

***REPORT***

**Montevideo,  
Uruguay,  
02 - 06 September,  
2019**

# **Latin American and Caribbean Forestry Commission**

**Thirty-first Session**



**Food and  
Agriculture  
Organization  
of the United  
Nations**



## Previous sessions of the commission

1 <sup>st</sup> Session	Río de Janeiro, Brazil	23 May 1949
2 <sup>nd</sup> Session	Lima, Peru	14 November 1949
3 <sup>rd</sup> Session	Santiago, Chile	11 December 1950
4 <sup>th</sup> Session	Buenos Aires, Argentina	16-23 June 1952
5 <sup>th</sup> Session	Caracas, Venezuela	4-15 October 1955
6 <sup>th</sup> Session	Antigua, Guatemala	4-15 November 1958
7 <sup>th</sup> Session	Mexico City, Mexico	3-6 August 1960
8 <sup>th</sup> Session	Santiago, Chile	13-19 November 1962
9 <sup>th</sup> Session	Curitiba, Brazil	5-12 November 1964
10 <sup>th</sup> Session	Port-of-Spain, Trinidad and Tobago	4-9 December 1967
11 <sup>th</sup> Session	Quito, Ecuador	11-21 November 1970
12 <sup>th</sup> Session	Havana, Cuba	2-7 February 1976
13 <sup>th</sup> Session	Pátzcuaro, Michoacán, Mexico	18-22 February 1980
14 <sup>th</sup> Session	Lima, Peru	15-18 November 1982
15 <sup>th</sup> Session	San José, Costa Rica	6-10 October 1986
16 <sup>th</sup> Session	Kingston, Jamaica	18-22 April 1988
17 <sup>th</sup> Session	Ciudad Guayana, Venezuela	18-22 February 1991
18 <sup>th</sup> Session	Maldonado, Uruguay	6-10 December 1993
19 <sup>th</sup> Session	Ciudad de Panama, Panama	17-21 June 1996
20 <sup>th</sup> Session	Havana, Cuba	10-14 September 1998
21 <sup>st</sup> Session	Santa Fe de Bogota, Colombia	4-8 September 2000
22 <sup>nd</sup> Session	Buenos Aires, Argentina	7-11 October 2002
23 <sup>rd</sup> Session	San José, Costa Rica	18-22 October 2004
24 <sup>th</sup> Session	Santo Domingo, Dominican Rep.	26-30 June 2006
25 <sup>th</sup> Session	Quito, Ecuador	29 September-3 October 2008
26 <sup>th</sup> Session	Guatemala City, Guatemala	24-28 May 2010
27 <sup>th</sup> Session	Asunción, Paraguay	5-9 March 2012
28 <sup>th</sup> Session	Georgetown, Guyana	9-13 September 2013
29 <sup>th</sup> Session	Lima, Peru	9-13 November 2015
30 <sup>th</sup> Session	Tegucigalpa, Honduras	25-29 September 2017



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of the

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Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations



## Contents

Summary of recommendations and requests	Page iv
	Paragraph(s):
Opening of the Session .....	1 - 5
Adoption of the agenda .....	6
Election of officers .....	7 - 8
State of forestry in the Latin American and Caribbean region .....	9 - 25
FAO report on follow-up activities to the recommendations and requests of the 30 <sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission .....	26 - 27
Priority themes for the 36th Session of the Regional Conference (Nicaragua, 2020) .....	28 - 30
Global items of relevance for the region .....	31 - 48
In-session seminars .....	49 - 83
Activities of the Commission's subregional groups .....	84 - 96
Information on regional forest meetings .....	97 - 99
Other matters .....	100 - 101
Place and date of the next Session of the Commission .....	102
Adoption of the report and closing of the Session .....	103 - 104
<i>Appendix A - Agenda</i> .....	Page 24
<i>Appendix B - List of Participants</i> .....	Page 25
<i>Appendix C - List of Documents</i> .....	Page 33
<i>Appendix D - Official statement by the Executive Secretariat of the Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization (SP/ACTO)</i>	Page 34
<i>Appendix E - Consolidated recommendations of the subregional groups to COFO, Regional Conference and FAO's program for the period 2020-2021</i> .....	Page 35

## Summary of recommendations and requests

1. Delegates *recognized* the achievement of Uruguay with regard to the certification of forest plantations. They *highlighted* the need to reduce timber production costs, which derived from transport. In addition, they *stressed* the need to resolve conflicts associated with forest plantations and civil society. They *noted* the importance of highlighting the contribution of forests to other productive systems, such as agricultural and ranching operations, which could result in increased livestock, agrosilvopastoral production and generate opportunities for the diversification of income. (Paragraph 25)
2. Delegates *recognized* the importance of work on agro-environmental policies, the contribution by FAO to the design of Global Environment Facility (GEF) and Green Climate Fund projects and capacity-building in the implementation of Agenda 2030. Referring to sustainable production, the delegate of Uruguay reported on the Agroecology Act recently adopted in his country. (Paragraph 27)
3. Delegates *requested* that FAO systematize successful experiences relating to the forest sector, to be presented during the Regional Conference, to ensure policy attention to that sector. They *recommended* that FAO update the Sustainable Forest Management Toolkit and make it more accessible and better adapted to the new international context. (Paragraph 29)
4. Delegates *recognized* the relevance for sustainable forest management of the initiative mounted by FAO through the Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS) programme, and FAO initiatives that highlighted the contribution of forest on food security, water management, and soils conservation. (Paragraph 30)
5. Delegates *affirmed* their commitment to the preparation of the second State of Forest Genetic Resources Report and *expressed* their interest in supporting FAO in that undertaking. In addition, they noted that some countries had submitted comments on the FAO strategy on mainstreaming biodiversity issues in agriculture, livestock, forestry, fisheries and aquaculture. Delegates *requested* FAO to facilitate the provision of information, technical assistance and access to financial mechanisms for the preparation of national reports on forest genetic resources. Observers offered their assistance in the development of the report. The Commission *recommended* the use of indicators from the SDGs and the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) to monitor the implementation of the FAO Biodiversity Strategy. (Paragraph 35)
6. The Commission *recognized* the importance of working on an intersectoral basis and with universities, the private sector and civil society, with a view to incorporating biodiversity criteria into production systems. It *recognized* the importance of biological corridors as a mechanism for landscape restoration and conservation of biodiversity. (Paragraph 36)
7. Delegates *recognized* the benefits of voluntary reporting on the SDGs as a means of highlighting the contribution of forests to the 2030 Agenda, also including national targets under international conventions. They *recommended* that countries follow that approach. (Paragraph 42)
8. The Commission *took note* of the recent development of the international agenda and *recognized* the importance of including forestry in NDCs, including targets in specified years. It *stressed* the need for inter-agency coordination mechanisms for collaboration among the agencies in accordance with their respective mandates. (Paragraph 44)
9. Delegates *took note* of the expansion of the International Poplar Commission to include additional fast -growing species and encouraged countries in the region to consider joining that Commission. (Paragraph 45)

10. Drawing attention to the declaration of the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration, the Commission *recommended* that FAO facilitate access to existing guidelines for the restoration of forest landscapes with due consideration for their environmental and production properties, including other important conservation areas. (Paragraph 46)
11. Delegates *recognized* the need to bring young people on board as disseminators and agents of change in areas related to the environment, biodiversity and sustainable forest management. (Paragraph 47)
12. Delegates *urged* countries to nominate representatives with decision-making powers to international dialogues and negotiations. (Paragraph 48)
13. In relation to the COP 25, the delegate of Chile *requested* FAO to facilitate arrangements for the virtual participation of countries, thereby heightening the visibility and broadening the scope of that high-level meeting, and to make a call for joint action by countries. (Paragraph 51)
14. The Commission *reaffirmed* the importance of the forest sector and its contribution to mitigating the greenhouse gas emissions generated by other sectors. It highlighted the importance of recognition by countries of the contribution made by forests to the provision of environmental services, beyond national borders. (Paragraph 52)
15. The Commission *called on* countries to be more ambitious in their NDC targets and to highlight the importance of forest plantations and woodland in achieving those targets. Delegates *highlighted* the need for coordination mechanisms to update NDCs, given the complexity of the process, which involved a number of organizations and were difficult to monitor. Delegates *encouraged* FAO to support national capacity-building in that regard. (Paragraph 53)
16. Delegates *recognized* the contribution made by FAO to the design and implementation of countries' national adaptation plans, including reforestation actions, training and REDD+ monitoring. In addition, they *highlighted* the importance of the use of FAO methodology in the elaboration of national inventories, integrating soil, water and forest management. (Paragraph 54)
17. Delegates *reported* on different mechanisms that they had used for climate change mitigation and adaptation, including training programmes in the use of inventories and satellite imagery for forest monitoring. Acknowledgement was expressed for the support provided by FAO in the GEF Capacity-Building Transparency Initiative (CBTI). (Paragraph 55)
18. The Commission *recommended* that developed countries members of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change should be encouraged to increase their financial contributions so that developing countries could meet their commitments in the campaign to combat climate change. (Paragraph 56)
19. Delegates *commended* FAO on its cooperation in the formulation and presentation of Green Climate Fund projects, using an integrated approach and facilitating intersectoral dialogue and thus expanded climate change mitigation and adaptation actions, including forest landscape restoration actions. (Paragraph 60)
20. Delegates *recommended* that FAO undertake the compilation of practices, systematization of success stories, manuals, techniques, mechanisms and policies relating to restoration, which could be shared across the region. They *highlighted* the importance of recognizing forms of landscape restoration that could include grasslands, conservation forests, productive forests and other forms. Mexico offered to share guidelines, methods and experiences on soil and forest landscape restoration practices developed in that country. (Paragraph 61)

21. Delegates of Small Islands Developing States *highlighted* the benefits and potential value offered by mangroves and wetlands in the provision of ecosystem services, in income generation through honey production, and in the provision of natural and traditional medicines. Delegates *encouraged* FAO to prepare guidelines for the development of restoration and management plans for mangrove and wetland forests and to facilitate international cooperation in dealing with that issue, promoting linkages between the forest sector, fisheries and aquaculture. (Paragraph 64)

22. Drawing attention to the fires affecting Africa and the Amazon, the Chair of LACFC highlighted the importance of promoting measures to prevent forest fires. In that context, Chile called on the member countries of the Commission to use available technologies and work on fire prevention to avert the loss of and damage to forest resources, the environment, infrastructure and people, and offered its collaboration and exchange of experience in that area. (Paragraph 68)

23. The Commission *stressed* the importance of incorporating fire prevention, management, control, firefighting and restoration actions into forest policies in the region, with the aim of promoting the integrated management of fires. The Commission *recommended* the revitalization of previous initiatives and regional strategies associated with forest fires and forest health, their updating and implementation in the new context of climate change, land tenure issues and conflicts relating to land-use change. Members also *highlighted* the importance of intersectoral coordination between the agriculture and forests sectors, with the aim of preventing the spread of forest fires. (Paragraph 69)

24. The Commission *requested* that FAO provide technical assistance for the development of early warning and rapid response systems, assist in the early detection of forest fire outbreaks and support countries in identifying appropriate financial mechanisms to implement those systems. Delegates from Mesoamerica *recognized* the importance of the local disaster risk management platform, in particular for transboundary pest management. (Paragraph 70)

25. The Commission *requested* FAO to develop arrangements for South-South cooperation in the prevention, control and combating of forest fires and to revise intervention protocols that would make it possible to launch coordinated action and ensure effective collaboration. (Paragraph 71)

26. The Commission, through Brazil, *requested* FAO to conduct a technical study on fires in the Amazon and to conduct a dialogue among the countries of that biome, with a view to reviewing and agreeing on proposals and coordinated actions for integrated fire management, conservation and sustainable forest management in that region. (Paragraph 72)

27. Delegates *requested* FAO to support programmes aimed at using the community forestry approach as a means of fostering sustainable forest management and the conservation of biodiversity, promoting food and nutritional security and reducing migration. (Paragraph 76)

28. Delegates *stressed* the importance of community forest management and of including such forestry products in the production chain and markets. They also highlighted the need to yoke together aspects of production and responsible consumption. (Paragraph 77)

29. Delegates *stressed* the importance of including biodiversity criteria in forest monitoring and inventory systems, that would make it possible to assess the state of biodiversity and the contribution that it made to the generation of ecosystem services. They *highlighted* the importance of improving forest monitoring tools in order to comply with international commitments in that domain, in view of the difficulty encountered in obtaining those data. (Paragraph 78)

30. The Commission *highlighted* the importance of bioeconomy as a tool to promote sustainable forest management. They *expressed* their belief that bioeconomy could contribute to the transformation, mechanization and diversification of timber and non-timber forest products. In addition, delegates *highlighted* the importance of that trend for efforts to make optimum use of native forests, and for the development of non-conventional forest products, such as native fruits, oils, integrated forest silvopastoralism, and tourism. (Paragraph 82)

31. Delegates *encouraged* FAO to deepen its assessment of bioeconomy in pursuit of the goals of the 2030 Agenda, promote sustainable practices for the production and use of forest and non-timber forest products and explore ways of promoting such practices in other countries. (Paragraph 83)

32. The Commission *urged* FAO member States to provide financial support to the fifteenth World Forestry Congress, in particular for the participation of developing countries. (Paragraph 84)

33. The Commission *recommended* that COFO undertake a discussion, during the plenary, of guidelines to promote urban forests and urban woodland, taking into consideration such aspects as urban development and infrastructure, reforestation, forest management, forestry awareness-raising and the systematization of good practices. (Paragraph 87)

34. On the issue related to the climate change agenda, the Commission *recommended* that COFO (Paragraph 88):

- Reconcile and harmonize environmental agendas and forest agendas where stakeholders, funding and targets were concerned, and ensure the inclusion of the role of forests in climate change mitigation and adaptation, which were fundamental to compliance with article 6 of the Paris Agreement;
- Lead discussions on the reduction in emissions from the forest sector and their contribution to the targets set out in the Paris Agreement, in particular in respect of the international system of transactions and accounting under article 6 that could be related to the sector.

35. The Commission *recommended* that COFO discuss the opportunity presented by the circular economy and bioeconomy for the fostering of sustainable forest management, including such aspects as the marketing of non-traditional forest products, technology, innovation, value chains and origin marking. (Paragraph 89)

36. The Commission *recommended* that COFO provide dialogue mechanisms in that forum related to SDG 12 on sustainable consumption and production to strengthen the legal trade in forest products and subproducts, including the process of wood traceability. (Paragraph 90)

37. The Commission *recommended* that COFO provide spaces for dialogue in that forum for the consideration of guidelines related to the contribution of indigenous peoples, the inclusion of issues of gender equality, youth, peace and human well-being. (Paragraph 91)

38. The Commission *recommended* that COFO accord special attention to coastal forests, including mangroves, for their importance in resilience to extreme climate change events, in particular for the islands of the Caribbean. (Paragraph 92)

39. The Commission *recommended* that the Regional Conference present success experiences of the forest sector and highlight the importance of forests for the reduction of social and environmental conflicts including those around human migration, land tenure, food and nutritional security, income generation and well-being. (Paragraph 93)

40. The Commission *recommended* that the Regional Conference consider the contribution of the forest sector to the implementation of NDCs. (Paragraph 94)
41. Delegates *recommended* that FAO (Paragraph 95):
- Facilitate discussions on the updating of NDCs and the shortfall between increased targets and the necessary funding;
  - Provide technical assistance for the formulation of carbon estimates and mobilize resources to accelerate the implementation of NDCs;
  - Develop evidence-based materials on the contribution of forests to climate change adaptation and mitigation;
  - Revitalize regional networks related to fire, health and invasive alien species in the forest sector and strengthen the forest monitoring and inventory network;
  - Support countries in gaining access to financial resources for restoration, reforestation and afforestation programmes and collection and production of forest genetic material of quality, in addition to the preparation of guidelines for the diversification of species of potential use in those programmes;
  - Develop guidelines on and the exchange of experience in environmental and productive restoration techniques;
  - Promote capacity-building for inventory and monitoring of forest plantations and native forests and facilitate the follow-up of national REDD+ initiatives;
  - Resume programmes associated with trees, farms, agroforestry and social forestry for the generation of income opportunities for communities, the provision of ecosystem, water and soil services, and mitigation and adaptation of the effects of climate change and natural disasters;
  - Systematize and disseminate relevant regional experience related to sustainable forest management and the formulation of forest and environmental policies;
  - Facilitate exchanges of knowledge in urban forestry, green areas and tree planting.
42. The Commission requested FAO to *facilitate* South-South cooperation mechanisms on such issues as forest fires, green taxes, and the monitoring and inventory of forests. (Paragraph 96)
43. The Commission, through Mexico, *recommended* that FAO coordinate actions between the North American Forest Commission (NAFC) and LACFC, taking advantage of the technical groups under that Commission to strengthen collaborative links, in particular in the areas of fires and forest health. (Paragraph 100)
44. The delegate of Jamaica *expressed* that country's interest in hosting the next meeting of the Commission, tentatively scheduled for September 2021. (Paragraph 102)
45. The Commission *adopted* the report by consensus. (Paragraph 103)

## Opening of the Session (item 1)

1. The Latin American and Caribbean Forestry Commission (LACFC) of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) held its thirty-first session from 2 to 6 September 2019 in Montevideo, at the kind invitation of the Government of the Eastern Republic of Uruguay. The session was attended by delegates of 15 member countries and of 10 organizations, including four agencies of the United Nations system, and six international, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations attending as observers. The agenda of the meeting may be found in Appendix A, the list of participants in Appendix B, and the list of documents submitted for consideration by the Commission in Appendix C.

2. The opening of the meeting was held in the presence of Mr. Alberto Castelar, Deputy Secretary of the Ministry of Livestock, Agriculture and Fisheries of Uruguay, Ms. Mette Løyche Wilkie, Director of the Forest Policy and Resources Division of the FAO Forestry Department, Mario Antonio Martínez, Minister-Director of the National Conservation and Forest Development, Protected Areas and Wildlife Institute of Honduras and Chair of LACFC, and Mr. Pedro Soust, Director of the Forestry Directorate-General, Ministry of Livestock, Agriculture and Fisheries of Uruguay.

3. Mr. Soust welcomed the participants to the thirty-first session of LACFC on behalf of the Uruguayan Forestry Directorate-General, and thanked FAO for accepting the offer of Uruguay to host the meeting. Mr. Martínez, speaking in his capacity as Chair of LACFC, reviewed shared challenges, such as climate change, deforestation and migration, faced by many countries in the region. He highlighted the importance of community empowerment for the development of tourism, and of the management of forests and protected areas for the provision of ecosystem services, such as water, and for the well-being of the population.

4. Ms. Wilkie greeted the participants on behalf of the FAO Director of Forestry, Mr. Hiroto Mitsugi, and thanked the Government of the Eastern Republic of Uruguay for its generosity in offering to host the session and for its hard work in organizing the event. Drawing attention to the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development and the commitments made by the international community to eradicate hunger, tackle climate change, and achieve inclusive growth and the sustainable management of natural resources, she stressed the importance of forests in achieving the goals of that Agenda, since they provided healthy and nutritious food, contributed to maintaining the livelihoods of rural communities and generating opportunities for decent employment, provided ecosystem services and ensured the conservation and use of biodiversity, which were key to adaptation and the mitigation of climate change. She further drew attention to the challenge of meeting food demand without increasing the rates of deforestation and, in that context, recalled the recent forest fires in the Amazon and Africa, which represented the final stage in the conversion of land for agriculture. She also noted the devastating effects that they had on the environment, human health and local livelihoods, and drew attention to the support that FAO could provide to countries in fire control and management, and also in the prevention of forest fires in the current context of climate change, drought and water scarcity.

5. Mr. Castelar took the floor to acknowledge the honour bestowed on him to be inaugurating the thirty-first session of LACFC. He noted the worldwide recognition accorded to Uruguay for its national public land management policy, its role as a food exporter and its contribution to international food security. He highlighted the role of public policy in addressing the environmental, social and economic challenges of forest management under the stresses of climate change. He highlighted the example of Uruguay, which demonstrated that policies and investments in afforestation and reforestation could be reconciled with other types of land use.

## **Adoption of the agenda (item 2)**

6. The agenda was adopted without amendment.

## **Election of officers (item 3)**

7. In accordance with the provisions of articles II-1 and II-5 of its rules of procedure, the Commission elected a chair, three vice-chairs and a rapporteur. The following members of the Commission were elected unanimously:

Chair: Mr. Pedro Soust (Uruguay)

Vice-Chairs: Ms. Marilyn Headley (Jamaica), Caribbean subregional group  
Mr. Edwin Oliva (Guatemala), Mesoamerican subregional group  
Mr. Pedro Soust (Uruguay), Southern Cone and Amazonian subregional group

Rapporteur: Mr. Edwin Oliva (Guatemala)

8. Ms. Hivy Ortiz Chour, Forestry Officer of the FAO Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean, served as Secretary.

## **State of forestry in the Latin American and Caribbean region (item 4)**

9. The Secretariat of LACFC presented document FO:LACFC/2019/2, entitled “The state of the forest sector and pathways to sustainable forest development in the region”. The document summarized, from a regional standpoint and drawing on other relevant references, the latest edition of *The State of the World's Forests* (SOFO 2018), which provided new information on the interlinkages between the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

10. In relation to SDG 1, on livelihoods, and SDG 2, on food security, the document noted that, in Latin America, the vast majority (82 per cent) of the extreme rural poor lived in or around forest and savannah areas.

11. Non-wood forest products (NWFPs) provided food, income and nutritional diversity for an estimated one in five people around the world, notably women, children and others in vulnerable situations; however, there was a lack of comparable data on edible NWFPs in terms of their nutritional value and their role as safety nets to increase resilience when other food was scarce.

12. The document highlighted the importance of agroforestry, since trees outside forests – including trees on farms – could serve as crucial safety nets and complement agricultural activity by diversifying production and providing ecosystem services.

13. Regarding SDG 5, on gender equality and the empowerment of women, the document observed that many women were actively involved in forestry activities such as gathering firewood, medicinal plants and other NWFPs, and also in gathering food for household consumption. Moreover, women had developed extensive local knowledge about forest biodiversity that could offer them an invaluable opportunity to participate meaningfully in public policy processes. Despite women's heavy involvement in forestry activities, data on the overall contribution of forests to gender equality were inadequate. SOFO 2018 had highlighted the need for further research into issues such as women's access to forest rights and the impact on gender equality, and also their empowerment in transitioning from the informal and subsistence sector to the formal sector and political level.

14. In relation to SDG 6, the sustainable management of water, the document demonstrated that water-related ecosystem services provided by forests were often undervalued, partly because of their complexity. It stressed the need for more information on the forest-water relationship for different ecosystems and at different spatial and temporal scales. Understanding the impacts of forest management on water, including forest loss, restoration and afforestation, was necessary for the development of forest-related measures that could contribute effectively to SDG 6.

15. With regard to SDG 7, on access to affordable energy, as observed in SOFO 2014, roughly one third of the world's population (some 2.4 billion people) used wood to cook, boil water and heat their homes; 16 per cent of those were in Latin America.

16. In relation to SDG 8, forests and their value chains were of critical importance for sustainable economic growth and full, productive and decent work for all,<sup>1</sup> in particular in remote rural areas. Forest-based tourism could make an increasing contribution to target 8.9 of SDG 8, on the promotion of sustainable tourism.

17. On SDG 11, relating to sustainable cities, the document noted that the benefits of green spaces and trees in urban areas were increasingly well recognized. Urban forests and trees also provided aesthetic, socio-cultural, environmental and biological diversity benefits. Measuring and valuing such benefits remained challenging, however.

18. With regard to SDG 12, the document stressed the key role of renewability, resource use efficiency and responsible sourcing of forest products. In this context, it also highlighted the potential of second-generation biofuels and bio-based material that could replace fossil-based fuels and products, and underscored the need to promote wood products for construction.

19. Where SDG 13 was concerned, on the need for urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts, the document pointed out that the role of forests in climate change mitigation and adaptation was well recognized. According to an FAO analysis of crops, livestock, forestry and fisheries sectors in nationally determined contributions (NDCs) in Latin America and the Caribbean, 88 per cent of countries had adopted mitigation measures in land use, land-use changes and forestry. They specifically identified measures and policies to reduce deforestation (56 per cent), forest management (44 per cent), forest restoration (28 per cent) and afforestation and reforestation (47 per cent).

20. In relation to SDG 15, on, among other areas, sustainable forest management (targets 15.1, 15.2 and 15.b), according to the Global Forest Resources Assessment 2015 (FRA 2015), between 1990 and 2015, the world's forest area had decreased from 31.6 per cent to 30.6 per cent, but the pace of loss had slowed in recent years. The largest forest area loss occurred in the tropics, in particular in South America and Africa. In some parts of Asia, North America and Europe, the forest area had increased since 1990 through large-scale afforestation programmes and the natural reversion of abandoned agricultural lands back to forests. According to the Sustainable Development Goals Report 2017, average worldwide coverage of terrestrial key biodiversity areas by protected areas had increased from 35 to 47 per cent between 2000 and 2017; in Latin America and the Caribbean, that proportion had increased from 29 to 38 per cent.

21. With regard to resource mobilization for sustainable forest management, in 2015, official development assistance (ODA) disbursement on forestry had amounted to some \$800 million (less than 1 per cent of total ODA).

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<sup>1</sup> According to FAO, decent rural employment refers to any activity, occupation, work, business or service performed for pay or profit by women and men, adults and youth, in rural areas. The definition strictly respects the four core labour standards, which are universally accepted as fundamental principles and rights at work. See <http://www.fao.org/3/a-bc270e.pdf> for further details.

22. The document further stressed the importance of tackling forest degradation as part of efforts to address problems of land degradation (target 15.3), as reflected in the Bonn Challenge and Target 15 of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets. In Latin America and the Caribbean, the 20x20 Initiative aimed to bring 20 million hectares of degraded land into restoration by 2020. Although forests were among the most important habitats for terrestrial biological diversity, the need to halt their loss (targets 15.1, 15.4, 15.5, 15.9 and 15.a) and to quantify progress in that regard continued to pose a great challenge.

23. The SOFO 2018 highlighted that to reach the SDGs, the following efforts are required:
- Addressing agriculture and forests together in formulating national development policies is critical to achieving the SDGs;
  - Strengthening the legal framework that recognizes and secures the rights of local communities and smallholder access to forest and trees will contribute to attainment of the SDGs;
  - Access to land, resources and investments in and around forests can empower women, young people and other rural entrepreneurs to be agents of change;
  - An enabling environment is fundamental for attracting the private sector to pro-sustainability activities;
  - Stakeholder engagement and a commitment to good governance are fundamental to effective policy implementation;
  - The ministries, agencies and institutions responsible for the sector are expected to apply an integrated approach, change the way in which they work and coordinate policies;
  - Investing in effective monitoring at national and subnational levels will furnish countries with vital information on the groups of people or areas of the country on which they need to focus.

24. The delegate of Uruguay presented a report on the situation of forests in that country, highlighting evidence that the forest policy currently under implementation (Act 15.939 of 1987) had achieved the objectives set for the conservation and expansion of the area of native forests and the expansion of the area of forest plantations; 90 per cent of the forest plantations had been granted international certification. The forestry sector was generating more than 17,000 jobs in the country and contributing more than \$2 billion through exports. The main challenges faced by the forestry sector in Uruguay were the degradation of native forests by invasive species and the need to ensure greater added value for forest products.

25. Delegates *recognized* the achievement of Uruguay with regard to the certification of forest plantations. They *highlighted* the need to reduce timber production costs, which derived from transport. In addition, they *stressed* the need to resolve conflicts associated with forest plantations and civil society. They *noted* the importance of highlighting the contribution of forests to other productive systems, such as agricultural and ranching operations, which could result in increased livestock, agrosilvopastoral production and generate opportunities for the diversification of income.

### **FAO report on follow-up activities to the recommendations and requests of the 30th Session of the Commission (item 5)**

26. The LACFC Secretariat presented document FO:LACFC/2019/3, entitled “FAO's report on follow-up activities to the recommendations and requests of Thirtieth Session of the Commission”.

27. Delegates *recognized* the importance of work on agro-environmental policies, the contribution by FAO to the design of Global Environment Facility (GEF) and Green Climate

Fund projects and capacity-building in the implementation of Agenda 2030. Referring to sustainable production, the delegate of Uruguay reported on the Agroecology Act recently adopted in his country.

### **Priority themes for the 36<sup>th</sup> Session of the Regional Conference (Nicaragua, 2020) (item 6)**

28. The LACFC Secretariat presented document FO:LACFC/2019/4, entitled “Priority themes for the 36<sup>th</sup> session of the Regional Conference (Nicaragua, 2020)” and informed the Commission about the priority themes approved by the Regional Conference, namely:

- Ending hunger and eradicating all forms of malnutrition;
- Towards a transformative agenda for sustainable rural development;
- Climate-resilient and sustainable agriculture.

29. Delegates *requested* that FAO systematize successful experiences relating to the forest sector, to be presented during the Regional Conference, to ensure policy attention to that sector. They *recommended* that FAO update the Sustainable Forest Management Toolkit and make it more accessible and better adapted to the new international context.

30. The Secretariat called on countries to present case studies relevant to show the relationship between forests, biodiversity and people as an input for the new edition of the SOFO report. Delegates *recognized* the relevance for sustainable forest management of the initiative mounted by FAO through the Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS) programme, and FAO initiatives that highlighted the contribution of forest on food security, water management, and soils conservation.

### **Global items of relevance for the region (item 7)**

#### **FAO work on biodiversity (item 7.1)**

31. The Secretariat presented document FO:LACFC/2019/5, entitled “FAO’s work on biodiversity” And reported that the 2016 United Nations Biodiversity Conference, held in Cancun, Mexico, had called for the mainstreaming of biodiversity across all agricultural sectors and also the tourism sector. It had invited FAO and its Governing and Statutory Bodies to consider and support the development and implementation of relevant measures, guidance and tools in that regard, and welcomed the FAO initiative to act as the biodiversity mainstreaming platform.

32. As outlined in the document, the agricultural sectors had the potential to contribute to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in a manner that promoted the cross-sectoral and integrated nature of the environmental aspects of production. Biodiversity was already a well-recognized element of forestry. The concept of sustainable forest management, which had evolved over time, currently guided the development and implementation of policies and practices to maintain and enhance the economic, social and environmental values of forests. The role of forests in maintaining biodiversity was also explicitly recognized by the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017-2030.

33. FAO had prepared its report, State of the World’s Biodiversity for Food and Agriculture, as an important milestone for the United Nations Decade on Biodiversity and as a valuable contribution to the development of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework.

34. The Secretariat further reported that, at its 40th session, the FAO Conference had welcomed the FAO initiative to act as the biodiversity mainstreaming platform; and had requested

FAO to facilitate, in collaboration with its partners, such as the Convention on Biological Diversity and other United Nations organizations, the integration in a structured and coherent manner of actions for the conservation, sustainable use, management and restoration of biological diversity across agricultural sectors at national, regional and international levels. The Committee on Forestry (COFO) at its twenty-second session had supported that initiative.

35. Delegates *affirmed* their commitment to the preparation of the second State of Forest Genetic Resources Report and *expressed* their interest in supporting FAO in that undertaking. In addition, they noted that some countries had submitted comments on the FAO strategy on mainstreaming biodiversity issues in agriculture, livestock, forestry, fisheries and aquaculture. Delegates *requested* FAO to facilitate the provision of information, technical assistance and access to financial mechanisms for the preparation of national reports on forest genetic resources. Observers offered their assistance in the development of the report. The Commission *recommended* the use of indicators from the SDGs and the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) to monitor the implementation of the FAO Biodiversity Strategy.

36. The Commission *recognized* the importance of working on an intersectoral basis and with universities, the private sector and civil society, with a view to incorporating biodiversity criteria into production systems. It *recognized* the importance of biological corridors as a mechanism for landscape restoration and conservation of biodiversity.

#### **Implementation of the United Nations strategic plan for forests and collaboration with the United Nations Forum on Forests (Item 7.2)**

37. The Secretariat presented document FO:LACFC/2019/6, entitled “Implementation of the UN Strategic Plan for Forests and collaboration with the UN Forum on Forests”. In its presentation, the Secretariat clarified that FAO contributed to the United Nations strategic plan for forests in two capacities: as a United Nations system organization and as a member of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF). The contribution by FAO to the implementation of the strategic plan for forests essentially consisted in work on the implementation of joint initiatives. FAO was leading or co-leading five initiatives and was a partner in other five.

38. The following results merited particular attention:

- CPF Communicators Network;
- Wangari Maathai Award;
- Streamlined forest-related reporting.

39. In addition, the Secretariat reported that FAO had worked very closely with members of CPF in organizing the International Conference on Working across Sectors to Halt Deforestation and Increase Forests Cover: from Aspiration to Action, with the main objective of making recommendations to the United Nations Forum on Forests, and through it to the High-level Political forum on Sustainable Development on how to accelerate progress towards the achievement of SDG 15, in particular its target 15.2, to promote the implementation of sustainable management of all types of forests, halt deforestation, restore degraded forests and substantially increase afforestation and reforestation globally by 2020.

40. FAO and partners, notably the Centre for International Forestry Research (CIFOR) and the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO), had also made significant progress through the initiative on Sustainable Wood for a Sustainable World, which was launched at the 13th session of the United Nations Forum on Forests in 2018.

41. The delegate of Secretariat of the United Nations Forum on Forests read an official statement to the Commission, in which countries were urged to submit Voluntary National Contributions (VNCs) to the United Nations Forum on Forests. Countries were encouraged to

include in their VNCs actions and targets related to other international forest related commitments and goals such as the SDGs, the Aichi Biodiversity Targets and actions to address climate change under the Paris Agreement, demonstrating the contribution of forests to the attainment of sustainable development.

42. Delegates *recognized* the benefits of voluntary reporting on the SDGs as a means of highlighting the contribution of forests to the 2030 Agenda, also including national targets under international conventions. They *recommended* that countries follow that approach.

**Outcome of global policy processes of relevance for the regional forestry commissions (item 7.3)**

43. The Secretariat presented document FO:LACFC/2019/7, entitled “Outcome of global policy processes of relevance for the Regional Forestry Commissions”, which affirmed that forests continued to be a crucial topic in a number of global processes and negotiations. The document provided an overview of such key developments of interest to the Commission as the following:

- 24th session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 24) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change;
- Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity;
- High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (2018/2019);
- United Nations Climate Action Summit;
- World Forum on Urban Forests;
- World Congress on Agroforestry;
- United Nations Decade on Family Farming;
- United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration;
- United Nations reform process;
- Reform of the International Poplar Commission.

44. The Commission *took note* of the recent development of the international agenda and *recognized* the importance of including forestry in NDCs, including targets in specified years. It *stressed* the need for inter-agency coordination mechanisms for collaboration among the agencies in accordance with their respective mandates.

45. Delegates *took note* of the expansion of the International Poplar Commission to include additional fast -growing species and encouraged countries in the region to consider joining that Commission.

46. Drawing attention to the declaration of the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration, the Commission *recommended* that FAO facilitate access to existing guidelines for the restoration of forest landscapes with due consideration for their environmental and production properties, including other important conservation areas.

47. Delegates *recognized* the need to bring young people on board as disseminators and agents of change in areas related to the environment, biodiversity and sustainable forest management.

48. Delegates *urged* countries to nominate representatives with decision-making powers to international dialogues and negotiations.

## **In-session seminars (item 8)**

### **Forests and climate change: moving towards the twenty-fifth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 25) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (items 8.1, 8.1.1, 8.1.2)**

49. The Secretariat presented document FO:LACFC/2019/8, entitled “Forests and climate change moving towards the twenty-fifth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 25) to the UNFCCC”. The document reviewed the results of the twenty-fourth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP24) of to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, held in Katowice, Poland, which highlighted the urgent need substantially to step up efforts to meet the goals of the Paris Agreement. The 195 countries at that session had agreed to strengthen the global response to the threat of climate change by “holding the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2° C above pre-industrial levels and pursuing efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5° C above pre-industrial levels”. As things stood, however, NDCs under the Paris Agreement would result in a global increase in temperature of about 3.0° C, twice the agreed limit of 1.5° C.

50. At its twenty-fourth session, COFO had requested FAO to support countries in developing national strategies and planning documents, including NDCs, to address forest-related emissions reduction and adaptation actions; to continue working in close collaboration with governments to facilitate intersectoral dialogues among ministries and relevant stakeholders to address the vulnerabilities, mitigation and adaptation potential of forests and to promote more holistic landscape-based approaches; and to assist countries in strengthening the role of forests and trees in achieving multiple SDGs and in accelerating progress in that regard in accordance with their national priorities.

51. The delegate of Chile reported on preparations for the twenty-fifth session of the Conference of the Parties, to be held in December 2019 in Santiago. It was outlined that the main objectives of the session would be: setting more ambitious targets for NDCs; mobilizing financial resources; and the nexus between the Green Climate Fund and the private sector. He conveyed the aim set by Chile to be carbon-neutral by 2050. He further reported that a high-level meeting on forests was being organized during that session to consider issues relating to the contribution of forests to the attainment of more ambitious targets; to review progress in the implementation of REDD+; and to promote the mobilization of resources from the private sector and protection of the rights of communities and workers in the sector. The delegate of Chile *requested* FAO to facilitate arrangements for the virtual participation of countries, thereby heightening the visibility and broadening the scope of that high-level meeting, and to make a call for joint action by countries.

52. The Commission *reaffirmed* the importance of the forest sector and its contribution to mitigating the greenhouse gas emissions generated by other sectors. It highlighted the importance of recognition by countries of the contribution made by forests to the provision of environmental services, beyond national borders.

53. The Commission *called on* countries to be more ambitious in their NDC targets and to highlight the importance of forest plantations and woodland in achieving those targets. Delegates *highlighted* the need for coordination mechanisms to update NDCs, given the complexity of the process, which involved a number of organizations and were difficult to monitor. Delegates *encouraged* FAO to support national capacity-building in that regard.

54. Delegates *recognized* the contribution made by FAO to the design and implementation of countries’ national adaptation plans, including reforestation actions, training and REDD+ monitoring. In addition, they *highlighted* the importance of the use of FAO methodology in the elaboration of national inventories, integrating soil, water and forest management.

55. Delegates *reported* on different mechanisms that they had used for climate change mitigation and adaptation, including training programmes in the use of inventories and satellite imagery for forest monitoring. Acknowledgement was expressed for the support provided by FAO in the GEF Capacity-Building Transparency Initiative (CBTI).

56. The Commission *recommended* that developed countries members of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change should be encouraged to increase their financial contributions so that developing countries could meet their commitments in the campaign to combat climate change.

### **Restoration of forests and landscapes (item 8.1.3)**

57. The Secretariat presented document FO:LACFC/2019/9, entitled “Restoration of forests and landscapes; the document reviewed ecosystem restoration as a fundamental mechanism for attaining the SDGs, in particular those that applied to climate change, poverty eradication, food security, water and biodiversity conservation, and could contribute considerably to achieving several of the Global Forest Goals set out in the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030.

58. The Secretariat reported that the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration 2021–2030, declared by the General Assembly on 1 March 2019, was intended to scale up the restoration of degraded and destroyed ecosystems to a massive degree, as a tried and tested measure for combating climate change and improving food security, water supply and biodiversity. FAO invited the countries of the region to share their experiences and guidelines in support of the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration.

59. The delegate of Guatemala described the experience of forest development in that country, associated with forestation incentives and general trends over the previous 10 years. Information was provided on the update of the Regional Strategic Program for the Management of Forest Ecosystems of the System of Central American Integration and Central American Commission for Environment and Development (SICA-CCAD), which included joint work between ministries of agriculture and environment on issues related to restoration, health, the control of invasive species, forest fires and the control of illegal timber trade in Mesoamerica, among other topics.

60. Delegates *commended* FAO on its cooperation in the formulation and presentation of Green Climate Fund projects, using an integrated approach and facilitating intersectoral dialogue and thus expanded climate change mitigation and adaptation actions, including forest landscape restoration actions.

61. Delegates *recommended* that FAO undertake the compilation of practices, systematization of success stories, manuals, techniques, mechanisms and policies relating to restoration, which could be shared across the region. They *highlighted* the importance of recognizing forms of landscape restoration that could include grasslands, conservation forests, productive forests and other forms. Mexico offered to share guidelines, methods and experiences on soil and forest landscape restoration practices developed in that country.

### **Coastal forests and their role in climate resilience in Small Islands Developing States (item 8.1.4)**

62. The Secretariat presented document FO:LACFC/2019/10, entitled “Conservation of Coastal Forest in Caribbean SIDS Countries”, that described the protective functions performed by mangroves and the importance of other coastal forests, their importance for the fish industry, and the wide range of forest and non-timber forest products that they provided. It reported on the main threats to mangrove forests, including human settlements, large-scale industrial and

infrastructure development, the large-scale clearing of agricultural fields for rice and other crops, and the establishment of shrimp and fish farms. In addition, it noted that, on average, those forests were estimated to store between three and four times more carbon than tropical forests by retaining carbon in biomass and locking it in marine mud. Reducing carbon emissions by avoiding the deforestation or degradation of mangroves or accumulating carbon by restoring mangroves had great potential for climate change mitigation. The inclusion of mangroves was currently being promoted by several organizations and incorporated into national REDD+ programmes.

63. The delegate of Jamaica reported on the development and implementation of a strategy for the protection and conservation of mangroves and wetlands as vital systems for ecological balance in the country, and for the monitoring of those ecosystems.

64. Delegates of Small Islands Developing States *highlighted* the benefits and potential value offered by mangroves and wetlands in the provision of ecosystem services, in income generation through honey production, and in the provision of natural and traditional medicines. Delegates *encouraged* FAO to prepare guidelines for the development of restoration and management plans for mangrove and wetland forests and to facilitate international cooperation in dealing with that issue, promoting linkages between the forest sector, fisheries and aquaculture.

**Forest protection: integrated fire management; forest health and invasive species; preventive approach to illegal logging (item 8.2)**

65. The Secretariat presented document FO:LACFC/2019/11, entitled “Forest protection: Integrated fire management; Forest health and invasive species; Preventive approach to illegal logging”, that informed that forests in Latin America and the Caribbean were being ravaged by extreme and increasingly frequent and intense events caused by a variety of factors, including climate change, forest fires, pests, invasive species (insects, pathogens, weeds and mammals), infestations of native insects that threatened ecosystems and the growing frequency and intensity of hurricanes and floods caused by the El Niño phenomenon. Deforestation and illegal logging and trade of forest products were, therefore, now part of that scenario exacerbating the problems associated with poverty in forest areas. The document also highlighted SOFO 2018 statement, indicating that “effective forest management can strengthen resilience and adaptive capacities to climate-related disasters, underscoring the importance of integrating forest-based measures into national disaster risk reduction strategies”.

66. Delegates of Argentina, Chile and Honduras reported on their national policies related to forest protection, including the issues of invasive species, fire management and control, forest fire fighting, forest health and the control of illegal logging.

67. In addition, the delegate of the Executive Secretariat of the Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization (ACTO) read an official statement related to the problems of the recent forest fires in the Amazon region. The statement is included in Appendix D.

68. Drawing attention to the fires affecting Africa and the Amazon, the Chair of LACFC highlighted the importance of promoting measures to prevent forest fires. In that context, Chile called on the member countries of the Commission to use available technologies and work on fire prevention to avert the loss of and damage to forest resources, the environment, infrastructure and people, and offered its collaboration and exchange of experience in that area.

69. The Commission *stressed* the importance of incorporating fire prevention, management, control, firefighting and restoration actions into forest policies in the region, with the aim of promoting the integrated management of fires. The Commission *recommended* the revitalization of previous initiatives and regional strategies associated with forest fires and forest health, their updating and implementation in the new context of climate change, land tenure issues and conflicts relating to land-use change. Members also *highlighted* the importance of intersectoral

coordination between the agriculture and forests sectors, with the aim of preventing the spread of forest fires.

70. The Commission *requested* that FAO provide technical assistance for the development of early warning and rapid response systems, assist in the early detection of forest fire outbreaks and support countries in identifying appropriate financial mechanisms to implement those systems. Delegates from Mesoamerica *recognized* the importance of the local disaster risk management platform, in particular for transboundary pest management.

71. The Commission *requested* FAO to develop arrangements for South-South cooperation in the prevention, control and combating of forest fires and to revise intervention protocols that would make it possible to launch coordinated action and ensure effective collaboration.

72. The Commission, through Brazil, *requested* FAO to conduct a technical study on fires in the Amazon and to conduct a dialogue among the countries of that biome, with a view to reviewing and agreeing on proposals and coordinated actions for integrated fire management, conservation and sustainable forest management in that region.

### **Forests, biodiversity, protected areas and local communities (item 8.3)**

73. The Secretariat presented document FO:LACFC/2019/12, entitled “Forests, biodiversity, protected areas and local communities”, informing that at the thirty-fifth session of the FAO Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean, held in March 2018 in Montego Bay, Jamaica, participants had requested FAO to organize a regional dialogue on biodiversity, with a focus on agricultural sectors. The Mexican Government had hosted the High-level Regional Dialogue on the Integration of Biodiversity in Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DRANIBA) in Mexico City in October 2018. The dialogue had taken the form of an intersectoral discussion and exchange of experience addressing issues of sustainable production in the agricultural, livestock, forestry and fisheries sectors, while mainstreaming biodiversity criteria that contributed to the sustainable use, conservation and restoration of biodiversity in the region. At that event, specific recommendations had been put forward for the forest sector.

74. The delegate of Mexico gave a presentation on the importance and recognition of community forest management, and the need to include it in the production chain; in its presentation, it emphasized that responsible consumption fostered sustainable production. The delegate reported on inter-institutional collaboration in the country to manage the use and conservation of biodiversity and to combat illegal use. The presentation noted that Mexico had an integration strategy for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, known as ENBIOFOR, which incorporated biodiversity criteria in productive, restoration, protection and conservation activities in the forestry sector. The presentation also introduced the BIOCOMUNI project, in which communities were stepping up monitoring in areas where sustainable forest management was being practised; that project was being conducted in partnership with civil society and the United States Forest Service. Participants also learned that the country had a Biodiversity Heritage Fund, through which payment was allocated for environmental services linked to biodiversity, resulting in the implementation of appropriate management practices in forests and rainforests.

75. The Commission learned about the outcome of the Regional Expert Meeting on Community-Based Forestry in Latin America and the Caribbean, held in Montevideo prior to the session of LACFC. Participants presented their experience of community forest management designed to ensure the social and economic inclusion of local, indigenous and Afro-descendant communities and their links with the 2030 Agenda. They also described their experience of ecosystem restoration, use and conservation of biodiversity and job creation, their impact on the reduction of migration and various social protection actions.

76. Delegates *requested* FAO to support programmes aimed at using the community forestry approach as a means of fostering sustainable forest management and the conservation of biodiversity, promoting food and nutritional security and reducing migration.

77. Delegates *stressed* the importance of community forest management and of including such forestry products in the production chain and markets. They also highlighted the need to yoke together aspects of production and responsible consumption.

78. Delegates *stressed* the importance of including biodiversity criteria in forest monitoring and inventory systems, that would make it possible to assess the state of biodiversity and the contribution that it made to the generation of ecosystem services. They *highlighted* the importance of improving forest monitoring tools in order to comply with international commitments in that domain, in view of the difficulty encountered in obtaining those data.

#### **Forests and the bioeconomy (item 8.4)**

79. The Secretariat and the Forestry Directorate-General of the Ministry of Livestock, Agriculture and Fisheries of Uruguay presented document FO:LACFC/2019/13, entitled “Forests and the Bioeconomy”, that considered bioeconomy as a cross-cutting approach that offered an invaluable opportunity for comprehensive efforts to tackle interconnected social challenges, such as food security, fossil-resource dependence, natural resource scarcity and climate change, while achieving sustainable economic development.

80. Delegate from Uruguay informed that bioeconomy was defined by the Government as one of the driving forces of the productive transformation needed to leverage sustainable development, through the incorporation of new bioprocesses into the production of goods and services, resulting in higher value-added products achieved through the proper use of natural resources. The country had prepared its national development strategy, known as “Uruguay 2050”, which included a strategy for the attainment of a forest bioeconomy by 2050 that was built on the basis of the forest-wood-cellulose value chain, identifying five areas as key to that process, including forest management; the mechanical and chemical transformation of wood; biorefining and bioenergy; and sustainable forest management.

81. The delegate of Brazil reported on the creation of a national observatory based at the Environmental Rural Land Registry, gathering essential information for the future planning of bioeconomy-related projects and initiatives across the country. The delegate also described national efforts to promote forest concessions in the Amazon as a means of combating illegal logging and strengthening fire prevention, pointing out that forest land granted under such concessions would generate social and economic benefits for more than 20 million people living in the Amazon biome.

82. The Commission *highlighted* the importance of bioeconomy as a tool to promote sustainable forest management. They *expressed* their belief that bioeconomy could contribute to the transformation, mechanization and diversification of timber and non-timber forest products. In addition, delegates *highlighted* the importance of that trend for efforts to make optimum use of native forests, and for the development of non-conventional forest products, such as native fruits, oils, integrated forest silvopastoralism, and tourism.

83. Delegates *encouraged* FAO to deepen its assessment of bioeconomy in pursuit of the goals of the 2030 Agenda, promote sustainable practices for the production and use of forest and non-timber forest products and explore ways of promoting such practices in other countries.

## Activities of the Commission's subregional groups (item 9)

### Formulation of regional priorities for consideration by the Committee on Forestry, the FAO Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean at its thirty-sixth session and the work plans of the Commission's subregional groups for the period 2020–2021 (item 9.1) and preparations for the twenty-fifth session of the Committee on Forestry and the Fifteenth World Forestry Congress (item 9.2)

84. The LACFC Secretariat presented document FO:LACFC/2019/14, entitled "Preparations for the twenty-fifth session of the Committee on Forestry and the Fifteenth World Forestry Congress". In that context, the Commission *urged* FAO member States to provide financial support to the fifteenth World Forestry Congress, in particular for the participation of developing countries.

85. Delegates arranged themselves into subregional working groups and prepared recommendations and inputs to be brought to the attention of COFO, the Regional Conference and the FAO work programme. The consolidated inputs may be found in Appendix E.

86. The main subjects identified were:

- Forests and climate change;
- Prevention of natural disasters and forest fires;
- Urban forests and urban woodland;
- Protection, health and vitality of forests;
- Restoration, reforestation and afforestation;
- Forest sector, bioeconomy and the circular economy;
- Value chains, trade and legality of timber and non-timber forest products;
- Inventories and forest management plans;
- Financial support mechanisms for sustainable forest management, in particular fire and forest monitoring;
- Biodiversity and genetic resources;
- Forests, indigenous peoples, gender equality and human well-being;
- Links between the United Nations Forum on Forests, the Convention on Biological Diversity and other international conventions on forests.

87. The Commission *recommended* that COFO undertake a discussion, during the plenary, of guidelines to promote urban forests and urban woodland, taking into consideration such aspects as urban development and infrastructure, reforestation, forest management, forestry awareness-raising and the systematization of good practices.

88. On the issue related to the climate change agenda, the Commission *recommended* that COFO:

- Reconcile and harmonize environmental agendas and forest agendas where stakeholders, funding and targets were concerned, and ensure the inclusion of the role of forests in climate change mitigation and adaptation, which were fundamental to compliance with article 6 of the Paris Agreement;
- Lead discussions on the reduction in emissions from the forest sector and their contribution to the targets set out in the Paris Agreement, in particular in respect of the international system of transactions and accounting under article 6 that could be related to the sector.

89. The Commission *recommended* that COFO discuss the opportunity presented by the circular economy and bioeconomy for the fostering of sustainable forest management, including such aspects as the marketing of non-traditional forest products, technology, innovation, value chains and origin marking.

90. The Commission *recommended* that COFO provide dialogue mechanisms in that forum related to SDG 12 on sustainable consumption and production to strengthen the legal trade in forest products and subproducts, including the process of wood traceability.

91. The Commission *recommended* that COFO provide spaces for dialogue in that forum for the consideration of guidelines related to the contribution of indigenous peoples, the inclusion of issues of gender equality, youth, peace and human well-being.

92. The Commission *recommended* that COFO accord special attention to coastal forests, including mangroves, for their importance in resilience to extreme climate change events, in particular for the islands of the Caribbean.

93. The Commission *recommended* that the Regional Conference present success experiences of the forest sector and highlight the importance of forests for the reduction of social and environmental conflicts including those around human migration, land tenure, food and nutritional security, income generation and well-being.

94. The Commission *recommended* that the Regional Conference consider the contribution of the forest sector to the implementation of NDCs.

95. Delegates *recommended* that FAO:

- Facilitate discussions on the updating of NDCs and the shortfall between increased targets and the necessary funding;
- Provide technical assistance for the formulation of carbon estimates and mobilize resources to accelerate the implementation of NDCs;
- Develop evidence-based materials on the contribution of forests to climate change adaptation and mitigation;
- Revitalize regional networks related to fire, health and invasive alien species in the forest sector and strengthen the forest monitoring and inventory network;
- Support countries in gaining access to financial resources for restoration, reforestation and afforestation programmes and collection and production of forest genetic material of quality, in addition to the preparation of guidelines for the diversification of species of potential use in those programmes;
- Develop guidelines on and the exchange of experience in environmental and productive restoration techniques;
- Promote capacity-building for inventory and monitoring of forest plantations and native forests and facilitate the follow-up of national REDD+ initiatives;
- Resume programmes associated with trees, farms, agroforestry and social forestry for the generation of income opportunities for communities, the provision of ecosystem, water and soil services, and mitigation and adaptation of the effects of climate change and natural disasters;
- Systematize and disseminate relevant regional experience related to sustainable forest management and the formulation of forest and environmental policies;
- Facilitate exchanges of knowledge in urban forestry, green areas and tree planting.

96. The Commission *requested* FAO to facilitate South-South cooperation mechanisms on such issues as forest fires, green taxes, and the monitoring and inventory of forests.

**Information on regional forest meetings (item 10)**

97. The delegate of Brazil invited participants to attend the twenty-fifth Congress of the International Union of Forest Research Organizations (IUFRO), to be held in Curitiba, Brazil, from 29 September to 5 October 2019.

98. FAO notified participants about the seventh International Conference on Forest Fires, organized by the Brazilian Institute of Environment and Renewable Natural Resources (IBAMA), to be held in Campo Grande, Brazil, from 28 October to 1 November 2019.

99. The delegate of Guatemala reported on the country's eleventh National Forestry Congress, on the theme "Forests, climate change, livelihoods and innovation", held in Alta Vera Paz in March 2019.

**Other matters (item 11)**

100. The Commission, through Mexico, *recommended* that FAO coordinate actions between the North American Forest Commission (NAFC) and LACFC, taking advantage of the technical groups under that Commission to strengthen collaborative links, in particular in the areas of fires and forest health.

101. The Secretariat reported on work by FAO on forest inventory and invited countries to collaborate in the consolidation of a network for the exchange of inventories and the preparation of a compilation of experience in that area.

**Place and date of the next Session of the Commission (item 12)**

102. The delegate of Jamaica *expressed* that country's interest in hosting the next meeting of the Commission, tentatively scheduled for September 2021.

**Adoption of the report and closure of the Session (item 13)**

103. The Commission *adopted* the report by consensus.

104. The session was closed by Mr. Vicente Plata from the FAO Representation in Uruguay, and Mr. Pedro Soust from the Forestry Directorate-General of the Ministry of Livestock, Agriculture and Fisheries of the Eastern Republic of Uruguay.

**Appendix A****AGENDA****Items**

1. Opening of the Session
2. Adoption of the Agenda
3. Election of Officers
4. State of forestry in the Latin American and Caribbean region
5. Report of FAO on follow-up activities to the recommendations and requests of the 30th Session of the Commission
6. The priority topics for the 36th Session of the Regional Conference
7. Global and regional issues of relevance for Latin America and the Caribbean
  - 7.1 FAO's work on biodiversity
  - 7.2 Implementation of the UN Strategic Plan for Forests and collaboration with the UN Forum on Forests
  - 7.3 Global processes
  - 7.4 Regional Initiatives in Latin America and the Caribbean
    - 7.4.1 End hunger and eradicate all forms of malnutrition in Latin America and the Caribbean
    - 7.4.2 Towards a transformative agenda for sustainable rural development
    - 7.4.3 Sustainable agriculture and resilience to climate change
8. In-Session Seminar
  - 8.1 Forests and climate change moving towards the 25th Session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 25) to the UNFCCC
    - 8.1.1 Adaptation actions - National Adaptation Plans
    - 8.1.2 Mitigation actions - Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions and UN-REDD
    - 8.1.3 Restoration of forests and landscapes
    - 8.1.4 Coastal forests and their role in climate resilience in Small Island Developing States
  - 8.2 Forest protection
    - 8.2.1 Integrated fire management
    - 8.2.2 Forest health and invasive species
    - 8.2.3 Preventive approach to illegal logging
  - 8.3 Forests, biodiversity, protected areas, local communities
  - 8.4 Forests and the bioeconomy
9. Activities of the Subregional Groups of the Commission
  - 9.1 Formulation of work plans of the Subregional Groups of the Commission for the period 2020-2021
  - 9.2 Preparations for the 25th Session of the Committee on Forestry and the XV World Forestry Congress
10. Information items on regional forestry meetings
11. Any other business
12. Place and date of the next Session
13. Adoption of the report
14. Closing of the Session

## Appendix B

## LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Chair: Mr. Pedro Soust (Uruguay)

Vice-Chairs: Ms. Marilyn Headley (Jamaica), Caribbean subregional group  
Mr. Edwin Oliva (Guatemala), Mesoamerican subregional group  
Mr. Pedro Soust (Uruguay), Southern Cone and Amazonian subregional group

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## Appendix C

## LIST OF DOCUMENTS

Agenda Item	Code	Title
1	FO:LACFC/2017/1	Provisional Agenda
3	FO:LACFC/2017/2	The state of the Forest Sector in the Region
4	FO:LACFC/2017/3	FAO's report on follow-up activities to the recommendations and requests of the 29 <sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission
5	FO:LACFC/2017/4	Priority themes for the 35th Session of the Regional Conference (Bahamas, 2018)
6.1	FO:LACFC/2017/5	Committee on World Food Security (CFS). High-level Panel of Experts study on sustainable forestry for food security and nutrition
6.2	FO:LACFC/2017/6	FRA 2020 and efforts for streamlining international forest reporting
6.3	FO:LACFC/2017/7	Global processes (UNFCCC COP22, CBD COP13, UNFF12) including the Strategic Plan for the International Arrangement on Forests and the 2017 – 2020 Quadrennial Work Programme (4PoW)
6.4	FO:LACFC/2017/8	A new strategic document for FAO in forestry
7.1	FO:LACFC/2017/9	Forests in the SDG (Indicators of Sustainable Forest Management)
7.2	FO:LACFC/2017/10	Governance strengthening of forest resources (intersectoral coordination, gender equity and ethnic and cultural relevance)
7.3	FO:LACFC/2017/11	Forest concessions for sustainable forest management (traceability of sustainable production)
7.4	FO:LACFC/2017/12	Forest protection: i) Integral Fire Management, ii) Forest health, iii) preventive approach to avoiding illegal logging.
7.5	FO:LACFC/2017/13	Association of small forest producers and microenterprise development
7.6	FO:LACFC/2017/14	Monitoring deforestation and forest degradation
7.7	FO:LACFC/2017/15	Mechanisms and economic incentives for: i) Mitigation of climate change effects, ii) Protection of biodiversity (wildlife) and conservation of ecosystem services, and iii) Restoration of forests and landscapes
8.2	FO:LACFC/2017/16	Inputs to FAO governance

**Appendix D****OFFICIAL STATEMENT BY THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT OF THE  
AMAZON COOPERATION TREATY ORGANIZATION (SP/ACTO)**

The Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization (ACTO), within its competences and the mandates received from its Member Countries, works to achieve its primary objectives through efforts and joint actions aiming at promoting the harmonious development of their respective Amazon territories, so that these actions produce equitable and mutually beneficial result, as well as the preservation of the environment and the conservation and rational use of the natural resources of those territories". For that purpose, medium and long-term projects are implemented, always with the approval of all the 8 Member Countries.

ACTO's Permanent Secretariat recognizes and values the efforts and different actions that Member Countries are carrying out for the mobilization, attention and articulation, according to their capabilities, to combat, control and mitigate forest fires that occur in their respective Amazonian territories.

Within the framework of forest management, restoration and reforestation, among other policies, ACTO has been implementing different actions and fundraising for new projects and programs destined to develop and strengthen: the monitoring of the degradation and forest recovery; the development of early warning systems of deforestation; establishment of information channels that support decision making on measures to mitigate deforestation and forest degradation and the promotion of the leveling of the countries capacities to address the existing challenges in face of climate change.

As well as planning for forest fire risk management; the zoning or mapping risk areas and vulnerability analysis of forest fires; the use of technologies for the application of early alerts; identification of the origin, frequency and extension of forest fires of the affected areas; and the strengthening of the information management at the national and regional levels as a basis for planning the prevention, control and combat of forest fires.

The work in favour of the Amazon Region, it must be emphasized, is carried out by the 8 Amazon Countries within the framework of their sovereignty and national and regional actions. ACTO's Permanent Secretariat is committed to multiplying these efforts in order to achieving greater and better effects towards the harmonious development and the preservation of the environment of the Amazon Region.

August 2019  
Source: ACTO

## Appendix E

**CONSOLIDATED RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SUBREGIONAL GROUPS TO  
COFO, REGIONAL CONFERENCE AND FAO'S PROGRAM  
FOR THE PERIOD 2020-2021**

**LACFC recommendations for the attention of COFO  
(issues to be considered for inclusion in the Agenda)**

<i>Priority issues</i>	<i>Expected outcome (information, discussion, decision)</i>	<i>Possible follow up activities for COFO and FAO</i>	<i>Reference to other RFC recommendation</i>
Promote urban forests and urban woodland, taking into consideration such aspects as urban development and infrastructure, reforestation, forest management, forestry awareness raising and the systematization of good practices.	Information/ Discussion		
Reconcile and harmonize environmental agendas and forest agendas where stakeholders, funding and targets were concerned, and ensure the inclusion of the role of forests in climate change mitigation and adaptation, which were fundamental to compliance with article 6 of the Paris Agreement.	Discussion/ Decision		
Lead discussions on the reduction in emissions from the forest sector and their contribution to the targets set out in the Paris Agreement, in particular in respect of the international system of transactions and accounting under article 6 that could be related to the sector.	Discussion/ Decision		
Discuss the opportunity presented by the circular economy and bioeconomy for the fostering of sustainable forest management, including such aspects as the marketing of non-traditional forest products, technology, innovation, value chains and origin marking.	Discussion		
Provide dialogue mechanisms in that forum related to SDG 12 on sustainable consumption and production to strengthen the legal trade in forest products and subproducts, including the process of wood traceability.	Information/ Discussion/ Decisión		
Provide spaces for dialogue in that forum for the consideration of guidelines related to the contribution of indigenous peoples, the inclusion of issues of gender equality, youth, peace and human well-being.	Information/ Discussion/ Decision		
Accord special attention to coastal forests, including mangroves, for their importance in resilience to extreme climate change events, in particular for the islands of the Caribbean.	Discussion/ Decision		

**LACFC recommendations for the attention of the Regional Conference**

<i>Priority issues</i>	<i>Expected outcome (information, discussion, decision)</i>	<i>Possible follow up activities for FAO</i>
Present success experiences of the forest sector and highlight the importance of forests for the reduction of social and environmental conflicts including those around human migration, land tenure, food and nutritional security, income generation and well-being.	Information/Discussion	LACFC President and Secretariat prepare the presentation
Consider the contribution of the forest sector to the implementation of NDCs.	Discussion	LACFC President and Secretariat prepare the presentation

**LACFC recommendations for the FAO Programme of Work in Forestry  
(related to the agenda of the current session)**

<i>Area/ action for FAO programme of work</i>	<i>Priority (high, medium, low, de- emphasis)</i>	<i>Type (new, continued)</i>	<i>Level of action (sub-regional, regional, global)</i>	<i>Strategic Objective (1-5)</i>	<i>Global Forest Goal (1-6)</i>
Facilitate discussions on the updating of NDCs and the shortfall between increased targets and the necessary funding	High	New	Regional	2, 5	1, 2
Provide technical assistance for the formulation of carbon estimates and mobilize resources to accelerate the implementation of NDCs	High	Continued	Regional	2, 5	1, 2, 4
Develop evidence-based materials on the contribution of forests to climate change adaptation and mitigation	High	Continued	Regional	2, 5	1, 2
Revitalize regional networks related to fire, health and invasive alien species in the forest sector and strengthen the forest monitoring and inventory network	High	Continued	Regional	2, 5	1, 4
Provide technical assistance for the development of early warning and rapid response systems, assist in the early detection of forest fire outbreaks and support countries in identifying appropriate financial mechanisms to implement those systems	High	Continued	Regional	2, 5	1, 4
Develop arrangements for South-South cooperation in the prevention, control and combating of forest fires, and to revise intervention protocols that would make it possible to launch coordinated action and ensure effective collaboration	High	Continued	Regional	2, 5	1, 4

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Conduct a technical study on fires in the Amazon and a dialogue among the countries of that biome, with a view to reviewing and agreeing on proposals and coordinated actions for integrated fire management, conservation and sustainable forest management	High	Continued	Regional	2,5	1, 4
Support countries in gaining access to financial resources for restoration, reforestation and afforestation programmes and collection and production of forest genetic material of quality, in addition to the preparation of guidelines for the diversification of species of potential use in those programmes	High	Continued	Regional, Subregional	2	1, 2, 4
Develop guidelines on and the exchange of experience in environmental and productive restoration techniques	High	Continued	Regional, Subregional	2	1, 2, 4
Promote capacity-building for inventory and monitoring of forest plantations and native forests and facilitate the follow-up of national REDD+ initiatives;	High	Continued	Regional, Subregional	2	1, 2, 4
Systematize and disseminate relevant regional experience related to sustainable forest management and the formulation of forest and environmental policies	Medium	Continued	Regional	2	1, 3, 5
Resume programmes associated with trees, farms, agroforestry and social forestry for the generation of income opportunities for communities, the provision of ecosystem, water and soil services, and mitigation and adaptation of the effects of climate change and natural disasters	High	Continued	Regional	2, 3, 5	2, 3
Support programmes aimed at using the community forestry approach as a means of fostering sustainable forest management and the conservation of biodiversity, promoting food and nutritional security and reducing migration	High	Continued	Regional, Subregional	1, 2, 3, 5	2, 3
Use of indicators from the SDGs and the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) to monitor the implementation of the FAO Biodiversity Strategy.	Medium	Continued	Regional	2	2, 5, 6

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Facilitate South-South cooperation mechanisms on such issues as forest fires, green taxes, and the monitoring and inventory of forests.	Medium	Continued	Regional	2,5	4
Facilitate exchanges of knowledge in urban forestry, green areas and tree planting.	Medium	New	Regional	2	4