Template for non-Party stakeholders' inputs
for the Talanoa Dialogue
Question 1 – Where are we?

This template is meant to guide non-Party stakeholders (organization(s), coalition(s), initiative(s) and/or sector(s) etc.) in providing inputs that are relevant and impactful to the Talanoa Dialogue process. Using such the template is not mandatory, however, the High-level Champions encourage non-Party stakeholders to use such a structure to facilitate capturing and highlighting the key messages across the three questions.

REDD+ - where are we?
Insights from CIFOR's Global Comparative Study on REDD+

This is a submission by the Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR) that summarizes scientific evidence to take stock of the current situation and status of REDD+. Scientific evidence on REDD+ progress and challenges will contribute to more efficient, effective and equitable REDD+.

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Where are we?

The commitment (planned and/or announced) as well as the actions taken so far that are in line with aims of Paris Agreement, the 1.5/2 degrees' goal and the transition towards a net-zero emission society by this mid-century [Maximum 300 words]

Agriculture, forestry and other land use change are responsible for ca. 25% of global greenhouse gas emissions. Deforestation and forest degradation (mainly agricultural expansion) account for 10–11% of net global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. But forests also absorb 4–6 Gt of carbon annually, part of it from fossil fuel emissions; the Paris Agreement's mitigation goal includes 'sinks' and needs 'negative emissions' (i.e. removals), to which afforestation/reforestation will be crucial. Forests also provide many centrally important provisioning and regulating ecosystem services, including contribution to rural incomes, conservation of biodiversity, and water provision to agricultural lands downstream and through 'teleconnections' to far-away regions. To reduce land-based emissions, and reap social and environmental co-benefits of tropical forest conservation, REDD+ (reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation and enhancement of forest carbon stocks) gained prominence in 2007. REDD+ is recognized in the 2015 Paris Agreement, and is explicitly included as a climate change mitigation strategy in the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) of 56 countries. REDD+ is supposed to provide financial compensation to developing countries for foregone gains from deforestation, through 'results-based' payments related to achieved carbon emission reductions. Importantly, REDD+ focuses on the national

level—as opposed to project-based activities—supposed to reduce leakage.

Since 2007, more than 50 countries developed REDD+ strategies, and more than 350 subnational REDD+ initiatives sprang up, some of them jurisdictional programs (i.e. led by subnational governments), but most local-level projects implemented by NGOs or for-profit companies. These early initiatives provide an excellent basis for rigorous assessment of REDD+ performance on the ground.

REDD+ "readiness" funding improved developing countries' abilities to address deforestation and forest degradation (e.g. national policies, forest monitoring), but progress is still needed to promote transformational change both within and beyond the forestry sector towards good governance, including stable institutions and transparency.

Progress made so far against the above commitments, including success stories, case studies and gaps [Maximum 300 words]

CIFOR's Global Comparative Study on REDD+ reveals critical challenges. The original REDD+ idea of conditional payments has been replaced by a diverse set of interventions on the ground. Opportunity costs of forest protection vary between households, which could exacerbate inequity in future benefit sharing. Incentives are fundamental to promoting the well-being of local populations facing land-use restrictions associated with REDD+.

Where NDCs explicitly mention REDD+, they rarely specify any details of implementation, regarding finance, MRV, land governance and tenure, and safeguards. REDD+ policy implementation is insufficiently integrated vertically (between government levels) or horizontally (between sectors) in many countries, with insufficient information sharing, unclear responsibilities, and budget and capacity limitations. Land tenure is central for REDD+ yet needs to be solved at the national policy level. Participation of local populations in REDD+ design is central, and more could be done to promote gender equality.

International REDD+ safeguards agreements do not subject safeguard information to the same rigorous standards as carbon monitoring, and protection of rights, participation and social co-benefits are challenging to measure. Yet pertinent data can be collected in national surveys.

Addressing the drivers of deforestation embedded in global commodity chains (beef, palm oil, soybeans, timber, pulp and paper) requires policy mixes that change the behavior of domestic and transnational deforestation agents. But many countries do not adequately address drivers beyond the forestry sector.

Limited REDD+ results, unfulfilled local expectations, and unsolved tension between environmental and social goals have led to calls for abandoning REDD+. Yet REDD+ has advanced our understanding of forest conservation, and dismissing it impedes learning. Policy makers should act on feedback from critical, evidence-based analysis to avoid policy detours and delays towards successful emission reductions. It seems particularly important to limit REDD+ burdens on local populations while efficiently ending deforestation drivers operating at higher levels.

Quantitative impact so far with respect to mitigation, adaptation, resilience and/or finance [Maximum 300 words]

While early REDD+ projects and programs have had [some effect](#) in reducing deforestation, measurable results are limited due to low financing, and thus limited action on the ground, and a focus on smallholders instead of on larger commercial agents of deforestation. To be successful, REDD+ [requires transformational change](#) within but also far beyond the forestry sector, as outlined above, including in terms of consumer demands internationally.

Forest monitoring still has critical gaps, due to limitations in currently available remote sensing data and analytical methods. There are problems linking satellite remote sensing and ground-based data collection, which is needed to identify drivers and establish causality. It is difficult to obtain biodiversity and social data, but there have been some advances towards obtaining critical information for forest management, such as [concession boundaries](#).

The private-sector voluntary "zero deforestation" commitments pledged by over 400 companies still fail to show measurable results. Satellite-based forest monitoring must be combined with supply-chain traceability for accountability, and [monitoring systems](#) are being developed.