

Submitted in Written Form Only

Action Plan for the implementation of the FAO Strategy on Climate Change 2022-2031

Jamaica commends FAO on Its 10-year strategic action plan to address Forest and Climate Change.

In fact, Jamaica is reassured that we are on the right path. Our current national sector plan- the National Forest Management and Conservation Plan 2016-2026, was the first national sector plan which audaciously included strategies and actions to address climate change concerns and challenges. Furthermore, this Plan, Mr. Chair, is our National Action Plan under the UN Forest Instrument. It is further strengthened by the "*no net loss*" policy and our current forest legislation.

Our Plan outlines key activities, programs, and initiatives aimed at building a sustainable and climate-resilient forestry sector across Jamaica including halting deforestation - primarily our broadleaf forests, improving degraded areas, and expanding forest cover whilst outlining adaptation and mitigative measures to address climate change risks. The plan is seamlessly aligned with relevant international and national Obligations, Agreements, Plans, Policies and Programmes.

For our Voluntary National Contribution under the UN Forest Instrument, we have surpassed our commitment of planting 300 ha and maintaining over 700 ha of the newly planted forest by 2022, Our Nationally Determined Contribution under the Paris agreement was revised to include forestry. As a small island state, our nation is at risk from more intense hurricanes, sea level rise, and a drying trend across much of the island. Our new NDC, therefore, is more ambitious than the previous one as it seeks to address our vulnerability.

In enhancing the role of forests in national climate policies, the Forest Department has coordinated with external governing bodies to contribute to the preparation of Jamaica's Emissions Policy. The policy emphasizes forests as an imperative carbon sink to negate harmful emissions as our country seeks to become carbon neutral, and by 2030 to reduce our carbon emissions by just under 25%. Furthermore, we are well on our way with our national tree planting initiative which targets every Jamaican citizen. The initiative concludes in March 2023 with the aim to plant 3 million trees or more over a 3-year period supported by a robust public education and awareness programme.

The Forestry Department also continuously collaborates with private farmers in developing sustainable and effective approaches for implementation of their farms that can improve GHGs offsets and removals. Collaborations with members of Local Forest Dependent Communities around

key issues aimed at recognizing, supporting, and rewarding local communities as key allies in forest-based climate actions is on-going. This is one of the primary areas Mr. Chair, where FAO's support will make an incredible difference – especially over the long term.

With funding support from GCF we have completed our National REDD+ strategy and we are currently building our capacities to implement this strategy and advance into Phase 2 of our REDD+ journey. It is our ambition to understand and tackle the underlying drivers of deforestation and degradation while addressing the social and economic needs of our people in a climate-resilient context.

Mr. Chair, the advancement of these transformative initiatives is intricately linked to external support. We, therefore, request that FAO advances discussions which seek to assist countries especially the most vulnerable SIDS in realizing climate-based funding to assist with the timely implementation of climate change initiatives.

Mr. Chair. I thank you.