**Draft Declaration of the High-Level Segment of the 19th session of the United Nations Forum on Forests**

1. We, the [Heads of State and Government, Ministers, and other high-level representatives] responsible for forests, have gathered at the high-level segment of the nineteenth session of the United Nations Forum on Forests:
2. Reaffirming the United Nations Strategic Plan for Forests 2017–2030 as a global framework for action at all levels to sustainably manage all types of forests and trees outside forests, to halt deforestation and restore degraded forests and contribute to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and other international forest-related instruments, processes, commitments and goals,
3. Recognizing that forests cover 30 per cent of the Earth’s land area, or nearly 4 billion hectares, and are essential to human well-being, sustainable development and the health of the planet, and noting that an estimated 1.6 billion people, or 25 per cent of the global population, depend on forests for subsistence, livelihood, employment and income generation
4. Recognizing also the multiple values and contributions of forests and sustainable forest management to sustainable development in its three dimensions, as well as the myriad benefits provided by all types of forests and trees outside forests, their wood and non-wood products, their functions and services to the environment, health and wellbeing, and to socio-economic development, such as food security, poverty eradication, employment, clean water, sand and dust storm mitigation, energy provision, climate change mitigation and adaptation, biodiversity conservation and restoration and prevention of land degradation and floods, among others,
5. Expressing deep concerns about the continued trend in deforestation and forest degradation, as well as the mutually reinforcing negative impacts of climate change, desertification, biodiversity loss, pollution and waste, while acknowledging efforts of countries in addressing deforestation,
6. Expressing deep concerns regarding the persistent insufficient levels of financial resources to support the conservation, restoration and sustainable management of forest ecosystems, especially in developing countries, and stressing the urgent need to support developing countries, in particular by strengthening multilateral funding mechanisms,
7. Noting these trends, challenges and crises have strongly hindered sustainable development gains, and are further exacerbated by persistent levels of poverty, hunger, malnutrition, and socio-economic and gender inequalities, and have negatively impacted forests and other natural resources, as well as human health and wellbeing, particularly in developing countries and on forest-dependent communities, Indigenous Peoples, and people in vulnerable situations,
8. Welcoming the agreed outcomes of the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Paris Agreement[[1]](#footnote-2), the Convention on Biological Diversity, including the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification,
9. Emphasizing the continuous need to increase the visibility of the social, economic and environmental benefits of forests and sustainable forest management and place them as an important component of our responses to global challenges and crises, and in this regard, taking note with appreciation of recent forest-related declarations, pledges and developments, including but not limited to the forest-relevant contributions of the Glasgow Leaders’ Declaration on Forests and Land Use,
10. Recognizing also the demand for forest products and agricultural land is expected to increase, putting significant pressure on forests, and that meeting future demand offers an opportunity to enhance cross-sectoral collaboration and balance the three pillars of sustainable development along value chains to mitigate climate change and halt and reverse biodiversity loss,
11. Emphasizing also the need to further accelerate the efforts and increase political commitment to achieve the GFGs by 2030, while acknowledging the efforts and progress made by members of the Forum, its Secretariat, the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF) and its member organizations, partners, and major groups and other relevant stakeholders towards achieving the objectives of the International Arrangement on Forests (IAF), and the UN Strategic Plan for Forests (UNSPF) and its Global Forest Goals (GFGs).
12. We agree to take urgent and accelerated action to halt and reverse deforestation, forest loss, and land degradation. To this end, we will aim to:
13. Address the complex threats to forests, including but not limited to agricultural expansion, unsustainable forest harvesting, climate change, wildfires, pests, diseases, floods, droughts, sand and dust storms, and pollution,
14. Accelerate the implementation of the UNFI, the UNSPF, and the achievement of its GFGs, as the overarching framework to deliver on forest-related commitments, and to unlock the full potential of forests to contribute to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda and its SDGs,
15. Work collaboratively to protect, conserve, sustainably manage and restore forests and forest ecosystems in line with the Global Forest Goals (GFGs), and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, including through meaningful engagement with and supporting the contributions of partners and stakeholders including forest owners, Indigenous Peoples, local communities, local authorities, the private sector, non-governmental organizations, women, children, youth, and scientific, academic and philanthropic organizations at all levels,
16. Strengthen political engagement, cross-sectoral collaboration, cooperation, coordination, and coherenceor synergies, as appropriate, and reduce fragmentation at all levels on issues related to forests, by facilitating partnerships among stakeholders, in particular within and among CPF member organizations, and between UNFFS and other relevant DESA divisions,
17. Provide adequate means of implementation, especially for developing countries, raising awareness on the contribution of forests and sustainable forest management to social, economic and environmental aspects of sustainable development, and to the 2030 Agenda and its SDGs, and the three Rio Conventions, as well as promoting cooperative actions to achieve globally agreed forest related goals and targets,
18. Adopt an integrated approach to wildfire management that prevents, manages, and addresses the negative impacts of wildfires related disasters, including early-warning systems, while recognizing the benefits of fire ecology, including post-fire landscape restoration and recovery, through policy interventions and actions, harnessing science and technology and enhanced international and regional cooperation, as appropriate,
19. Effectively implement forest-related legislation, strengthen forest law enforcement as needed and promote good governance at all levels, as appropriate, to advance sustainable forest management, and ensure security of land tenure and user rights, in accordance with the national regulatory frameworks and national circumstances,
20. Improve forest monitoring, assessment, reporting and information systems, in particular with the aim to increase the availability of knowledge and data for scientific and edivence-based policy decisions and actions on forests, biodiversity and climate change and further strengthen the reporting systems of developing countries,
21. Call upon the international community to increase the provision of resources for forest-based actions and measures to address global challenges and halt and reverse deforestation, particularly for developing countries,
22. Promote investment, innovative financing mechanisms, scientific, technological, and capacity-building support, and make these support accessible and attractive to stakeholders involved in forest management and use, including forest owners, smallholders, Indigenous Peoples, local communities, women and youth,
23. Convey consistent messaging in different governing bodies of the CPF and its member organizations to promote achievement of the GFGs, and to advance implementation of national and international commitments to protect, restore , conserve, and sustainably manage forests globally,
24. Encourage Members of the Forum, in a position to do so, to provide increased voluntary contributions and resources to the UNFF Trust Fund to support activities of the Forum, the Secretariat and the Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network in accelerating achievement of the GFGs and enhancing the contribution of forests to the achievement of the SDGs of the 2030 agenda and encourage Members of the Forum to further announce and update Voluntary National Contributions (VNCs),
25. Facilitate policy dialogues at all levels on issues related to sustainable management of forests and trees outside forests, expand the exchange of good practices, including through ecosystem-based approaches where appropriate and/or nature-based solutions, and improve exchange of information and scientific knowledge, to promote sustainable forest management and sustainable wood use at all levels,
26. Protect and respect the traditional knowledge of indigenous peoples and local communities when implementing actions to promote the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of forest ecosystems.
27. Encourage Members of the Forum to make use of UNFF country-led initiatives (CLI ) in order to exchange experiences and develop new GFG-oriented solutions.
28. Invite the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development to recognize the need for accelerated implementation of the UNSPF to effectively contribute to the achievement of the SDGs and other forest-related international commitments, including the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework adopted under the Convention on Bilogical Diversity.

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1. Adopted under the UNFCCC in FCCC/CP/2015/10/Add.1, decision 1/CP.21. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)