

## 25<sup>th</sup> Session of the Committee on Forestry

### **Items not under Written Correspondence Procedure – inputs from Members**

#### Item 6 Forests: Nature-based Solutions for Climate Change

Member Name	Comments
Switzerland (25 September)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthen their efforts to unlock the vast mitigation potential of forests by reducing emissions through halting deforestation and forest degradation, as well as removing substantial amounts of carbon from the atmosphere through sustainable forest management, forest conservation and forest ecosystem restoration, by:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. increasing forest-related commitments in the nationally determined contributions (NDCs);</li> <li>ii. strengthening fire, pests, and disease management systems that enable to <b>prevent</b>, reduce risk, be prepared, act fast and safe, and recover;</li> <li>iii. accelerating implementation of national REDD+ strategies and action plans, to address drivers of deforestation <b>and forest degradation</b>;</li> <li>iv. deploying actions that trigger transformational changes in their economies and societies and a move to low-carbon economies, in particular, by ensuring that longterm stimulus packages <b>for forests</b> to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic lead to sustainable decarbonization, multi-dimensional resilience and other co-benefits.</li> </ol> </li> </ul> <p>The Committee may wish request FAO to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support countries <b>upon request</b> to address drivers of deforestation and drivers of the expansion of agricultural land as part of the nature-based solutions to climate change, to enhance their NDCs;</li> <li>• Strengthen its collaboration with the private sector and facilitate dialogue aimed at mobilizing climate finance <b>for forests</b> and enhancing the role of private sector in efforts to address drivers of deforestation and forest degradation while contributing to job creation, livelihood resilience and poverty reduction;</li> <li>• Increase understanding of impacts that deforestation and forest degradation may have in increasing the risk of spread of zoonotic diseases, to help inform policy making for mutually beneficial recovery approaches;</li> <li>• Assist Members upon request in emergency and after-outbreak situations and in establishing long-term prevention <b>and management</b> strategies for <b>both drought</b>, fire, <b>and</b> pests and diseases <b>management</b>; and strengthen the respective regional networks and availability of information at national and global levels;</li> <li>• Provide technical assistance and data to redesign and implement policies and actions to halt deforestation and <b>forest degradation</b>, while building back better post COVID-19.</li> </ul>

### Swiss intervention

Switzerland agrees with the recommendations proposed in the text. In order to clarify some of the points, we would like to propose the following amendments – we also will provide them in writing:

#### Modifications suggested in section: invitation to countries

- Regarding point ii of the invitation to countries, we believe the word “prevent” should be inserted before “reduce risk”, as prevention is a key term in fire management strategies and we consider it stronger than reducing risk.
- We support the reference to REDD-plus in the invitation to countries. However, the REDD-plus framework also prioritizes forest degradation, and this is occasionally left out in the text. In the invitation to countries in bullet iii, we would recommend to add “and forest degradation” at the end. In the request made of FAO for support, forest degradation should be added in the last paragraph after “halt deforestation and” à “forest degradation”.
- In point iv we think *forest* should be made more specific when referring to stimulus packages. Therefore, we suggest that “for forests” be added after “stimulus packages”.

#### Modifications suggested in section: request to FAO

- In the first bullet, it should be clearer that countries request the support of FAO to address drivers. Therefore, we request that after “support countries” the words “upon request”
- In the second bullet, we think “climate finance” should be modified with “for forests”, to make the specific reference to the relevant finance
- In the fourth bullet, a major direct effect of drought has been left out. Therefore, we request that the sentence be modified and streamlined as follows:

Assist Members upon request in emergency and after-outbreak situations and in establishing long-term prevention and management strategies for both drought, fire, and pests and diseases management; and strengthen the respective regional networks and availability of information at national and global levels;

- Finally, in the last bullet, the concept of “forest degradation” has been left out and should be added after “deforestation and”.

#### Rationale

Nature-Based Solutions (NBS) can potentially provide over one third of the cost-effective climate mitigation needed between now and 2030 (UNEP Gap Report 2017), as well as providing multiple benefits for development.

Nature has been placed clearly in the minds of decision-makers from far beyond the environment sector, and within this the forest agenda as the most advanced Nature-Based Solution. We welcome the mention of REDD-plus as we consider it a vehicle with potential to go to the necessary scale to support the delivery of forests as the key nature solution to

	<p>climate, biodiversity, and now recovery from the pandemic. FAO has a political role in promoting and implementing NbS at the UN level. We do not see this reflected.</p>
Japan (2 October)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• With the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, which threatens to increase unsustainable forest exploitation, including over-extraction of forest resources and illegal logging, promoting the implementation of REDD+ and strengthening the role of forests as carbon reservoirs remain critical tasks. Beyond that, we believe it is crucial to discuss how to achieve the financial mobilization from the private sector and what the technical challenges are for developing countries to continue to access funds in all phases of REDD+. It would be meaningful if FAO facilitates these discussions by providing opportunities to share knowledge and lessons learnt from countries in various situations, and in this regard Japan is willing to support the efforts of FAO. Within the framework of the Joint Crediting Mechanism (JCM), Japan has been promoting REDD+ activities by Japanese private companies to contribute to halting deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries.</li> <li>• We believe that nature-based solutions can be a useful tool not only in climate change mitigation, but also in adaptation. From the perspective of coping with increasing disaster risks, efforts to minimize the social, economic and environmental impacts of climate change and to strengthen resilience should be made. To this end, Japan, in cooperation with FAO, is about to launch a new project on community resilience against natural disasters in mountainous areas in developing countries, using a risk-based watershed management approach for forest and land use management. In addition, Japan is conducting a unique program which aims to promote disaster prevention and mitigation through development of applicable technologies utilizing functions of forests in developing countries.</li> </ul>
USA (4 October)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The United States recognizes the important role of forests in economic and ecological resilience, including with respect to climate and in situations such as post-pandemic recovery.</li> <li>• For this item we should ensure the recommendations are narrowly focused on forests and climate change. If the intent is to address forests beyond climate change, we must be clear about this in the report, including in the title of this item.</li> <li>• The U.S. submitted its notification of withdrawal from the Paris Agreement on November 4, 2019; and it will take effect on November 4, 2020. We do not support a focus exclusively on the Paris Agreement or NDCs as that is not relevant for all COFO members. COFO should avoid stepping into the domain of the UNFCCC.</li> <li>• The U.S. generally supports the proposed action by COFOs, with some modifications:</li> </ul>

- Proposals for countries and for FAO support should relate to national strategies and approaches according to how countries formulate them, not only limited to NDCs nor only to specific commitments. We request the language be more inclusive and explicit to reflect these points.
  - In *[small roman numeral] i* regarding countries, we request language such as,
    - i. Maximizing the mitigation [and resilience] potential of forests** ~~increasing forest related commitments~~ **in relevant policies, national strategies, and plans, including** ~~in the nationally determined contributions (NDCs)-~~ **as appropriate and as applicable;**
  - On FAO support, the bullet should more generally reference nature based solutions, therefore we request a full stop after “nature based solutions to climate change”
    - Support countries to address drivers of deforestation and drivers of the expansion of agricultural land as part of the nature-based solutions to climate change *[full stop]*; ~~to enhance their NDCs;~~
- Likewise, FAO support applies not only to national REDD+ strategies, but to other strategies with many of the same aims. We request the recommendation *[small roman numeral] iii* mention other REDD+ and landscape approaches that address degradation, SFM, and forest restoration.
  - i. accelerating implementation of national REDD+ strategies, and action plans, and other REDD+ components, and landscape approaches, to address drivers of deforestation and degradation, and promote forest restoration and sustainable forest management;**
- The U.S. does not support language in the recommendations that implies judgments on recovery pathways, especially using terms that are not defined or agreed. COFO should avoid phrases such as “transformational changes,” “new paradigm,” or “building back better.” Therefore, we do not support recommendation *[small Roman numeral] iv* for country action and also request to strike such language from the last bullet for FAO action.
  - ii. deploying actions that trigger transformational changes in their economies and societies and a move to low-carbon economies, in particular, by ensuring that long term stimulus packages to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic lead to sustainable decarbonization, multi-dimensional resilience and other co-benefits.**
    - Provide technical assistance and data to redesign and implement policies and actions to halt deforestation, **including during** ~~while building back better~~ post COVID-19 **recovery actions related to forests.**

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• We will provide the specific edits in writing, including to address some of the broader points.</li></ul>