COP30 Presidency Roadmap on Halting and Reversing Deforestation and Forest Degradation by 2030

Achieving the Global Stocktake (GST) goal of halting and reversing deforestation and forest degradation by 2030 (paragraphs 33 and 34 of Decision 1/CMA5) requires a coordinated response to curb deforestation from multiple sources, reduce forest degradation, stimulate forest conservation and enable a forest restoration economy.

Forests and other types of native vegetation (hereinafter called forests) represent carbon, biodiversity and water assets, are home for indigenous people and local communities, benefits agriculture and provides ecosystem services benefiting society from a broad perspective.

Forests are at the center of the climate actions towards meeting the Paris Agreement goals. Since the Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation – REDD+ decision in 2012, passing through the centrality of forests on Article 5 of the Paris Agreement, tackle forest loss became a multilateral goal due to carbon, biodiversity, water, ecosystem services, beyond multiple benefits provided by forests.

Based on this context, Agroicone, a brazilian think thank that aims to transform agriculture and renewable energy aligned with climate change goals and, more broadly, with diferent sustainable development goals, respectively suggests the following topics to the roadmap:

(a) What are the most critical barriers — whether physical, economic, financial, institutional, technological or social — preventing the halting and reversing of deforestation and forest degradation?

Forest MRV

The initial gap is related to forest monitoring to track the condition, change, and health of forests and native vegetation over time. Countries systems and tools, using satellite images, technologies and tools, are substantially necessary to allow an effective control, planning and management.

A structural constraint to many developing countries is the absence of robust monitoring, reporting and verification (MRV) systems and integrated governmental land-use databases. Strengthening these tools is critical to distinguish legal from illegal deforestation and to support target, evidence-based enforcement strategies

Addressing deforestation

Tackle deforestation must be seen as a multifaceted challenge, connected to diferent activities and drivers. Nearly 90% of deforestation in Brazil, for instance, in associated

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with illegal practices such as logging, land grabbing, mining, drugs and guns trafficking and agriculture. As these activities often involve international criminal networks, stronger multilateral cooperation is required.

Strengthened institutional interaction between the UNFCCC, the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crimes (UNTOC), the United Nations Office on Drug and Crime (UNODC) and the Convention on International Trade of Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna (CITES) is crucial to ensure that transnational environmental crimes are addressed through coordinated, multi-agency responses with appropriate legal instruments.

Brazil illustrates the complexity of the challenge. In 2024, over 93% of deforested areas showed indicators of illegality, highlighting the urgent need for more effective enforcement.[1] Deforestation is distributed across diverse land categories – public non designated lands, conservation unites, rural settlements, indigenous territories, and private properties – each requiring differentiated policy responses.

The scale of the challenge varies significantly by land tenure: in 2022, approximately 75% of Amazon deforestation took place on public lands, while 25% occurred on private properties.[2] This heterogeneity demands tailored and context-specific strategies, as there is no one-size-fits all approach.

The strategies to address deforestation must consider the nature of the pressure, the potential drivers, the type of land by regulatory management structure, among other specific case by case aspects.

Agriculture is often named as the main source of deforestation. It is important, however, to separete the occupation on land after it is cleared in a time period, from the initial motivation of deforestation to agriculture.

(b) What potential levers, whether economic, financial, institutional, social or technological, exist for accelerating the implementation of the commitment to halt and reverse deforestation and forest degradation?

An integrated landscape approach

Sustainable landscape strategies depend on how agricultural lands, forests and native vegetation are managed. In this context, the sustainable use and management of forests emerge as a key pillar in mitigating greenhouse gas emissions and adapting to the

[1] MapBiomas, 2025. Annual Report of Deforestation in Brazil – 2024. Available: https://alerta.mapbiomas.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/17/2025/05/RAD2024_15.05.pdf
[2] Ministry of Environment and Climate Change, 2024. Action Plan for Preventing and Controlling Deforestation in the Amazon - PPCDAm (2023-2027). Available: https://www.gov.br/mma/pt-br/assuntos/controle-ao-desmatamento-queimadas-e-ordenamento-ambiental-territorial/controle-do-desmatamento-1/amazonia-ppcdam-1/5a-fase-ppcdam.pdf

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impacts of climate change. Without robust management plans grounded in national regulations, degradation, low productivity and biodiversity loss will persist.

This approach is directly reflected in the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) through tree targets: Target 1 requires that all land and sea areas be placed under participatory, integrated spatial planning by 2030; Target 2 calls for the restoration of at least 30% of all degraded ecosystems and Target 3 propose to conserve 30% of Land, Waters and Seas.[3]

These targets constitute a dual strategy that must be pursued in conjunction with UNFCCC climate commitments to ensure a cohesive global response. This alignment reinforces that deforestation is not a localized concern; it is a global challenge. Given the transboundary drivers and their cascading impacts on climate, hydrological cycles and biological diversity, coordinated action is the only viable path forward.

The restoration of native forests offers concurrent benefits: protection of critical ecosystems, reversal of degradation trajectories and generation of shared value for society through sustainable forest management. The roadmap should incentivize forest restoration, including through market mechanisms such as the carbon market, as a solution that can generate win-win outcomes.

Under national frameworks, forests should be treated as a continuum, combining different types of conservation and protection areas. The view of forests solely as protected areas, with no management and use, should be one potential strategy. This approach limits the multiple types of vegetation along with multiple uses of land. Climate and biodiversity goals arising from native vegetation relates to the conservation level, avoiding degradation, enhancing ecosystem services among other characteristics, regardless the legal status of the area.

Under sound management, agricultural lands can function as significant carbon reservoirs while simultaneously delivering climate resilience, water regulation and biodiversity co-benefits.

Data from the Brazilian Forest Service's Environmental Regularization Panel, updated up to March 2026, shows that there are 218,10 million hectares of Legal Reserve areas and 29.29 million hectares of Permanent Preservation Areas, and 19.5 million hectares of surplus vegetation.[4] Conservation on private areas will be improved with the validation of the Rural Environmental Registries (CAR) by state authorities, which will contribute to certify the total area under conservation by rural producers.

The Forest Code enables a strict control of land use and deforestation on private areas, allowing to differentiate legal and illegal conversion. The new Climate Plan, approved in

[3] Convention on Biological Diversity. Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. Available: https://www.cbd.int/gbf

[4] https://app.powerbi.com/view?r=eyJrIjoiZmRiM2QwZDQtYjUxZi00YWI0LWFjNGEtZTIxNjg1YWFkNmZlIiwidCI6ImViMjJjMjU4LWQ0ZWQtNGZmMC04Y2Y2LTI4NmQ2Mjc3OTQ5ZSJ9

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the beginning of 2026,[5] creates a mitigation plan aimed at controlling deforestation in private areas, putting forward the challenge to create value to the forests, as a tool to avoid legal deforestation based on financial instruments, the carbon market and payment for environmental services.

The roadmap should foster sustainable forestry activities and recognize the integration of production and conservation as a cornerstone of global climate mitigation and adaptation strategies.

The role of private lands and agricultural producers

Private landowners are central actors in the conservation ecosystem and should be formally recognized within the roadmap as key strategic partners.

Brazil's Forest Code provides a relevant institutional model: it mandates that rural landowners designate between 20% and 80% of their property as Legal Reserves areas (LR), depending on the biome and location, while also requiring the conservation of Permanent Preservation Areas (APP) around riparian zones, slopes, hilltops and other ecologically sensitive features.

The implementation of the Forst Code, passing through the validation of the Rural Environmental registry (CAR), will allow to atest the ammount of native vegetation conserved in Brazilian Farms.

Notwithstanding this significant contribution, an APP compliance deficit of approximately 10 million hectares and LR compliance deficit up to 33 million hectares remains, and the full operationalization of the Forest Code is contingent on the validation of Rural Environmental Registry (CAR) by state authorities. This requires not only coordinated federal and state commitment but also sustained international investment and technical cooperation. The Forest Code implementation allows to foster conservation and restoration, connecting private areas to the objective of the roadmap.

Produce food, feed and renewables in areas connected to native vegetation is, in fact, an approach that delivers carbon, biodiversity, water and ecosyste services.

At a structural level, the absence of adequate financial valuation mechanisms for conservation on private lands constitutes a systemic barrier to scaling voluntary conservation efforts. Landowners bear real costs when maintaining native vegetation, expenses that are rarely offset by current financial instruments.

Create incentives to avoid legal deforestation is a critical challenge. Value chains must manage ilegal deforestation and are motivated to move away from legal conversion as well. International trade requirements goes beyond Brazilian regulation not accepting legal conversion. Estimates shows that there are 70 million hectares of native vegetation

[5] https://www.gov.br/mma/pt-br/centrais-de-conteudo/publicacoes/mudanca-do-clima/sumario-executivo-plano-clima.pdf

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that are eligible to legal conversion on private areas. Of that, 30 million are highly productive areas that could be conserved through innovative mechanisms that will at least partialy cover the cost of opportunity of the areas.[6]

This is an important topic to be addressed by the roadmap.

The development of robust mechanisms – encompassing direct payments for ecosystem services, results-based finance and market-based programs – is essential to transforming conservation from a regulatory obligation into a financially viable strategic asset. Ultimately, these instruments must ensure that maintaining native vegetation remains economically competitive with alternative land uses over the long term.

Scaling climate finance

The current climate finance architecture is insufficient in both aggregate volume and delivery efficiency. Available funding fails to reach the landowners and forest owners who bear the direct costs of forest conservation, and existing mechanisms fall short of covering the full economic costs of maintaining forest cover.

Results-based payments (RBP) under REDD+ represent an important instrument within this architecture, yet significant structural gaps remain. While the Green Climate Fund (GCF) recently increased its RBP rate from US$ 5 to US$ 8 per tonne of carbon equivalent (tCO_2e), this adjustment remains an incremental step.[7] This price still falls short of the threshold required to make conservation economically competitive against alternative land uses.

The current scale of deployment also reflects a broader bottleneck in climate finance. To date, only 12 RBP projects have received GCF approval, totalling US$ 748.72 million[8] – a volume that remains insufficient to meet the amount needed.

Under the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility of the World Bank, there are 15 Emission Reductions Payment Agreements (ERPAs) with a total contract value of over $721 million, committing to reduce emissions through reforestation programs by more than 144 million tons of carbon by the end of 2028.

At the UN-REDD Programme, the total source of funds amounts to approximately USD 436 million in pledges, of which USD 400 million has been delivered up to 2024.

Brazil received US$ 1.2 billion from Norway and Germany aligned with REDD+ RBP.[9]

[6] https://www.reuters.com/sustainability/climate-energy/brazils-agrotools-building-worlds-biggest-environmental-services-payment-2026-02-06/
[7] GCF. Policy for results-based payments for REDD+. Disponível em: https://www.greenclimate.fund/document/policy-results-based-payments-redd
[8] GCF. Open Data Library. Available: https://data.greenclimate.fund/public/data/projects
[9] https://www.gov.br/mma/pt-br/composicao/smc/departamento-de-instrumentos-de-mercado-e-redd/redd/assuntos/financiamento-para-redd

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Voluntary carbon market (VCM) can serve as a complementary financing channel when build on strong standards and transparency, enabling the implementation of high-impact projects. Despite a decline in traded volumes, the rise in agricultural carbon credit prices in 2024 signals a latent demand.[10] This market interest could be more effectively mobilized through regulatory frameworks that provide long-term certainty for high-impact projects.

Further strategic pathways are offered through Article 6 of the Paris Agreement, which provides the necessary basis for international cooperation. Under Article 6.2, cooperative approaches can stimulate sustainable agricultural practices and facilitate technological transfer to developing countries. Simultaneously, the Paris Agreement Crediting Mechanism (PACM) under Article 6.4 should fully integrate forest carbon credits and nature-based solutions. To ensure market health, the PACM could incorporate cross-sectoral credit allocation limits, thereby preventing market concentration in the forestry segment and incentivizing broader participation across diverse economic sectors.

The roadmap should incentivize a broader debate, under the UNFCCC, regarding REDD+, including based on forest restoration, as carbon offsets accepted under Article 6.2 and Article 6.4 mechaisms based on a cap. Prevent the exclusive use of forest offsets is critical for several reasons and could create opportunities to enhance forest conservation and restoration using a price signal from the market as a lever.

Rather than creating new financing schemes, the priority should be to refine and scale existing mechanisms while diversifying the resource base. This requires the coordinated mobilization of governments, multilateral development banks, philanthropic organizations, and the private sector. Innovative financial instruments – such as blended finance, guarantees, catalytic equity facilities, and green and blue bonds – can significantly enhance both the availability and the quality of climate finance.

To maximize impact, it is essential to ensure full alignment between the deforestation roadmap and the Baku-Belém roadmap to 1.3T. The action plan aimed at mobilizing US$ 1.3 trillion annually by 2035 should serve as a primary guide for channelling finance to reward sustainable production and forest conservation. These two initiatives, both supported by the COP30 Presidency, must coexist as complementary frameworks that reinforce one another's objectives across the climate agenda.

Conclusion

There are no silver bullet or simplistic solutions for the global challenge of halting and reversing deforestation and forest degradation. Achieving the ambitious targets of the GST requires a fundamental shift away from rigid, one-size-fits-all mandates toward strategies that are adapted to national realities and needs.

[10] Ecosystem Market Place. 2025 State of the Voluntary Carbon Market. Available: https://www.ecosystemmarketplace.com/publications/2025-state-of-the-voluntary-carbon-market-sovcm/

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By recognizing the unique land-use systems, ecological particularities, and development contexts of each nation, the international community can foster more resilient and effective outcomes. Ultimately, success depends on a tailored approach that respects national circumstances, ensuring that conservation efforts are both practically viable and globally impactful.

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