

The Ministerial Katowice Declaration on Forests for the Climate

The Ministers / the Head of Delegations attending the twenty-fourth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP24) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), held in Katowice, Poland, from 2 to 14 December 2018,

Recalling that in order to achieve the long-term temperature goal, the Parties to the Paris Agreement aim to reach global peaking of greenhouse gas emissions as soon as possible, recognizing that peaking will take longer for developing country Parties, and to undertake rapid reductions thereafter in accordance with best available science, so as to achieve a balance between anthropogenic emissions by sources and removals by sinks of greenhouse gases in the second half of this century, on the basis of equity, and in the context of sustainable development and efforts to eradicate poverty,

Further recalling that Parties should take action to conserve and enhance, as appropriate, sinks and reservoirs of greenhouse gases, including forests and forest products as well as to strengthen cooperation in this respect,

Affirming that there is no future without addressing climate change, and forests are a key component to achieve the goals of the Paris Agreement, which will contribute to building a community with a shared future for humankind,

Welcoming the finding of the IPCC Special Report on the impacts of global warming of 1.5°C which reveals that all pathways that limit global warming to 1.5°C project the use of carbon dioxide removal (CDR) that is subject to multiple feasibility and sustainability constraints, while requiring rapid and far-reaching transitions in energy, land, urban and infrastructure and industrial systems that imply deep emissions reductions in all sectors, a wide portfolio of mitigation options and a significant upscaling of investment,

Acknowledging the important role of forests as sinks and reservoirs of greenhouse gases, in mitigating climate change, and simultaneously recognizing the need for reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, and forest conservation, sustainable management of forests, enhancement of forest carbon stocks, as well as alternative policy approaches, such as joint mitigation and adaptation approaches for the integral and sustainable management of forests, while addressing and respecting social and environmental safeguards and objectives,

Recognizing that climate change is affecting forests, under certain circumstances, as a result of natural disasters, leading to increased emissions, affecting the carbon storage capacity of forests and *underlining* the need to increase the capacity of forests to adapt to climate change,

Further recognizing that forests have a decisive role to play in the sequestration and storage of carbon in the soil, trees and other vegetation, and in providing goods, resources and materials with a smaller carbon footprint, such as harvested wood products,

Sharing the UN Strategic Plan for Forests' vision of a world in which all types of forests and trees outside forests are sustainably managed, contribute to sustainable development and provide economic, social, environmental and cultural benefits for present and future generations. Recognizing that multifunctional and sustainable forest management contributes to nature conservation, as well as constitutes a keystone in achieving a balance between anthropogenic emissions by sources and removals by sinks,

Emphasizing that healthy, biologically diverse, and resilient forests adapted to climate change have important benefits for species habitat and biodiversity, and ensure the continued provision of a wide range of ecosystem services that are essential to human health and well-being,

Further recognizing the role of indigenous peoples and local communities in conserving and sustainably managing forests for the benefit of present and future generations,

Building on milestone documents and processes such as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and its SDGs, the UNFCCC and related legal instruments, the Warsaw Framework for REDD+, the CBD and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, and the UN Strategic Plan for Forests, as well as other, global and regional initiatives regarding sustainable forest management, and *stressing* the importance of strengthening synergies at the national level in implementing UNFCCC, CBD, UNCCD, UNFF, where appropriate,

1. *Pledge* to accelerate our actions to ensure that the global contribution of forests and forest products is maintained and further supported and enhanced by 2050, in order to support the achievement of the long term goal of the Paris Agreement.
2. *Encourage* the scientific community to continue to explore and quantify the contribution of sinks, and reservoirs of greenhouse gases in managed lands, including forests, to achieving a balance between anthropogenic emissions by sources and removals by sinks of greenhouse gases in the second half of this century, as well as to explore ways to increase this contribution and welcome the work done up to now.
3. *Encourage* non-party stakeholders including cities, regions, businesses and investors, to continue to display their ambition and commitments in their forestry related climate actions through the Marrakech Partnership for Global Climate Action and the NAZCA Platform.