

SANTIAGO CALL FOR ACTION ON FORESTS

COP 25, Madrid, December 2019.



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- Land, including forests, provides the primary basis for human livelihoods, including food and water security, multiple other ecosystem services, and biodiversity. Climate change, including increases in frequency and intensity of extreme weather events, has adversely impacted terrestrial ecosystems, exacerbating existing risks to livelihoods, food systems, infrastructure, human and ecosystem health, and biodiversity (IPCC, 2019).
- The concentration of carbon dioxide (CO₂) in the atmosphere reached 415 parts per million (ppm) in May of this year, generating the highest land and ocean temperature departure from average since global records began in 1880 (0.95°C) in September 2019, (NOAA, 2019).
- According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) an estimated 23% of total anthropogenic emissions of GHGs between 2007 and 2016 derive from the Agriculture, Forestry and Other Land Use (AFOLU) sector.(IPCC, 2019)
- Limiting global warming to under 1.5°C is critical for the planet to continue fostering life and biodiversity as we know them today. Current emission reductions in Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) need to be “increased around fivefold” to hold the increase in global average temperature below 1.5oC (UNEP, 2019).
- A myriad of forest-based solutions taking place on the ground show the real and promising results that forest can deliver. Halting deforestation and degradation of forest ecosystems and restoring degraded lands by sustainable forest management, planting trees and shrubs are recognized by the scientific community as the most cost-effective mitigation actions to meet the objectives of the Paris Agreement while also producing important adaptation, biodiversity, livelihood and development benefits.
- These actions are ready to be scaled-up exponentially. Together with improved land management options, forests and trees could provide more than 30 percent of the GHG mitigation required by 2030 to keep the increase in global average temperature below 2°C.

CALL FOR ACTION

The COP 25 Presidency calls on countries, international organizations, civil society, and the private sector, to address the urgency of the current climate crisis by collaborating and coordinating actions aimed at increasing the ambition of NDCs through sustainable and inclusive mitigation actions in the AFOLU sector, including through reducing deforestation and forest degradation, sustainable management of forests, the conservation and enhancement of forest carbon stocks, and other nature-based solutions.

The COP25 Presidency calls on countries, international organizations, civil society and the private sector, in accordance with their capacities, to act on the following:

1. Reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation and enhance carbon sinks.

The world community must strengthen efforts and cooperation to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in all countries in line with Article 5 of the Paris Agreement. Scaling up and transferring appropriate knowledge, technologies and financial incentives are needed to achieve transformative change across all sectors that drive deforestation and forest degradation. Urgency is required at the same time to sustainably increase reforestation, restoration and afforestation efforts and to conserve primary forests in all biomes as functioning carbon sinks.

2. Increase the ambition of Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) through Nature-Based Solutions (NBS) based on forest activities (Including REDD+).

All countries should enhance their NDCs through NBS -the protection, restoration and sustainable use of forests, grasslands and wetlands- to contribute to closing the emissions gap by 2030. Scaling-up NBS based on forest activities is a cost-effective opportunity for countries to enhance their NDC ambition, while also aligning with Article 5 of the Paris Agreement. Reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries (REDD+) has contributed to tackling the main drivers of deforestation and to the development of monitoring and MRV systems. In addition to the climate change mitigation potential, incorporating nature-based solutions in the NDCs can contribute to improving livelihoods, reducing inequality, ensuring food and water security, strengthening resilience and enhancing biodiversity conservation.

3. Advance NDC implementation through effective and measurable multi-stakeholder action..

All actors, public and private, at all levels, should fully engage in the implementation of international commitments, including the NDCs and other international voluntary goals such as those associated with the Bonn Challenge and the New York Declaration on Forests. International initiatives are helpful to set the path for climate emergency actions, but it is now time to move towards their full implementation.

Action is needed from all sectors of the economy and at all levels to make agricultural commodity supply chains more sustainable and bring more investments into forests and low carbon agricultural practices. Private companies should establish procurement standards, traceability processes and smallholder support. These efforts should be done in close coordination with governments and the relevant stakeholders.

4. Increase NDC transparency: reinforcing trust in the Paris Agreement

Countries are called upon to: (i) ensure that their NBS actions are clearly presented in their NDCs; and (ii) actively engage in the implementation of the Enhanced Transparency Framework. Approximately 77% of NDCs reference Land Use, Land-use Change and Forestry, but only about 30% of NDCs include quantitative mitigation (or adaptation) targets, such as hectares reforested, and an even smaller proportion put forward GHG-based targets for the sector. When forest activities are included in NDCs, countries should transparently convey how they will ensure the expected impact toward global mitigation efforts. This would facilitate the tracking of progress at both the national and international levels.

5. Scale-up predictable financial support from all sources

Scaled-up and predictable financial support, including through REDD+ results-based payments, is needed in order to enhance NDC ambition. Today, international forest finance remains small and has not grown substantially. Less than 3.3% of funding to fight climate change goes to the entire agriculture, forestry, land-use, and natural resource management sectors. Scaled-up and predictable finance for sustainable forest and agricultural practices should come from all sources.

Private finance is likely to play an important role as private enterprises -small, medium and large- have the flexibility to adapt to changing production conditions. Countries and organizations should create conditions that are favorable for investment in NBS, including REDD+, considering forest restoration, recovery of degraded land, sustainable forest management and plantation establishment for all scales of private entrepreneurship, recognizing the multiple benefits generated for all society.

6. Build on existing technical support for NDC implementation and reporting.

Scaled-up technical support is needed on various aspects related to NDC implementation and reporting. In particular, there is a need to support countries in meeting the new requirements of the Enhanced Transparency Framework, including through more effective MRV systems and more robust GHG inventories. Countries have made significant progress on forest monitoring and Measurement, Reporting and Verification (MRV) through REDD+ and can build on this for NDC implementation.

Private and public actors should make the necessary Engineering, Management and Institutional know-how available to countries committed to restore forest landscapes and to implement close to nature plantations with high diversity. The emphasis should be on accelerating implementation of forest activities with existing means and know-how to save valuable time and resources.

7. Actively engage local communities and indigenous peoples, including women and youth.

Design and implementation of international commitments and goals, including the process of enhancing NBS in NDCs, should actively engage local communities and indigenous peoples, including women and youth. Ownership by the whole of local communities is essential for the success and sustainability of mitigation and adaptation in the forest sector. Therefore, it is essential that community activities to restore and manage forest resources are carried out using a sustainable livelihoods approach.. In particular, we call on all actors, both public and private, to listen carefully to the youth and to provide them space in climate emergency issues as they will be the ones to live through the coming climate challenges.

