



April 2026

**Submission by the United Nations Development Programme to the UNFCCC COP-30 Presidency invitation to submit contributions to the “Roadmap for Halting and Reversing Deforestation and Forest Degradation by 2030”.**

**Background**

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) welcomes the opportunity to provide its views on the Roadmap and notes that it also aligns with the submissions from the UN-REDD Programme and the Collaborative Partnership on Forests.

1. Despite progress in some countries, global deforestation rates remain high, and trends have not significantly changed. Global forest loss has reached more than 8 million ha in 2024 alone resulting in the world being off track from the global goal of halting deforestation and forest degradation by 2030<sup>1</sup>.
2. Around 85% of global deforestation is directly caused by forestland conversion for soy, palm oil, cattle pasture, and other commodities, while consumption patterns exacerbate indirect deforestation via imported commodities.
3. The Global Stocktake (GST) decision taken at COP28 reinforced the critical role of REDD+ finance by noting the need for enhanced support and investment for the efforts to halt and reverse deforestation and forest degradation by 2030, in accordance with Article 5 of the Paris Agreement, and specifically referring to results-based payments (RBPs) for REDD+. As the Secretary General has affirmed, there is no path to limiting global warming to 1.5°C by the end of the century without tropical forests<sup>2</sup>. The Roadmap for Halting and Reversing Deforestation and Forest Degradation by 2030 now presents a concrete and strategic opportunity to implement the findings from the first GST, building on and seeking synergies across existing programmes and platforms with related mandates.

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<sup>1</sup> FAO's FRA and Forest Declaration Assessment, 2025

<sup>2</sup> <https://press.un.org/en/2025/sgsm22900.doc.htm>

4. UNDP has supported tropical forest countries' efforts to halt and reverse deforestation through REDD+ readiness and implementation for the past 15 years, including analysing drivers of deforestation and forest degradation, designing policies and measures to address them, and channeling finance for implementation and REDD+ results-based payments.
5. UNDP further emphasizes the growing role of high-integrity carbon markets, including Article 6 of the Paris Agreement and voluntary carbon markets, as complementary instruments to REDD+ results-based payments. In particular, jurisdictional REDD+ (J-REDD) approaches provide a pathway to scale finance while ensuring environmental integrity, alignment with national accounting, and consistency in the implementation of social and environmental safeguards.
6. UNDP is a core partner of the UN-REDD Programme Partnership - the UN's flagship forest and climate programme. Since 2008, UN-REDD has supported forest countries, leveraging the unique strengths of FAO, UNDP, and UNEP, to support transformative forest-based climate action worldwide.
7. UN-REDD's updated [2026-2030 Strategy](#), developed through a highly inclusive and consultative process, builds on the experience, trust and traction that the Programme has gained at country, regional and global levels over the past 15 years. The 2026-2030 Strategy sets out the collective vision for the UN-REDD Programme to contribute to achieving the global goal of halting and reversing deforestation and forest degradation by 2030, in full alignment with the preparation of the Presidency Roadmap, and the submissions of FAO, UNDP and UNEP. As such, UN-REDD and its 2026-2030 Strategy provide a platform to support ambitious and concerted implementation of the Roadmap for Halting and Reversing Deforestation and Forest Degradation by 2030.
8. According to the recent [UNDP analysis](#) of the NDCs submitted in 2025, forests and land use sector have a prominent role in the latest generation of national climate pledges as a critical sector for both mitigation and adaptation ambition. 96 percent of new NDCs include a reference to forests and land use, nearly 90 percent comprehensively include a role for forests under both mitigation and adaptation and 71 percent include a quantified target related to the land use, land-use change and forestry (LULUCF) sector; 45 percent of new NDCs from developing countries have a direct reference to REDD+ in the context of NDC implementation. The leading role of Indigenous Peoples (IPs) and local communities (LCs) in forest conservation and restoration for enhancing resilient livelihoods is widely recognized: 72 percent of new NDCs include specific LULUCF or forest-related measures that involve IPs and LCs as key actors.
9. In response to the inclusion of forest and land use sector as a priority in a majority of NDCs, UNDP is also leveraging its support to countries on NDC implementation to address these priorities through its Climate Promise. Having supported 90% of developing countries to prepare and/or implement their NDC over the past decade, the Climate Promise is now bringing together the entire UN System, at the request of the Secretary General to support NDC delivery. It offers a valuable platform and support offer to countries, including delivery of its forest and land use-related targets under the latest round of NDCs.

Drawing from UNDP's experience, particularly through the UN-REDD Programme, we present below responses to the specific questions:

***(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?***

Based on our expertise, including from lessons learned under the GCF REDD+ RBP window, and as communicated in [UNDP's submission on Enabling Forest Mitigation Solutions](#) in response to the MIT/MTUN/IGO/MWP/ Global Dialogue call for submissions by the UNFCCC Secretariat as of **4 April 2025** for the Fifth global dialogue and investment-focused event under the Sharm el-Sheikh mitigation ambition and implementation work programme, the main barriers fall into five systemic categories:

**1. Perverse economic incentives driving deforestation**

- Agricultural subsidies outweigh forest-positive finance by >200:1, rendering forest-safe production economically uncompetitive<sup>3</sup>
- Higher profitability of land-uses linked to deforestation: Revenues from alternative land uses (agriculture, extractives, speculation) are often far larger than REDD+ and other forest financial incentives, limiting uptake of forest-friendly practices.
- Sustainable supply-chain commitments are still the exception, and monitoring remains unreliable.
- Companies lack strong enforcement mechanisms to ensure deforestation-free imports of soy, beef, palm oil, and other commodities.

**2. Weak and uneven governance systems**

- Deforestation is driven by deeply embedded land-use systems; short project cycles cannot achieve paradigm shift timelines.
- Many actions are policy-focused (tenure, land-use regulation, governance reform) whose mitigation impact is hard to measure and that occurs on long timelines.
- Several countries are scaling back environmental ambition, with insufficient integration of 2030 forest targets into national plans.
- Global agreements (the Paris Agreement, the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework) are not being translated quickly or strongly enough into aligned actionable national measures.
- Governance barriers such as limited access to justice, corruption, and weak enforcement continue to undermine protection.
- Structural power imbalances prevent equitable participation and effective decision-making.

**3. Insufficient, unpredictable and misaligned finance**

- Countries stress the need for predictable long-term finance to ensure permanence of emission reductions.
- Without coherent national economic strategies, isolated REDD+ investments cannot counteract national and international market forces.

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<sup>3</sup> Forest Declaration Assessment. (2025). *Forest Declaration Assessment 2025*. Forest Declaration Assessment. <https://forestdeclaration.org/resources/forest-declaration-assessment-2025>

- Only 3% of the REDD+ results reported to the UNFCCC have received RBPs, and the level of payment (USD \$5/t) is reported as insufficient to support action at scale relative to competing land-use incentives.
- GCF RBPs alone cannot shift land-use systems; countries must assemble financing from multiple sources and align policies across agriculture, land-use, trade, and climate.
- J-REDD represents an opportunity for jurisdictions that achieve high-integrity REDD+ results to receive public results-based finance or direct foreign investment from private capital.
- National and subnational governments have made significant investments in implementing J-REDD and getting their REDD+ results certified by high-integrity carbon markets standards without seeing the finance for these credits after sometimes a full political cycle. Keeping the high-level political commitments is challenging given other economic pressures.
- While progress has been made in operationalizing jurisdictional REDD+ standards (e.g., ART-TREES), challenges remain in scaling demand and ensuring alignment between jurisdictional crediting and national accounting under the UNFCCC.
- Limited price signals and demand uncertainty in carbon markets, particularly for REDD+ credits, reduce investor confidence. Current prices often do not reflect the true cost of mitigation or the opportunity cost of avoided deforestation.<sup>4</sup>

#### 4. Social and political barriers

- Indigenous Peoples (IPs) safeguard around 35% of the world's forests yet receive only 14% of the public forest finance, with even a smaller fraction of it (around 2%, depending on the source) directly going to IPs and local communities (LCs) led initiatives.
- While RBPs have helped strengthen safeguards, countries still face challenges applying Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC), managing grievance mechanisms, and ensuring equitable benefit-sharing approaches.
- Local stakeholders require long-term, predictable support to maintain participation and safeguard compliance.

#### 5. Climatic and ecological pressures

- These include anthropogenic fires, wildfires, extreme droughts, and other climate-related stress events reducing forest resilience. For example, Amazon fires releasing 791 Mt CO<sub>2</sub>e, significantly worsen degradation and undermine recovery potential.

***(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?***

1. Scaling up sustainable supply chain commitments and enforcement, monitoring the implementation of these commitments Lever to address governance challenges, including but not limited to:
  - Cross-sectoral coordination, particularly among forestry, agriculture and finance line ministries, and moving beyond the traditional view of forests solely as timber resources, by recognizing forests' multiple economic functions, including sustaining rural livelihoods, securing water resources, and regulating climate and biodiversity.

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<sup>4</sup> World Bank, 2023; IPCC AR6

- Coherent policy, legal, and institutional frameworks to address deforestation, combined with robust forest monitoring systems, spatial data, and safeguards, enable governments to make these values visible and actionable in land use, fiscal, and investment decisions.
- Clear regulatory frameworks and transparent traceability systems further reinforce this valuation by reducing risk, strengthening market confidence, and ensuring that commodities entering domestic and international markets are deforestation free.
- Consolidating land tenure rights, establishing robust benefit sharing arrangements and providing direct finance to Indigenous Peoples and local communities.

2. Accelerated access to REDD+ finance, including REDD+ results-based payments, high-integrity carbon markets and complementary finance streams.

- UNDP encourages accelerating the process for FP submission and approvals through the GCF.
- To unlock high-integrity carbon market finance for NDC implementation and SDGs, and increase the supply of high-quality carbon credits on a global scale:
  - It is critical to ensure that all parties are equally informed and capacitated to strategically engage.
  - SDG impacts and social and environmental safeguards should be at the core of carbon programme design and implementation.
  - Carbon market investments and benefits should remain in the host countries.
  - UNDP is supporting governments to establish enabling policy, regulatory and legal frameworks and institutional capacities for sustainable implementation of high-integrity carbon crediting programmes.
  - Incorporating the high-integrity guardrails into host countries' decision-making and practices, ensuring their inclusion across all carbon crediting programmes, at project, sectoral and jurisdictional levels, is key.
- Establish clear national frameworks for carbon rights, benefit sharing, and authorization procedures to enable participation in international carbon markets.
  - Promote jurisdictional approaches (J-REDD) to reduce leakage, ensure scale, and align with national accounting systems.
  - Enhance transparency and trust through robust MRV systems, digital infrastructure, and alignment with international standards (e.g., ART-TREES, Verra JNR, UNFCCC guidance).
  - UN-REDD, J-REDD Coalition – make use of existing processes and partnerships and build from these.
  - Blended finance approaches combining public RBPs and private carbon finance are more effective than standalone mechanisms (World Bank, State and Trends of Carbon Pricing, 2024).
- Complementary to REDD+ finance and carbon markets, the Tropical Forest Forever Facility (TFFF) brings a blended finance solution to provide long-term, reliable financing stream at scale for forest conservation. TFFF complements these other mechanisms in several ways in that it:
  - is a long-term (forever), predictable, funding that could exceed ODA budgets by several times in large forest countries;

- is led by the Global South, with tropical forest country needs, systems, and national sovereignty at its core;
  - recognises and pays the full ecosystem services forests provide (including climate regulation, carbon, water, biodiversity);
  - rewards forest conservation;
  - recognises the role of forest stewards, with 20% minimum direct allocation to IPs & LCs.
- UNDP is supporting tropical forest countries to meet the eligibility criteria to receive their first TFFF payment, as well as build the financial and governance frameworks for countries to remain in TFFF and continue receiving payments.

3. Long-term, predictable, direct finance to IP and LC led initiatives: UNDP highlights that directing climate finance straight to Indigenous and local actors strengthens their autonomy and ensures that solutions are designed and implemented in ways that reflect local priorities, cultural values, and traditional knowledge. These factors significantly enhance climate resilience and long-term forest-positive outcomes. Predictable, sustained funding also supports the creation of long-term, trust-based partnerships that respect the rights of Indigenous Peoples, including their right to self-determination and FPIC. Through its engagement in global events like the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, UNDP has amplified Indigenous leaders' central message that without direct access to finance, Indigenous Peoples cannot participate meaningfully in climate action or secure equitable benefit-sharing. Ensuring direct funding streams is therefore a foundational requirement for expanding Indigenous-led climate solutions that safeguard forests, strengthen livelihoods, and enhance biodiversity. UNDP also recognises the importance of advancing trust-based partnerships between Indigenous Peoples and local communities and the private sector, and has developed a platform, Forest Guardians Connect, to advance this objective.

4. Strengthening early warning systems and community-based forest-firefighting brigades to improve preparedness, response, management and recovery of forest fires and other extreme climate events. UNDP has supported the use of REDD+ finance to reinforce public finance for forest-fire management and prevention. For example, in Costa Rica a portion of the REDD+ RBP was allocated to enhance the national protected area system's voluntary forest fire brigades, with strong women's participation.

***(c) What country, regional or sector experiences, best practices, and lessons learned can be shared regarding forest conservation and restoration?***

Countries that have reduced emissions from deforestation and/or forest degradation, conserved forest carbon stocks, sustainably managed their forests, or enhanced forest carbon stocks through REDD+ implementation and have reported REDD+ results to the UNFCCC (via the [REDD+ information hub](#)), can be considered as a first group of countries that can provide valuable lessons and best practices to inform the Roadmap. These include Argentina, Belize, Brazil, Cambodia, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Gabon, Guyana, Honduras, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Mexico, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Suriname, Uganda, and Viet Nam.

In addition, emerging jurisdictional REDD+ programmes (e.g., Brazil, Guyana, Ghana, Costa Rica) demonstrate the importance of integrating REDD+ within broader land-use governance systems, aligning subnational implementation with national accounting frameworks, and leveraging both results-based payments and carbon market finance.

Under the Paris Agreement Enhanced Transparency Framework, countries may voluntarily submit REDD+ Reference Levels and REDD+ results as part of a Biennial Transparency Report (BTR) Technical Annex. In the first round of BTRs that had to be submitted by the end of 2024, eight countries – Bhutan, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Guyana, Indonesia, Panama and Papua New Guinea – submitted their first BTRs with Technical Annexes on REDD+ to report on results achieved from REDD+ result-based payments. Additionally, Bolivia as a country at the early stage of REDD readiness submitted - as a part of the BTR package - an Annex on REDD+ safeguards.

Lessons learned from channeling results-based payments from the GCF pilot window to several of the above-mentioned countries, have been presented by UNDP and FAO as accredited entities, and can be summarized as follows:

1. **Paradigm Shift:** Achieving a paradigm shift in land-use patterns requires time and a supportive policy and legal framework. Investments in REDD+ programmes focus on priority measures identified through comprehensive assessments run in the readiness process. Results are visible over time, beyond the lifespan of individual projects. Policymaking is crucial but hard to measure cumulatively.
2. **Need for Additional Finance:** Current REDD+ RBPs are insufficient to transform the sector and cover total REDD+ results. The true cost of reducing deforestation is high, and the value of \$5/t is seen as inadequate to motivate climate action. Only a small fraction of REDD+ results has received payments from the GCF.
3. **Catalytic Role of GCF RBPs:** Countries use various sources of finance to implement sustainable land-use interventions under a systemic approach. GCF RBPs play a catalytic role in leveraging additional resources and supporting systemic transformations, that can lead to further finance from carbon-markets. Developing countries acted on REDD+ with an expectation of support, highlighting the need for predictable finance.
4. **Unlocking Additional Climate Finance:** GCF RBPs have enabled actions that unlock further climate finance from other sources like the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility's Carbon Fund, carbon markets, bilateral programmes, public and private finance. The regular funding window can further enhance the transformational impact of the GCF Pilot Programme.
5. **Socially Inclusive and Gender Responsive Finance:** Innovative instruments like PES and green credit lines deliver finance to least represented local stakeholders, including IPs, women, and youth. Early engagement in the readiness phase ensures equitable and effective participation. Brazil's Floresta+ program integrates social inclusion and gender approaches through its “Communities” modality.
6. **Delivering Social Co-benefits:** Local climate finance yields additional benefits for forest communities, improving their wellbeing. These benefits are not systematically monitored or

reported but could be encouraged in future REDD+ implementations without increasing the burden on countries.

7. **Strengthening Safeguards:** GCF REDD+ RBPs projects fuelled applying social and environmental safeguards in large scale programs. The requirement for an Environmental and Social Assessment (ESA) led to a concrete methodology for assessing past actions/results. For most projects (e.g., Brazil, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Indonesia), the ESA focused on similar REDD+ actions targeted by RBPs, such as Action Plan for the Prevention and Control of Deforestation in the Legal Amazon (PPCDAm), PES, Socio Bosque, and Social Forestry. Identified gaps through the ESA were transformed into recommendations in the Environmental and Social Management Plans (ESMPs) for these projects.

### **Recommendations on the process for the Roadmap:**

1. **Principles:** The Roadmap should be based on transparent, inclusive, action-oriented, and science-based principles.
2. **Political leadership:** The Roadmap requires high-level political will to sustain the post COP-30 momentum. The process should remain country-driven and be led by a small group of leading countries (both developing and developed), similar to the approach used for the Roadmap to Transition Away from Fossil Fuels. This effort can be supported by existing coalitions and fora, including, but not limited to, the [Forests and Climate Leadership Partnership](#) and the [United Nations Forest Forum](#).
3. **Building up existing coalitions and commitments:** The Roadmap should provide a structured platform and a process to coalesce existing coalitions and galvanize implementation of existing commitments recognizing their lessons (both positive and negative), considering the following (non-exhaustive):

#### Coalitions and Partnerships

- Governments: [Forest Climate and Leaders Partnership](#)
- Multi-stakeholder (non-state): [Nature for Climate \(N4C\)](#), [Tropical Forest Alliance](#), [Forest Declaration Assessment](#)
- International Organisations and Institutions: [Collaborative Partnership on Forests](#), [UN-REDD Programme](#)
- Indigenous Peoples: [Global Alliance of Territorial Communities](#)

#### Commitments and Declarations

- [New York Declaration on Forests](#) (2014)
- [United Nations Strategic Plan for Forests 2017-2030](#) (2017)
- [Declaration of Belém-OTCA](#) (2023)
- [Glasgow Leaders Declaration on Forests and Land Use](#) (2024)
- [Intergovernmental Land Tenure Commitment](#) (2025)

4. Define key milestones to be agreed upon by COP-31: Consultations to build political momentum and for parties and international partners to provide input for the process could be held during the following events:
- UNFF 21<sup>st</sup> session (11-15 May 2026, New York)
  - UNFCCC REDD+ Summit (19-21 May, Nairobi)
  - UNFCCC SBSTA 64<sup>th</sup> Session (8-18 June, Bonn)
  - London Climate Action Week (20-28 June, London)
  - High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (6-15 July 2026, New York)
  - UNGA, New York Climate Week and UN SG Climate Summit (September 8-22, 2026, New York)
  - Convention of Biological Diversity COP 17 (19-30 October 2026, Yerevan, Armenia)

UNDP reaffirms its readiness to assist the COP-30 Presidency throughout the year by supporting consultations, distilling and compiling case-studies and best practices, and engaging tropical forest country champions throughout the process, as needed.