

**Statement**  
**of the European Union and its 27 Member States**

**26<sup>th</sup> session of the FAO Committee on Forestry**  
**Rome, 3-7 October 2022**

**Agenda item 6: Agriculture and forestry linkages**

Mr Chair,

1. I am honoured to speak on behalf of the European Union and its 27 Member States.
2. Albania, Republic of Moldova, Türkiye and Ukraine align themselves with this statement.
3. This statement is complementary to our statement as delivered during COAG in July.
4. We thank the Secretariat for presenting this issue at COFO and earlier this year at COAG, which should help to reinforce interlinkages between agriculture and forestry in FAO's activities. Both sectors play a key role as part of the solutions for the global challenges on climate, biodiversity, food and nutrition security that we face today. These sectors can mutually strengthen each other. We underline the opportunities for improving complementarity between agriculture and forestry as mentioned in the document.
5. The EU and its Member States request the FAO to continue the data collection and analysis on drivers of deforestation, forest degradation and land degradation; on this basis elaborate necessary definitions, recommendations, case studies and provide best practices in cooperation with Members and relevant international partners.
6. There is an urgent need to improve management techniques to address the pressures placed on land from agricultural expansion into forests and improve profitability in order to ensure food and nutrition security, while integrating tree components and their ecosystem services. We stress the importance of integrated land use approaches.
7. The EU has already made good progress in the legislative process for a new Regulation on deforestation-free supply chains for some relevant agricultural and wood products; we would therefore also highlight the importance of joining forces to assist producing countries in facilitating the establishment of deforestation-free supply chains and the importance to cooperate with other consumer countries to reduce agriculture expansion at the cost of forests and other ecosystems.
8. As small holders produce the main share of the world's food, they and their organizations, could play a key role in finding and implementing solutions to contribute to a sustainable solution for the agriculture and forests nexus. Therefore, we would like to emphasize the need to support small-scale producers, including youth and women,

family farmers, local communities, indigenous peoples and producer organizations.

9. Greater emphasis should be placed on the global sharing of scientific results as quickly as possible, as well as on the dissemination of more efficient cultivation techniques among smallholders.
10. The EU and its Member States request urgently that FAO continues actively identifying the important and mutual beneficial linkages between agriculture and forestry and scaling up its related activities in the relevant Programme Priority Areas of its Strategic Framework.
11. Finally, we would like to ask attention for financial flows that contribute to unsustainable activities in the forest and agriculture sector. New and additional finance from private sources and existing public sources must be redirected to Members' policies and programmes focussing on qualitative improvements, especially for small holders (as under the Forest and Farm Facility) and their long-term engagement in forests and sustainable forest management and for activities mitigating climate change and biodiversity loss.

Thank you, Mr Chair.