

26th Session of the Committee on Forestry

Item 7. Forest Solutions for Combating Climate Change

The Paris Agreement goal of limiting global warming to 1.5 – 2 °C above pre-industrial levels will be out of reach without protected, restored and sustainably managed forests that store and sequester carbon, stabilize local and regional climate through biophysical processes, and provide biodiversity benefits and other ecosystem services that help enhance resilience.

To reinforce forest solutions to climate change, there is a need to: further understand and tackle drivers of deforestation and forest degradation; enhance the role of forests in national climate policies; mobilize finance for mitigation and adaptation; support and reward Indigenous Peoples and local communities who protect and sustainably manage forests; and promote transformational adaptation.

FAO's work on forests and climate change is embedded in the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31, along with the FAO Strategy on Climate Change 2022-2031, including strengthening the role of forests in global climate debate, developing countries' capacities for forest-based climate action, and scaling up action on the ground.

The Document COFO/2022/5 provides an overview of FAO's work on advancing forest solutions to the climate crisis (for both mitigation and adaptation) and summarizes progress of work under major initiatives, including the UN-REDD Programme, FAO's Green Climate Fund portfolio, the Global Peatlands Initiative, and the Action Against Desertification Programme that helps implement Africa's Great Green Wall, among others.

The Committee is invited to:

- strengthen their efforts to unlock the vast mitigation and adaptation potential of forests by halting deforestation, restoring degraded forests and landscapes, and implementing sustainable forest management, by:
 - taking advantage of REDD+¹ frameworks to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation and to facilitate access to growing results-based finance, including through carbon markets;
 - enhancing forest-related ambition in Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and National Adaptation Plans (NAPs), as appropriate;
 - creating enabling conditions to mobilize climate finance for mitigation and adaptation, including through robust forest monitoring and strong social and environmental safeguards; and
 - supporting the role of local communities and Indigenous Peoples in climate action.

The Committee is invited to recommend FAO to:

- enhance the forest-related components of NDCs and NAPs, including through estimating the biophysical effects of forests on climate (beyond carbon) and highlighting forest-based adaptation options;

¹ Reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, as well as the sustainable management of forests and the conservation and enhancement of forest carbon stocks in developing countries (UNFCCC decision 1/CP.16, paragraph 70).

- facilitate access to climate finance for mitigation and adaptation through the Green Climate Fund (GCF), the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the Adaptation Fund and other multilateral and bilateral sources, along with emerging market opportunities;
- explore and assess the contribution of wood products to carbon storage and carbon substitution, and how the mitigation benefits of wood products can be better integrated into NDCs;
- bolster technical assistance and access to finance for forest and farm producer organizations, local communities and Indigenous Peoples; and
- implement integrated risk management approaches for healthier and more resilient forests, including through a focus on wildfires, pests and diseases, and severe weather events.

Amy Duchelle, Senior Forestry Officer, Forestry Division, FAO