



Food and Agriculture
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United Nations

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Enhancing the engagement of forest-based industries in ecosystem restoration

A STATEMENT FROM THE ACSFI

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The **Advisory Committee on Sustainable Forest-based Industries (ACSFI)** is a statutory body that guides the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) on issues concerning the sustainable consumption and production of forest products. It also serves as a forum for dialogue between FAO and the private sector, identifying strategic actions across forest sector value-chains in order to promote the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The ACSFI acknowledges that forest-based industries are uniquely positioned to take a leadership role in helping restore vital ecosystems around the globe. Ecosystem restoration can contribute up to one-third of the total climate change mitigation needed by 2030 to limit global warming to below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels. A number of global and regional initiatives have been launched to enhance private-sector participation in ecosystem restoration, the most important of which are the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration (UNDEER), the Bonn Challenge, the Initiative 20x20 in Latin America, AFR100 in Africa, ECCA30 in Eastern and Central Europe, and the Agadir Commitment for Mediterranean countries.

Ecosystem restoration represents a core facet of **SDG 15 (Life on Land)** and closely aligns with **SDG 1 (No Poverty)**, **SDG 2 (Zero Hunger)**, **SDG 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation)**, **SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production)**, **SDG 13 (Climate Action)**, and **SDG 14 (Life below Water)**.

In addition, ecosystem restoration is essential to achieving the net-zero emission targets set by a number of private-sector companies and public entities including city, state and national governments.



The ACSFI recognizes that forest-based industries can play a unique role in facilitating global efforts towards ecosystem restoration. Given their long experience of sustainably managing land, forests, water, and biodiversity, many representatives in the forest-based industries possess scientific expertise on ecological processes and rich insights into the protection of ecosystems. The ACSFI believes that this knowledge can open novel economic opportunities for forest-based industries while further enhancing their reputation as key providers of nature-based solutions to climate change.

The ACSFI identifies a range of ways in which forest-based industries benefit from engaging in ecosystem restoration, including:

- **opportunities** to develop strategic collaborations with companies in other sectors and increase demand for sustainably sourced wood products;
- **raising societal awareness** about the role of the forest sector in addressing environmental challenges;
- **building the capacity** of forest-based small, medium and micro enterprises in the forest product sector to transform and enhance sustainable wood-based value-chains;
- **tapping the potential** to scale up impact at landscape level for restoration activities through blended finance and other mechanisms; and
- **accessing sustainable finance** to diversify revenue portfolios through such mechanisms as green bonds, impact funds, carbon finance and payments for ecosystems services.

The ACSFI thus views ecosystem restoration as a novel development strategy for the forest-based industries, which promises to secure a prosperous long-term future for the industry, while also addressing critical social and environmental problems.

The ACSFI hence calls upon

- FAO to:
 - **chart a framework** for forest-based industries engagement with ecosystem restoration initiatives at national, regional and global levels, including identification of key markets and policy-related opportunities and challenges;
 - **identify best practices**, including in sustainable finance, for the implementation of ecosystem restoration initiatives by the forest sector and the dissemination of this knowledge globally; and
 - **nurture public-private partnerships** that support and build capacity to mainstream the best operational and financial practices of ecosystem restoration.
- and forest-based industries to:
 - **promote industry-wide dialogues** to recognize ecological restoration as a novel strategic opportunity;
 - **participate** in the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration initiative; and
 - **explore collaborations** within and outside the sector to build the capacities of value-chain partners for harnessing emergent opportunities.

To facilitate the above actions, the ACSFI co-organized a roundtable on “Enhancing the forest-sector’s engagement in ecosystem restoration”, with The Forests Dialogue on 2 October 2022, at which the following six priority strategies were identified:

1. **Build** unity within the forest sector through a shared ecosystem restoration vision and share learnings.
2. **Develop** effective metrics to facilitate goal setting and monitoring of the outcomes from restoration activities.
3. **Collaborate** with other stakeholder groups in restoration activities to build understanding and enhance impact.
4. **Understand** how degraded land and forest sector capacity can align to facilitate on-the-ground action contributing to restoration commitments under the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration and related initiatives.
5. **Establish** new business cases for ecosystem restoration based on research and practice, in order to better understand and demonstrate the value proposition of the private sector to engage in ecosystem restoration.
6. **Identify** and build understanding of business and financial models that enhance shared value and deliver multiple outcomes in support of ecosystem restoration.

In this crucial Decade for Ecosystem Restoration, the ACSFI herewith commits to **contributing to restoration efforts through activities such as showcasing best practices, engaging with leading ecosystem restoration initiatives, disseminating scientific and practical knowledge** to companies both within and outside the forest sector, and supporting multistakeholder initiatives coordinated by the FAO to facilitate global ecosystem restoration efforts.



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