

Joint submission on the COP30 Presidency Roadmap for Halting and Reversing Deforestation and Forest Degradation by 2030

We, a global coalition of organisations working to advance sustainable, healthy, resilient and equitable food systems in the UNFCCC process, welcome the COP30 Presidency's invitation to contribute to the Roadmap for Halting and Reversing Deforestation and Forest Degradation by 2030 ("the deforestation roadmap"). We would like to offer the following views:

The deforestation roadmap presents a critical opportunity to recognise the dual role of agriculture and food systems, not only as major drivers of deforestation and forest degradation, but also as a key part of the solution to those challenges through the transition to sustainable agriculture and food systems.

Healthy forests underpin the productivity of agriculture and its resilience in the face of climate impacts. They stabilise soils, provide and regulate water, support pollinators and biodiversity, and buffer against climate-related shocks. Nearly one third of the global population depends on forests for their livelihoods, food security and nutrition¹.

Agriculture remains the greatest threat to forests: around 90% of deforestation stems from agricultural expansion², for commodities such as beef, soy, palm oil, cocoa, timber, paper and coffee. Beyond this, secondary contributors linked to food systems also play a significant role in driving forest loss, such as reliance on firewood for cooking, crop residue burning, and the increasing prevalence of wildfires.

The world remains far off track to halt and reverse deforestation and forest degradation by 2030 despite global commitments such as the outcome of the first global stocktake (paragraphs 33 and 34). Hunger affected more than 600 million people in 2024³. That same year, a record-breaking 6.7 million hectares of tropical primary forest were lost⁴. As pressures to feed a growing population intensify, so too will the strain on forests under our current food systems. Continued forest loss and degradation heighten risks and costs for communities, businesses, and financial institutions alike, undermining the prosperity, resilience, and long-term stability of our societies and economies.

Achieving climate, biodiversity and food security goals will therefore require a rapid and deep transformation of how food is produced and consumed. Today's dominant model of industrial, intensive agriculture has been fuelling forest loss and must be transformed.

¹ Sooyeon Laura Jin, "[Forests and Foods: Nourishing People, Sustaining the Planet](#)", United Nations, 2025

² UN Food and Agriculture Organization, "[Global Remote Sensing Survey](#)", 2021

³ UN Food and Agriculture Organization, "[The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the world](#)", 2025

⁴ World Resources Institute, "[Fires Drove Record-breaking Tropical Forest Loss in 2024](#)", 2025

Key barriers preventing a shift to sustainable food systems that align with zero deforestation goals:

- **Global supply chains structurally linking commodity production to deforestation.** Up to 39% of tropical deforestation is tied to the international trade of agricultural commodities⁵. Demand for soy, beef, palm oil and other forest-risk commodities makes conversion of forests economically attractive where land is cheap and environmental costs are unaccounted for. Expanding global consumption, and more specifically the increased consumption of high-impact foods, continues to push agricultural frontiers deeper into forest ecosystems.
- **Harmful agricultural incentives and subsidies.** Nearly 90% of agricultural support provided by governments is considered harmful to nature and health. Environmentally damaging agricultural subsidies reached approximately USD 400 billion in 2023. A significant share of those subsidies directly encourages land conversion and deforestation by supporting expansion of crop area, livestock expansion, as well as the production and consumption of input-intensive foods.
- **Institutional and governance gaps.** Weak law enforcement and forest monitoring approaches, unclear or insecure land tenure, and conflicting policies and illegal activities such as land grabbing reduce accountability and lower the cost of agricultural expansion, creating enabling conditions for deforestation.

Deforestation and forest degradation are complex challenges, and governments must implement a mix of policy, legal, institutional and financial instruments to accelerate the transition to sustainable food systems by tackling the food-related drivers of forest loss:

1. Address the entire food system, not only food production.

A holistic and systemic approach is needed to shift consumer demand and food environments towards healthy and sustainable diets, and to reduce food loss and waste. Shifting towards predominantly plant-based diets can dramatically reduce pressure on forests by lowering demand for land-intensive animal agriculture.

2. Scale up deforestation- and conversion-free supply chains.

Decoupling agricultural supply chains from deforestation requires mandatory due diligence ensuring that companies sell products free from deforestation, support for producer countries in aligning their agricultural and forestry policies, strengthened traceability and transparency (including through the use of digital tools), and targeted support for smallholder farmers to meet sustainability requirements.

3. Reform environmentally harmful agricultural subsidies.

Repurposing agricultural support is one of the most effective ways to shift production and consumption away from damaging practices and unsustainable patterns. In line with Target 18 of the Global Biodiversity Framework, governments should map existing support, assess how subsidies impact forests, identify harmful incentives, phase out the most

⁵ Godar et al., "[Agricultural and forestry trade drives large share of tropical deforestation emissions](#)", 2019

distortive measures, and redirect resources toward sustainable and equitable food production - building on the progress already made in several countries to align public support with nature-friendly practices⁶. Reforms must be socially fair and enable a just transition, particularly for smallholder farmers.

4. Promote sustainable food production that conserves forests and supports livelihoods.

Countries should prioritise diversified, nature-positive production systems such as agroecology, agroforestry, and the scaling-up of alternative proteins alongside sustainable land-management practices that enhance resilience, improve nutrition, and reduce pressure on forests. Integrated landscape approaches are also essential to align food production with forest conservation

5. Strengthen governance and institutional frameworks.

Stronger governance requires cross-cutting and coherent agricultural, forestry, trade and climate policies; robust legal and enforcement systems; effective measurement, reporting and verification; improved cross-ministerial coordination; and continuous dialogue with relevant sectors and stakeholders. Meaningful participation of Indigenous Peoples and local communities, paired with secure land-tenure rights, is essential for long-term forest stewardship.

To implement these instruments effectively, governments must prioritise:

- **Integrated planning** that links food policy with rural development, public health, biodiversity conservation, and economic resilience, with a goal of unlocking synergies, reducing trade-offs, and accelerating shared climate and development goals.
- **Equity and justice**, with the meaningful inclusion of Indigenous Peoples, local communities, women, and youth, whose leadership and rights are vital to building resilient, biodiversity-positive food systems within planetary boundaries.
- **A strong science-policy-practice interface**, with research fostering dialogue, co-creation of practical knowledge, and translation of evidence into accessible, decision-ready formats.

Proven solutions already exist, and Brazil offers some of the most powerful examples.

The Amazon Soy Moratorium, one of the world's most effective zero-deforestation agreements, has virtually eliminated soy as a direct driver of forest loss in the Amazon while preserving Brazil's competitive position in global markets. Initiatives such as the Catalytic Capital for the Agricultural Transition are mobilising large-scale investment in deforestation-free soy, cattle, and agroforestry production, lowering risk and improving financial terms so that farmers and companies can afford to conserve forests and restore degraded land. In parallel, Brazil's transition from livestock farming to plant-based agroforestry systems has demonstrated how degraded pastures can be transformed into biodiverse, carbon-rich landscapes that also deliver significantly higher farmer incomes⁷.

⁶ WWF, "[Turning harm into opportunity: Repurposing agricultural subsidies that destroy forests and non-forest natural ecosystems](#)", 2024

⁷ ProVeg International, "[Increasing Income. Respecting The Planet. Nourishing People](#)", 2025

The deforestation roadmap can provide a much-needed direction for coordinated international action across the agriculture and forest sectors, for leveraging synergies in climate, health and equity by embedding just transition from the start, by setting clear milestones through 2030 to accelerate progress and support the global shift toward sustainable food systems.

Ending deforestation and forest degradation will not be possible without tackling their drivers, and especially agricultural expansion. The deforestation roadmap must address the role of industrial, intensive agriculture, and drive an urgent, systemic transformation of food systems. There is no climate resilience or food security without healthy forests, and there are no healthy forests without food systems transformation. This is why joint action on food and forests offers a powerful pathway to build resilience, security and prosperity.

We stand ready to support the development of a strong and ambitious roadmap that tackles the drivers of deforestation and forest degradation.

List of organisations endorsing this submission:

1. WWF International
2. Ação da Cidadania
3. Solutions for Our Climate
4. Good Food Institute Brazil
5. Climate Strategies
6. SAOSO Foundation
7. Mercy For Animals
8. ProVeg International
9. Palakiya Foundation
10. Vegetarian Society of Denmark
11. Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN)