

Contributions of forests to 2017 HLPF theme “Eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing world” and achievement of SDGs 1,2, 3, 5, 9, 14 and 17.

- Views of the UNFCCC

Introduction

The role of forests in climate change mitigation and adaptation has long been and continue to be well-recognized in the UNFCCC process. Forestry, such as through reducing deforestation, can make a very significant contribution to a low-cost global mitigation portfolio that provides synergies with adaptation and sustainable development. Approximately three-quarters of the Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDC) that were submitted by Parties, in particular developing country Parties, before the coming into force of the Paris Agreement, identified actions in the land use, land-use change and forestry sector among priority areas for the implementation of mitigation and adaptation actions. At the same time, the multiple benefits provided by forests in addition to reduction in greenhouse gas emissions and removals are also equally well-recognized by the UNFCCC. Actions to reduce emissions as well as enhance removals in the forest sector as part of low carbon development strategies also contribute to other benefits such as protection of water resources and biodiversity, ensuring food security, maintenance and promotion of health and well-being and creation of employment opportunities.

The secretariat as the main institution supporting the UNFCCC processes, serves as a catalyst to facilitate and/or enable implementation of the Convention, the Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Agreement by Parties and other stakeholders. In supporting Parties in various areas of climate action delivery, it also needs to facilitate the alignment of climate actions with the goals of the 2030 Agenda.

1. Please provide your organization’s view on the key contributions of forests to “eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing world”.

The principles, objective and commitments expressed in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (the Convention), its Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Agreement all carry the aim of addressing an urgent common concern of humankind, that is the threat of climate change and a warming world. These agreed objectives and commitments and associated actions align with the goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its plan of action for people, planet and prosperity. Further, the Conference of the Parties (COP), in its adoption of the Paris Agreement in decision 1/CP.21, had welcomed the adoption of United Nations General Assembly Resolution A/RES/70/1, “*Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*”, in particular its goal 13.

Both the Convention and the Paris Agreement provide a collective and cooperative pathway to climate actions and that these actions be taken in the context of sustainable development and eradication of poverty. In this context, the Convention and the Paris Agreement have a central role in ensuring and contributing to the achievement of all the goals of the 2030 Agenda, in particular Goal 13.

The Convention, its Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Agreement have recognized the urgent and potentially irreversible threat of climate change to the planet, human societies, including their rights to development, health, gender equality and intergenerational equity, and to all economic sectors. In addition, all 3 agreements have acknowledged and recognized the intrinsic relationship that climate change actions, responses and impacts have with equitable access to sustainable development and eradication of poverty.

This vision for action is in line with the goals of the 2030 Agenda. The Paris Agreement’s central aim is to strengthen the global response to the threat of climate change, in the context of sustainable development and efforts to eradicate poverty, by keeping a global temperature rise this century well below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels and to pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase even further to 1.5 degrees Celsius. Furthermore, the Agreement aims to strengthen the ability of countries to deal with the impacts of climate change through strengthening climate resilience.

In the context of the objective and aim of the Convention, its Protocol and Paris Agreement, among the actions and responses by Parties consider the important role of terrestrial and marine ecosystems as sinks and reservoirs of greenhouse gases. This is well captured in commitments under Article 4, paragraph 1(d) of the Convention, in which Parties commit to promote sustainable management, and promote and cooperate in the conservation and enhancement, as appropriate, of sinks and reservoirs of all greenhouse gases not controlled by the Montreal Protocol, including biomass, forests and oceans as well as other terrestrial, coastal and marine ecosystems. This commitment and its political significance, is reiterated in Article 5 of the Paris Agreement. Annex I country Parties under the Kyoto Protocol, in order to promote sustainable development, have committed to promote sustainable forest management practices, afforestation and reforestation as part of their actions to enhance sinks and reservoirs and to achieve their agreed emissions reduction targets (Article 2, paragraph 1(a)(ii), Article 3, paragraphs 3 and 4). Afforestation and reforestation activities undertaken as part of the clean development mechanism (CDM) are for the purpose of assisting non-Annex I Parties to achieve sustainable development while assisting Annex I Parties to achieve their emission reduction targets (Article 12, Kyoto Protocol).

Parties not only consider forests in their actions to mitigate climate change but also the role of forests in meeting their adaptation needs and addressing their vulnerability to the adverse effects of climate change.

2. Please provide your organization’s view on key contributions of forests to the achievement of Goals 1, 2, 3, 5, 9, 14 and 17.

SDG Goal	Key contributions of forests under the UNFCCC – as noted in key Articles, decisions and/or mandates of the COP/CMP
1	<p><u>Convention</u>: Article 2, Article 3, paragraphs 4 and 5, Article 4.1(d) <u>Kyoto Protocol</u>: Article 2. 1(a)(ii), Article 3.3 and Article 3.4, Article 12 <u>Paris Agreement</u>: Article 5, Article 7.1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Countries should implement REDD-plus actions in the context of sustainable development and reducing poverty, while responding to climate change (Decision 1/CP.16, Appendix 1).
2	<p><u>Convention</u>: Article 2 <u>Paris Agreement</u>: Article 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To take actions towards the achievement of the ultimate objective of the Convention and the aim of the Paris Agreement that would strengthen the ability to adapt to the adverse impacts of climate change and foster climate resilience and ensure that food production is not threatened and enable sustainable economic development.

SDG Goal	Key contributions of forests under the UNFCCC – as noted in key Articles, decisions and/or mandates of the COP/CMP
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same as for Goal 1 as this goal relates to sustainable development and economic growth. Actions and activities relating to the protection, conservation and enhancement of terrestrial ecosystems, including forests and to the reduction of emissions from deforestation and forest degradation will contribute to sustainable livelihoods, good health and well-being. <p><u>Convention</u>: Article 4.1(f) <u>Paris Agreement</u>: Article 7.2</p>
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The COP requests developing country Parties, when developing and implementing their REDD-plus national strategies and action plans, to also include gender considerations (Decision 1/CP.16, paragraph 72). • The Paris Agreement also acknowledges the need to respect, promote and consider gender equality, empowerment of women and intergenerational equity when taking action to address climate change (that may include actions that relate to the forestry sector). • Parties also acknowledge that adaptation actions and also in capacity-building, these efforts should be gender responsive, among other considerations (Article 7.5, Article 11.2)
9	<p><u>Convention</u>: Article 4.1, sub-paragraphs (c) and (e), which includes the forestry and land use sector</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The COP encourages Parties to address the drivers of deforestation and forest degradation in the development and implementation of their REDD-plus national strategies and action plans (Decisions 1/CP.16, paragraph 72 and 15/CP.19, paragraph 1) • The COP also encourages organizations, relevant stakeholders and the private sector to address the drivers of deforestation and forest degradation and to take actions that reduce these drivers (Decision 15/CP.19, paragraphs 3 and 4).
14	<p><u>Convention</u>: Article 4.1, sub-paragraphs (d) and (e), which includes the terrestrial, coastal and marine ecosystems.</p>
17	<p><u>Convention</u> (cooperation): Article 4.1, sub-paragraphs (c), (e), (g), (h) and (i)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parties to collectively aim to slow, halt and reverse forest cover and carbon loss, in accordance with national circumstances (as part of their actions to implement activities relating to REDD-plus). • The Paris Agreement recognizes the importance of the engagement of all levels of governments and non-Party stakeholders to scale up actions to reduce emissions and build resilience to the adverse effects of climate change, through

	<p>multiple initiatives and platforms for climate action. The secretariat is involved in several initiatives to enhance cooperation and support to developing country Parties to meet the targets expressed in their INDCs/NDCs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Paris Agreement also encourages Parties to work closely with non-Party stakeholders as well as regional and international cooperation to strengthen and implement more ambitious mitigation and adaptation actions.
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3. Please briefly describe the priorities and challenges to enhance the contributions of forests to the achievement of Goals 1, 2, 3, 5, 9, 14 and 17.

Priorities and challenges include:

- Ensuring adequate and predictable financial resources, including results-based payments, for actions relating to reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, conservation of forest carbon stocks, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks in developing countries (Warsaw Framework for REDD-plus,¹ in particular decisions 9/CP.19 and 10/CP.19, Article 5 of the Paris Agreement, Decision 1/CP.21, in particular, paragraph 54);
- Ensuring new, additional and predictable financial resources, that may come from a variety of sources, including public and private, bilateral and multilateral sources as well as alternative sources for the sustained implementation of actions relating to REDD-plus.
- Recognizing and addressing the need for capacity-building, the provision of technical assistance and the transfer of technology to improve data collection, estimation of emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, and to increase technical capacities for monitoring, reporting and verifying emissions and removals, changes in forest carbon stocks and changes in forest areas in developing countries. In addition, addressing the institutional needs of developing countries to take effective actions in reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation and enhancing forest carbon stocks.
- Promoting regional and international cooperation to mobilize and implement stronger and more ambitious climate actions by all Parties and relevant stakeholders, including actions that relate to reducing deforestation and forest degradation, conservation, restoration and enhancement of forest carbon stocks.
- Ensuring the sustainability of REDD-plus actions and implementation through all phases, from the readiness phase to the results-based phase, and encouraging the broadest participation of as many developing countries as possible. In addition, to promote and incentivize the multiple non-carbon benefits associated with the mitigation actions relating to REDD-plus and can also contribute to adaptation.

¹ REDD-plus refers to decision 1/CP.16, paragraph 70 in which the COP encourages developing country Parties to contribute to mitigation actions in the forest sector by undertaking the following activities, as deemed appropriate by each Party and in accordance with their respective capabilities and national circumstances: reducing emissions from deforestation, reducing emissions from forest degradation, conservation of forest carbon stocks, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks.