



MINUTES OF THE MEETING

25 November 2021

The Global Forest Expert Panel (GFEP) on Forests and Human Health convened virtually for the first meeting on 9-11 November 2021. Twenty participants, including fifteen Panel Members and the GFEP team, attended the meeting. It was moderated by GFEP Coordinator Christoph Wildburger and the Scientific Chair of the assessment, Cecil C. Konijnendijk. A full list of participants is annexed to the minutes.

1) Opening of the meeting

Christoph Wildburger, GFEP Coordinator, opened the meeting and welcomed the participants on behalf of the GFEP initiative and the International Union of Forest Research Organizations (IUFRO). He informed the participants that the meeting was recorded, and their names and affiliation would be published on the IUFRO-GFEP website as panel members for this assessment.

2) Brief introduction of participants

All participants, including the GFEP team, introduced themselves in a *tour de table*. C. Wildburger informed the participants that Prof Cecil C. Konijnendijk will serve as the Expert Panel's Scientific Chair. He also introduced the Panel Members who could not attend the meeting due to time differences and other conflicting commitments.

3) Introduction to the assessment

C. Wildburger briefly introduced the International Union of Forest Research Organizations ([IUFRO](#)) and the Global Forest Expert Panels ([GFEP](#)) Initiative.

C. Wildburger then highlighted the key points in the "Terms of Reference of the Expert Panel on Forests and Human Health" and the "GFEP Rules of Procedure". He noted that the primary goal of this Expert Panel is to carry out a comprehensive assessment of scientific knowledge on the interlinkages between forests and human health and to produce a comprehensive peer-reviewed scientific report and associated policy brief on the topic in early 2023. He briefed the participants on the task of the Expert Panel; main thematic elements to be covered in the assessment report; and the composition and modalities of work of the Expert

Panel. He highlighted the roles and responsibilities of the Panel members: the Panel Chair is responsible for overseeing the assessment report and coordinating the Introduction and Conclusions chapters; Coordinating Lead Authors (CLAs) are responsible for delivering integrated chapter manuscripts for designated chapters; Lead Authors (LAs) produce designated chapter sections; and Contributing Authors (CAs) assist with preparing chapter sections and elements.

C. Wildburger then outlined the tasks of the three-day meeting: the tasks of Day 1 were to discuss the thematic outlines and related conceptual approaches and methodologies, as well as allocate panel members to the chapters; on Day 2, the panel members refined and further developed the chapter outlines; and Day 3 focused on further refining the chapter outlines, and discussing the organization of work and next steps.

4) Discussion on the key concepts and annotated outline of the assessment

C. Wildburger then handed over the moderation to C. Konijnendijk, the Scientific Chair of the Panel, who thanked the participants and explained the development so far, particularly in light of the previously held scoping meeting. Participants discussed the framing and scope of the report and the chapters, as well as the use of terminology and definitions (e.g. "forests", "health", etc.). The panel members also discussed potential additional topics that were not explicit in the outline yet and cross-cutting issues.

5) Allocation of panel members to chapters

All Panel Members were then invited to express their interest in one or more chapters in a *tour de table*. The provisional list of chapter allocations was shared with all Panel Members.

6) Summary of first day's discussion

C. Wildburger and C. Konijnendijk briefly reviewed the main action items and discussion points from Day 1 of the meeting. C. Konijnendijk also shared the input points from a separate meeting with a Panel Member who could not attend the Panel Meeting due to time differences.

7) Break-out groups: Discussion of chapter work and refinement of chapter outlines

The Expert Panel split into break-out groups according to the chapters to further elaborate the content and outlines of each chapter of the assessment.

8) Reporting back from break-out groups

The participants convened back in the plenary to report the outcomes of their discussions in the break-out groups.

9) Discussion of issues arising

The Panel discussed the reports from each break-out group and the arising issues, including overlaps, cross-cutting content, and methodological issues. Further discussions focused on terminology and definitions as well as evidence sources.

10) Summary of second day's discussion

C. Wildburger and C. Konijnendijk briefly reviewed the main action items and discussion points from Day 2 of the meeting. C. Konijnendijk also shared the main input points from a separate meeting with a Panel Member who could not attend the Panel Meeting due to time differences.

C. Wildburger then announced the names of confirmed and potential Coordinating Lead Authors for each chapter.

11) Break-out groups: Discussion of chapter work and outlines, and designation of tasks

Chapter teams further developed the chapter content and outline. They also designated tasks to Lead Authors within the chapters and agreed on the internal working structure of the group.

12) Reporting back from break-out groups by Coordinating Lead Authors

The Panel Members then met in plenary, and the designated Coordinating Lead Authors (CLAs) of each chapter reported the outcomes of their discussions in the break-out groups.

The assessment report is structured into the following chapters:

- 1) Introduction
- 2) Framing chapter
- 3) Key health challenges and forest-based opportunities
- 4) Synergies and trade-offs between health-related forest usages and with other forest usages
- 5) Response options
- 6) Conclusions

13) Discussion of issues arising

The Panel then discussed several arising issues, including overlaps and the necessary intersection among different chapters. Conceptual approaches, terminologies, and framing of the assessment report, as well as chapters, were also addressed. Panel Members who could not join the break-out group expressed interest in certain sections of other chapters.

All Coordinating Lead Authors were also asked to engage the Panel Members who could not join their break-out group or the meeting in their chapter work as soon as possible.

14) Organization of work

C. Wildburger gave an overview of the tentative timeline and key milestones of the assessment.

The Panel agreed on the next milestone as 31 December 2021, when the annotated chapter outlines are due. The CLAs then decided to meet on 12 January 2022 to discuss the annotated outline. The deadline for turning in the first drafts of chapter manuscripts was set to 27 March 2022, followed by the 2nd meeting of the Expert Panel on 5-7 April 2022.

The GFEP team also informed the participants about logistical and technical support. Each panel member will get remuneration for their work, depending on their role in the Panel. All panel members will be added to an MS Teams account for coordination. Dikshya Devkota will follow up with all panel members regarding their contract and other logistical details. The list of Panel Members, minutes of the Panel Meetings, and additional relevant information for the public will be uploaded to <https://www.iufro.org/science/gfep/gfep-initiative/panel-on-forests-and-human-health/>.

The revised tentative timetable of the assessment was set as follows:

Scoping Meeting - GFEP Forests and Human Health	25-26 August 2021
Terms of Reference (ToR) for the Expert Panel	Early September 2021
Selecting members of the GFEP Expert Panel	September 2021
1 st meeting of the Expert Panel (virtual)	9 – 11 November 2021
Detailed chapter outlines	31 December 2021
Meeting of the CLAs	12 January 2022
First draft manuscripts of chapters	27 March 2022
2 nd meeting of the Expert Panel	5-7 April 2022
Final draft of chapters for peer review	End of May 2022
Peer review of chapters	June - July 2022
3 rd meeting of the Expert Panel	September 2022
Final revision of the chapters	November 2022
Editing of the Assessment Report	December 2022 - January 2023
Development and editing of Policy Brief	January 2023
Layout of the Assessment Report and Policy Brief	February 2023

Printing of the Assessment Report and Policy Brief	March 2023
Launch – International Day of Forests	21 March 2023

15) Final summary by the Panel Chair

C. Konijnendijk thanked participants for their efforts over the last three days. He asked Panel Members to work on their chapter outlines within the chapter groups until the first deadline (31 December).

16) Closing remarks by GFEP Coordinator

On behalf of IUFRO and the GFEP team, C. Wildburger thanked the participants for their commitment to this assessment and closed the meeting.

Annex I: List of Participants

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