levels of informality.

The overall sector's contribution to global GDP is about 0.9 per cent, accounting for over 5 per cent of GDP in some countries.⁴ The global production and trade of major wood products have grown each year since 2010 – at the fastest pace in Asia and the Pacific, Europe and North America. The largest economic value is generated by the production of timber, which is more and more sourced from fast-growing tree plantations, which are increasing in area. Wood removal volumes are expected to be three times higher in 2050 than in 2010, implying a need to enhance efficiency in production;

by 2050, between 242 and 304 million additional hectares will have to be managed for commercial harvesting, requiring a higher level of mechanization and a skilled workforce.⁵ However, illegal logging is highly prevalent and constitutes an additional challenge to the sector's sustainability. It is estimated to account for between 15 and 30 per cent of global timber production, and up to 90 per cent of all logging in some tropical countries.⁶ Initiatives attempting to tackle illegal timber production and trade and to promote sustainable forest management practices include the European Union Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) Action Plan.⁷ In addition, various private compliance initiatives provide forest management certification.

The forestry industry has a much wider impact on overall employment and the economy than direct forest work, as industries and sectors like transport, processing, furniture and construction are closely linked to timber logging in many countries. Woodfuel provides as much of the global renewable energy supply as solar, hydroelectric and wind power combined, and is the main source of energy for two-thirds of households in Africa.⁸ If well-managed, wood energy can have positive climate implications through its capacity to substitute fossil fuels and reduce the net release of carbon into the atmosphere.⁹

³ FAO: *Contribution of the forestry sector to national economies 1990-2011* (Rome, 2014). This paper focuses on the forestry and logging subsector.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ WWF. *Forest sector transformation*, available at: https://www.panda.org/our_work/forests/forest_sector_transformation2/

⁶ INTERPOL: *Project LEAF. Global Forestry Enforcement* (2017).

⁷ EUFLEGT: *The EU Timber Regulation*, available at: <http://www.euflegt.efi.int/eutr>

⁸ FAO: *Forests and energy*, Infographic available at: <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i6928e.pdf>; REN21: *Renewables 2017 Global Status Report* (Paris, REN21 Secretariat, 2017).

⁹ FAO/UNECE: *Wood energy in the ECE Region* (New York and Geneva, 2018), available at: <https://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/timber/publications/SP-42-Interactive.pdf>

2. Scope and definitions

This policy guidance note focuses mainly on the forestry and logging subsector, consisting of silviculture, logging, gathering of non-wood forest products (NWFPs), and support services to forestry. It does not specifically discuss wood manufacturing and pulp and paper manufacturing, which are often considered to be part of the wider forestry sector.

Target groups

Women are involved in a wide range of forestry activities. The majority of these activities are informal and low-paid – or unpaid – such as the collection of fuelwood or the harvesting of medicinal plants and other NWFPs. Women bear a disproportionate share of unpaid care and household work. They are often responsible for meeting household food and fuel needs, with an estimated 80 per cent of unpaid fuelwood collection carried out by women and girls. Globally, about 25 per cent of all workers in the formal forestry sector are women. While women also work as technicians and professionals in areas such as logging or silviculture, they are often under-represented in forestry work overall, particularly at management and decision-making levels in forestry authorities, organizations, enterprises and industry bodies.¹⁰ Furthermore, they face structural barriers that prevent them from access to, ownership of and control over productive resources. Due to customary laws on women's land ownership and management, they are less likely to have control over the most valuable forest resources, such as timber. Even when women have formal ownership of land, they may not be able to access financial and technical support services, or markets.¹¹

Indigenous and tribal peoples' livelihood systems and traditional knowledge often leads them to inherently protect and sustain forests. This highlights their important role as change agents in mitigating the impacts of climate change and preventing deforestation (see box 1).¹² However, they are often challenged by the repercussions of climate change, land tenure insecurity and conflicts, which have infringed their customary rights. This situation has, in turn, led to economic and political marginalization, which often results in the exclusion of indigenous and tribal peoples from all levels of decision-making – particularly with regards to

the exploitation of natural resources, including forestry activities.¹³ In some countries, indigenous and tribal peoples have lower employment rates and wages compared to non-indigenous people, and in the forest sector they are under-represented in higher-paying occupations.¹⁴ Indigenous women face a particularly challenging situation, including barriers to access and property rights to forests and other productive lands.¹⁵

Box 1: Indigenous people and climate change – powerful change agents through decent work¹⁶

The economy of indigenous peoples primarily depends on natural resources and ecosystems, with natural resources being their core asset. They have a complex cultural relationship with the environment in which they live. Since their livelihoods depend almost entirely on the resources they derive from their natural environment, the economic model that governs their use of natural resources ensures that the value does not depreciate. This could be a very powerful approach to climate change mitigation, regarding efforts directed at reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation. For instance, due to low deforestation rates, emissions from Brazilian forests managed by indigenous peoples are 27 times lower than other parts of the forest.

Indigenous peoples have unique knowledge and skills regarding their natural environment. Research shows that indigenous peoples have a long record of adapting to climate variability, which enhances their resilience. Traditional knowledge, in combination with modern techniques, offers a promising approach to climate change adaptation in forestry, protecting ecosystems for carbon storage and providing other ecosystem services. There is a great potential to increase the effectiveness of adaptation measures by including traditional knowledge, while empowering communities. Guided by the ILO Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989 (No. 169), which calls for ensuring indigenous peoples' consultation and participation in decision-making, a key objective of the ILO's Decent Work Agenda is to empower indigenous women and men and promote social solutions to environmental problems – and it is well positioned to address the threats stemming from climate change.

¹⁰ ITTO: *ITTO policy guidelines on gender equality and empowering women (GEEW)* (2017).

¹¹ Climate Investment Funds: *Gender and sustainable forest management: entry points for design and implementation* (2017), available at: https://www.climateinvestmentfunds.org/sites/cif_enc/files/knowledge-documents/gender_and_sustainable_forest_management.pdf; P. Bose, A-M. Larson, S. Lastarria-Cornhiel, C. Radel, M. Schmink, B. Schmook and V. Vázquez-García: *Women's rights to land and communal forest tenure: A way forward for research and policy agenda in Latin America*, Women's Studies International Forum, 65 (2017) pp. 53–59.

¹² ILO: *Indigenous peoples and climate change. From victims to change agents through decent work* (Geneva, 2017), available at: http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/-/dgreports/-gender/documents/publication/wcms_551189.pdf

¹³ A. Lazarte: *Understanding the drivers of rural vulnerability: Towards building resilience, promoting socio-economic empowerment and enhancing the socio-economic inclusion of vulnerable, disadvantaged and marginalized populations for an effective promotion of Decent Work in rural economies*, EMPLOYMENT Working Paper No. 214 (Geneva, ILO, 2017b)..

¹⁴ Mowat Centre: *Decent work in the green economy*, Mowat Research #156 (Ontario, 2017).

¹⁵ P. Bose: *Land tenure and forest rights of rural and indigenous women in Latin America: Empirical evidence*, Women's Studies International Forum, available at: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.wsif.2017.10.006>

¹⁶ Box 1 is adapted from ILO: *Indigenous peoples and climate change* (2017), op.cit.

Migrant workers are concentrated in physically demanding and labour-intensive tasks, such as planting, cutting and weeding, or collecting and selling woodfuel or charcoal, often working in poor conditions. In addition, migrants face challenges such as language barriers, limited access to protection and regulation, a lack of contracts, isolated workplaces, workplace abuse and elevated levels of informality. Many migrant workers move temporarily to work in another country or region based on the season. Legal seasonal cross-border migration can improve the living conditions of workers and their families in the home community, while covering the labour shortage in forestry operations.

Policy issues

Facilitating the transition to formal economy

Informality is highly prevalent in the forestry sector, with an estimated 75 per cent of work taking place in the informal economy, and with informal logging often surpassing the formal activity.¹⁷ Informal forest operations, particularly logging, are often associated with decent work deficits, outdated technology, weak management systems and an unsustainable use of resources. Informal small-scale logging and sawmilling are significant sources of income for many, particularly in developing countries, and informal production and trade is deeply entrenched throughout the entire timber supply chain. Informality may be attributed to inadequate policy frameworks and their insufficient enforcement and implementation, as well as to a lack of support for small-scale operators.¹⁸ For many local producers in the informal economy, the process of obtaining legal permits can be too complicated and expensive, preventing them from applying for or complying with them.¹⁹ Furthermore, the lack of formal tenure prevents people from making a full and sustainable use of the resources upon which their livelihoods depend. Facilitating the transition to formality within the forestry sector requires an integrated and coherent strategy for employment, social protection and other social policies, as well as institutional coordination, as set out in the ILO Transition from the Informal to the Formal Economy Recommendation, 2015 (No. 204).

An enabling environment for sustainable forest enterprises

Enterprises play a key role in ensuring that forest resources are sustainably managed. The promotion of sustainable enterprises in forestry is a major tool for achieving decent work, sustainable development and innovation – all of which improve working and living conditions over time. Although over 75 per cent of the forest area worldwide falls under public ownership, it is estimated that there are still at least 29 million private forest owners globally.²⁰ Through concessions that differ in duration and objectives, private companies are highly involved in the management and exploitation of publicly owned forests. Large multinational enterprises are often linked to the paper and pulp industry, managing the different activities in the production chain. They have increasingly invested in adding to their production capacities in developing regions, including through investments in tree plantations and paper production facilities. The business practices of companies should adhere to national legislation, and consultation and dialogue with local stakeholders, including women and indigenous peoples, are important.

Small and medium-sized forest enterprises (SMFEs), including community-owned and managed enterprises and cooperatives, make up the majority of enterprises in the sector, employing an estimated 40 million people and providing approximately 75 per cent of all jobs in the sector.²¹ Many of the SMFEs operate in the informal economy and are unable to access support services such as business development, extension, or financial services. Furthermore, they may not possess the permits and documentation required for processing and transporting timber, which renders these activities illegal. The lack of an enabling environment often relates to land tenure and resource access, and to ensure that forest enterprises operate to their full potential, governments may address this issue by: granting and enforcing legal access to forest resources; curbing the illegal logging and harvesting of NWFPs; simplifying bureaucratic procedures for SMFE registration; and providing financial incentives for start-up SMFEs. To improve their own competitiveness in the markets, SMFEs can upgrade their technical, business and financial capacities, and organize into second-level associations.²²

¹⁷ FAO: *State of the World's Forests: Enhancing the socioeconomic benefits from forests* (Rome, 2014); G. Lescuyer and P. Cerutti : "Taking the informal sector into account", in *Perspective Forest Policies*, April 2013, No. 21. CIRAD.

¹⁸ Chatham House: *Improving legality among small-scale forest enterprises. The role of national-level indicators within the Sustainable Development Goals* (2016), available at: <https://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/default/files/publications/research/2016-03-16-small-scale-forest-enterprises-hoare.pdf>

¹⁹ X. Weng: *The rural informal economy: Understanding drivers and livelihood impacts in agriculture, timber and mining*, Working Paper, IIED (London, 2015)

²⁰ FAO: *State of the World's Forests* (2014), op.cit.

²¹ The Program on Forests (PROFOR): *Unlocking the potential of forest sector small and medium enterprises*, available at: https://www.profor.info/sites/profor.info/files/PROFOR_Brief_ForestSMEs.pdf

²² Chatham House (2015), op.cit.; FAO, CATE, IIED, SNV and ICCO: *Towards an enabling environment for small and medium forest enterprise development*, policy brief, available at: <http://www.fao.org/forestry/15444-0d3e74714615d6917d9fe6d24c1849147.pdf>; and K. Obidzinski et al.: "Timber legality verification and small-scale forestry enterprises in Indonesia: Lessons learned and policy options", in: *Infobrief*, No. 76 (CIFOR, 2014), available at: http://www.cifor.org/publications/pdf_files/infobrief/4862-infobrief.pdf

Skills and training for improved practices

Skills development is key to improving the productivity and sustainability of forest enterprises and working conditions, as well as the employability of workers in the sector. While skills deficits are prevalent in the sector globally, the situation is more challenging in developing countries with high levels of informality, low education levels and a limited number and quality of training institutions. While many countries have adequate training systems for engineering and other high-level technical skills, there are few programmes to develop the skills required by timber- and woodworkers to perform safely and productively while protecting the environment.²³ In many developing countries there are limited formal training opportunities for forestry work, resulting in a situation in which a large proportion of the forestry workforce lack adequate skills. This is particularly true for the lower-level positions and semi-skilled workers, who are in need for training to improve productivity, OSH, and business and marketing skills. Women face particular challenges in accessing formal and informal forestry training. Both the public and private sector can enhance women's opportunities and participation in forestry by, for instance, increasing their efforts to provide gender-sensitive training and job placements, as well as promoting their entrepreneurial and representational skills.²⁴

In the future, highly skilled forest workers will be required for specialized forest work. As forestry is among those sectors likely to be the most seriously affected by structural change in the wake of the green transition, forest workers will need to have the right skills and access to meaningful and high quality training and skills upgrading in order to ensuring a just transition in the forest sector. These include the adoption of new technologies, knowledge on green production processes and other relevant skills in areas such as renewable energy, products for wooden construction, low-impact logging, carbon accounting, and biodiversity protection, among others.²⁵

Raising awareness on OSH

Forestry is a dangerous sector for workers, and all segments of the forestry workforce – including contractors, the self-employed and forest farmers – are exposed to high risks of accidents, injuries and health problems. Forest work often takes place in remote areas, sometimes in temporary and

shifting worksites, with varying living conditions and terrain and climatic conditions. Isolation and limited accessibility make labour inspection and enforcement of labour standards more challenging.²⁶ Workers deal with heavy machinery, and are exposed to chemicals, natural hazards, animals and insects, noise, dust, and falling trees, among others. In addition, workplace organization and skills and know-how among workers, supervisors and managers can be inadequate, as can machines and other tools and protective equipment. The mechanization of timber harvesting has contributed to reducing accident rates, but it has brought about different psychological and musculoskeletal problems. Creating a preventative safety and health culture, in which the right to a safe and healthy working environment at all levels is guaranteed, is key to improving OSH in the forest sector.

Strengthening social protection

High levels of self-employment, temporary and casual work, and subcontracting, as well as the prevalence of the informal economy, create challenges to ensuring social protection for workers, especially those vulnerable to discrimination. Due to the hazardous nature of the sector, provision should be made for adequate financial compensation for the loss of income and cost of treatment incurred by workers in the event of work-related fatalities, injuries and diseases. Employment injury benefit schemes are therefore vital to ensure the provision of fair, equitable and effective compensation to workers involved in accidents. In addition to income, cash for work and other public works programmes on reforestation provide skills development and improved understanding on the importance of reforestation and the sustainable management of natural resources. Maternity protection requires special attention. This implies considering the exposure of working women to chemicals or physically demanding tasks; ensuring their effective access to maternity care; and providing them with income security before and after childbirth.²⁷ The ILO Social Protection Floors Recommendation, 2012 (No. 202), which promotes a universal and progressive approach for the extension of social protection, is of particular relevance.

Promoting effective social dialogue

Social dialogue based on respect for freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective

²³ ILO: *Globalization and sustainability: The forestry and wood industries on the move* (Geneva, 2001); and C. Ackerknecht: "Work in the forestry sector: some issues for a changing workforce", in: *Unasylva* (2010). Vol. 61. 234/235, pp.60-65.

²⁴ UNECE/FAO: *Time for action: Changing the gender situation in forestry*. Report of the UNECE/FAO team of specialists on gender and forestry (Rome, FAO, 2006).

²⁵ ILO: *Working towards sustainable development. Opportunities for decent work and social inclusion in a green economy* (Geneva, 2012) Available at: https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/---publ/documents/publication/wcms_181836.pdf

²⁶ ILO: *Guidelines for labour inspection in forestry* (Geneva, 2005)

²⁷ FAO: *Promoting decent employment in forestry for improved nutrition and food security*, Background paper for the International Conference on Forests for Food Security and Nutrition, Rome, 13–15 May 2013 (Rome, 2013); ILO: *World Social Protection Report 2017–19: Universal social protection to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals* (Geneva, 2017); FAO: *Social protection for forest-dependent communities*, policy brief (Rome, 2017); ILO: *Guidelines for labour inspection in forestry*, op.cit.

bargaining is key in the promotion of decent and sustainable work – including safe working conditions in forestry.²⁸ The high number of informal workers, self-employed workers and SMFEs in the sector, in addition to its seasonal nature and the geographical isolation makes the organization of workers and the establishment of social dialogue challenging. In some countries tripartite social dialogue is limited in rural areas, where rural workers may not be organized to participate in formal social dialogue processes and employers' and workers' organizations tend to be fragmented with low levels of membership.²⁹

²⁸ ILO: *Conclusions on promoting decent work and safety and health in forestry*, Sectoral meeting on promoting decent work and safety and health in forestry, Geneva, 6-10 May 2019, available at: https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_dialogue/---sector/documents/meetingdocument/wcms_701340.pdf

²⁹ ILO: *Social dialogue and tripartism*, Report VI, International Labour Conference, 107th Session, Geneva, 2018, available at: http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_norm/---relconf/documents/meetingdocument/wcms_624015.pdf

Social dialogue in forestry can be efficient when the right of workers to organize and elect representatives is respected and employers engage in meaningful discussions with workers' organizations where they exist, and when workers channel their inputs through these established mechanisms.³⁰ In many countries different types of rural workers' organizations coexist – trade unions on the one hand, and producer associations, cooperatives, and other types of organizations on the other.³¹ Ensuring the participation of women and indigenous peoples in social dialogue is important as it can contribute to improved forest governance, management, conservation and sustainability of resources.

³⁰ ILO: *Guidelines for labour inspection in forestry*, op.cit.

³¹ ILO: *Giving a voice to rural workers*, General Survey concerning the right of association and rural workers' organizations instruments, Report III (Part 1B), International Labour Conference, 104th Session, Geneva, 2015.

3. The ILO's approach

The sector holds considerable potential for promoting green economic growth, employment creation and decent work in the rural economy, while sustainably managing forest resources. To realize its full potential, policies that build on the contribution and commitment of multiple actors need to be in place. The ILO's Decent Work Agenda, as an integrated rights-based development strategy, supports tripartite constituents in their efforts to promote decent work in the forestry sector for improved rural livelihoods.

The ILO has developed two forest-specific tools to support its member States. The *Guidelines for labour inspection in forestry* (2005) address some of the main issues and general principles of labour standards and their inspection in the forest sector from planting to logging. It is aimed at three main groups of users: labour inspectors/certifiers, forest managers, and training and educational organizations.³² The *ILO Code of Practice on safety and health in forestry work* (1998) aims to protect workers from hazards in forestry work and to prevent or reduce the incidence of occupational illness or injury. While applicable internationally, the Code is especially useful for countries that lack relevant regulations and guidelines.

In the forestry sector, the ILO's work focuses on addressing employment and labour-related challenges and opportunities for sustainable development. It aims to improve jobs in the forestry sector by: promoting the ratification and effective implementation of international labour standards relevant to forestry, including the fundamental principles and rights at work (FPRW) – and tools that help in their implementation; facilitating social dialogue; enhancing capacity-building activities; and developing and disseminating knowledge. At the same time, these efforts support poverty reduction, green economic growth and sustainable development. Key areas of intervention include encouraging the transition to the formal economy; promoting employment creation, including through green jobs; raising awareness about the role of forestry work in protecting the environment; enhancing skills development; improving working conditions through the enforcement of labour inspection; supporting the establishment of OSH policies and management systems that identify hazards and preventive measures; promoting OSH requirements in all stages of forestry work; and fostering social dialogue and stakeholders' cooperation at all levels.

³² ILO: *Guidelines for labour inspection in forestry*, op.cit.

Box 2: Sectoral meeting on promoting decent work and safety and health in forestry (Geneva, May 2019)

This was the first global ILO meeting on forestry in 14 years, and it brought together over 70 participants from around the world, mainly representing governments and employers' and workers' organizations.

The Conclusions adopted recognize the importance of decent work in ensuring sustainable and productive forestry operations that are environmentally friendly, safe for those working in them, and that benefit the millions of workers who depend on forests for their livelihoods, food and shelter. They note the decent work deficits in the sector, particularly as they relate to OSH, and the importance of promoting social dialogue. They provide recommendations for future action by the ILO, governments and employers' and workers' organizations, helping to promote safer forestry work in the future.³³

The Sectoral meeting called upon the Office to:

- promote the ratification and effective implementation of international labour standards relevant to sector, as well as respect for the FPRW and to build the capacity of constituents to realize these rights;
- develop a work plan in consultation with tripartite constituents to support governments and social partners to promote and further implement the Code of Practice on safety and health in forestry work (1998) and the Guidelines for labour inspection in forestry (2005); and to initiate preparations to update these two tools;
- support governments in data collection and reporting efforts and undertake and disseminate research and comparative analyses on trends and developments, lessons learned and good practices in addressing decent work and OSH challenges; and
- strengthen partnerships with other international organizations active in the sector with a view to promoting international policy coherence;
- support tripartite constituents to engage in effective social dialogue to ensure safe and healthy workplaces.

For more information see the meeting website at: https://www.ilo.org/sector/activities/sectoral-meetings/WCMS_667231/lang--en/index.htm

4. The ILO's experience to date

The ILO provides advice to governments in the design, monitoring and implementation of policies relevant to decent work in the forestry sector. It facilitates and strengthens social dialogue and builds the capacity of constituents, including through the dissemination and application of forestry-related tools on, for instance, OSH and labour inspection.

In **Timor-Leste**, the Enhancing Rural Access through Agro-Forestry (ERA Agro-Forestry) Project is contributing to a peaceful, inclusive and sustainable development as a result of improved rural access, the creation of employment, economic and domestic revenue opportunities through agro-forestry development, and a durable reduction in food insecurity and

malnutrition in rural areas.³⁴ In **Jordan**, forestry is one of the sectors promoting job creation for Syrian refugees and Jordanian host communities through green works, which are tackling desertification by increasing vegetation cover through tree planting by using an employment-intensive approach.³⁵

As part of the Job Opportunities for Youth (JOY) project in **Indonesia**, the ILO conducted a study on labour conditions in forestry, drawing on the project's assessment of the importance of green jobs and their impact of youth employment policies.

³⁴ ILO: *The Enhancing Rural Access through Agro-Forestry (ERA Agro-Forestry) Project*, available at: https://www.ilo.org/jakarta/whatwedo/projects/WCMS_553152/lang--en/index.htm

³⁵ ILO: *Job creation for Syrian refugees and Jordanian host communities through green works in agriculture and forestry (Phase II)*, available at: https://www.ilo.org/beirut/projects/WCMS_645879/lang--en/index.htm

³³ ILO: *Conclusions on promoting decent work and safety and health in forestry*, op.cit.

In **Brazil**, an ILO project promoted Payments for Environmental Services (PES) in the Amazon region with a view to finding alternative employment and livelihood opportunities for families living in protected areas in order to protect the forest resources.³⁶

One specific approach of the ILO has been to promote community forestry and community contracting, including among indigenous peoples. In **Mali**, it supported the establishment of labour contracts between the Forestry Department and the local community in relation to maintenance works in protected forest areas. This was achieved by encouraging participatory dialogue and negotiations between the parties on issues such as remuneration and the village's rights and obligations. After signing the contract, the local population received training on forest management and preservation methods. In **Cambodia**, the ILO supported the implementation of the Law on Land Rights with a view to improving the recognition and promoting the certification of indigenous peoples' communities so that they might secure communal land titles.³⁷

In the wood processing sector, in **Viet Nam**, the Responsible Supply Chains in Asia programme collaborates with national stakeholders, including government agencies, policy-makers, and employers' and workers' organizations, to increase the knowledge and understanding on corporate social

³⁶ ILO: *Green jobs in the forestry sector*, available at: https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/green-jobs/projects/latin-america/WCMS_213184/lang-en/index.htm

³⁷ ILO: *Indigenous Cambodians' long wait for collective land ownership*, available at: https://www.ilo.org/asia/info/public/WCMS_125235/lang-en/index.htm

responsibility (CSR) and to promote socially responsible labour practices in the operations of businesses.³⁸ In **Peru**, the Sustaining Competitive and Responsible Enterprises (SCORE) programme has been implemented in 34 furniture and wood manufacturing SMEs in Lima and in the Amazon region, improving their productivity and working conditions. At present, the programme is looking to improve the conditions of the overall timber value chain, with the support of the businesses and government institutions such as the Ministry of Labour and the Ministry of Production.

With a view to facilitating and strengthening social dialogue, the ILO has supported forestry stakeholders in jointly identifying solutions for the sustainability of forest plantation territories in **Chile**. In **Peru**, the improvement of institutional capacities of stakeholders and social dialogue in forestry was among the objectives of a project tackling illegal logging in the Amazonian forest. In **China** and **Indonesia** the ILO's policy research on decent work in the sector has placed particular emphasis on social dialogue.

The ILO has collaborated with various United Nations agencies on issues related to forestry, including with the FAO and UNECE, most recently through their joint Team of Specialists on Green Jobs in the Forest Sector. Within this framework, in 2019 the ILO contributed to the development of the joint UNECE-FAO and ForestEurope *Guidelines on the promotion of green jobs in forestry*.

³⁸ ILO: *Responsible supply chains in Asia*, available at: https://www.ilo.org/asia/projects/rsca/WCMS_672798/lang-en/index.htm

5. Practical guidance and resources

Although the ILO does not have a specific Convention on forestry, many of its Conventions and Recommendations, as well as its Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work (1998), apply to the sector. As mentioned above, the ILO has specifically developed a *Code of Practice on safety and health in forestry work* and *Guidelines for labour inspection*

in forestry. The Sectoral Meeting on Promoting Decent Work and Safety and Health in Forestry (2019) requested the Office to initiate preparations to update these two tools. In addition, a wide repository of knowledge and tools in the forestry sector has been developed through partnerships and strengthening collaboration with the relevant actors.

Tools

ILO. 1998. *Code of practice on safety and health in forestry work* (Geneva). Provides guidance to ILO constituents in their efforts to improve the safety and health performance of their national forestry sectors or enterprises.

ILO. 2005. *Guidelines for labour inspection in forestry, Sectoral Activities Programme* (Geneva). Addresses some of the main issues and general principles regarding labour standards and labour inspection in the forestry sector. Includes specific guidance for labour inspectors on child labour in forestry.

Publications

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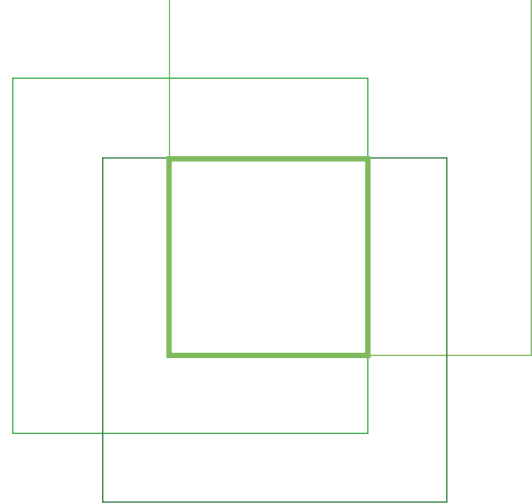
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Overview of Policy Guidance Notes on the Promotion of Decent Work in the Rural Economy



Supporting inclusive agricultural growth for improved livelihoods and food security

- Decent Work for Food Security and Resilient Rural Livelihoods
- Decent and Productive Work in Agriculture

Promoting economic diversification and triggering productive transformation for rural employment

- Economic Diversification of the Rural Economy
- Promoting Decent Work for Rural Workers at the Base of the Supply Chain
- The Role of Multinational Enterprises in the Promotion of Decent Work in Rural Areas
- Transitioning to Formality in the Rural Informal Economy
- Sustainable Tourism – A Catalyst for Inclusive Socio-economic Development and Poverty Reduction in Rural Areas

Promoting access to services, protection and employment-intensive investment

- Providing Access to Quality Services in the Rural Economy to Promote Growth and Social Development
- Extending Social Protection to the Rural Economy
- Developing the Rural Economy through Financial Inclusion: The Role of Access to Finance
- Employment-Intensive Investment in Rural Infrastructure for Economic Development, Social and Environmental Protection and Inclusive Growth

Ensuring sustainability and harnessing the benefits of natural resources

- A Just Transition towards a Resilient and Sustainable Rural Economy
- Decent Work in Forestry
- Harnessing the Potential of Extractive Industries
- Water for Improved Rural Livelihoods

Increasing the voice of rural people through organization and the promotion of rights, standards and social dialogue

- Rights at Work in the Rural Economy
- Promoting Social Dialogue in the Rural Economy
- Building Local Development in Rural Areas through Cooperatives and other Social and Solidarity Economy Enterprises and Organizations
- Decent Work for Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in the Rural Economy
- Empowering Women in the Rural Economy
- Decent Work for Rural Youth
- Promoting Fair and Effective Labour Migration Policies in Agriculture and Rural Areas

Improving the knowledge base on decent work in the rural economy

- Enhancing the Knowledge Base to Support the Promotion of Decent Work in Rural Areas

For more information please visit www.ilo.org/rural or contact rural@ilo.org

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