

THE 26th SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE ON FORESTRY

3 – 7 OCTOBER 2022

Agenda	4
Item	Item 4: State of the World' Forests 2022: Forest Pathways For Green Recovery And Building Inclusive, Resilient and Supporting Resilient Economies

MALAYSIA'S INTERVENTION

*Mr. Chairman,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and gentlemen,*

Malaysia would like to record our appreciation and thanks to be given the floor to intervene on this very critical issue and the efforts by the Secretariat in compiling the State of the World Forest (SOFO) 2022 report. Indeed, the key finding and recommendation of SOFO 2022 entail many more work needed toward achieving climate change goals and balancing the economic and social needs post COVID-19 pandemic, but it is urgent to recognize that we have to start somewhere or improved on the existing initiatives that have significantly contributed toward the climate change mitigation.

Based on SOFO 2022, forest not only remain one of global significant and crucial mitigation option, but also continued to support societies that are forest-dependent and toward post pandemic recovery and energy demand.

Malaysia could not stress it enough that scaling up of efforts through restoration and agroforestry should be complemented with mobilization of multiple source of funding; which should be made more practical and easily accessible. Removal of subsidies should be considered with having the notion of balancing the food security versus environmental needs.

We look forward for collaborative partnership between member countries, private sectors, international organization and ODAs in achieving not only the three pathways but also existing bilateral and multilateral efforts. Malaysia also believe that the principle of Common but Differentiated Responsibility should always in the forefront of our effort, in ensuring the successful of our shared objective and participation of all Member States.

Thank you, chair.

Agenda	6
Item	Item 6 Agriculture and forestry linkages

MALAYSIA'S INTERVENTION

*Mr. Chairman,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and gentlemen,*

Malaysia has launched National Policy on Biological Diversity 2016-2025 as a guide for biodiversity management across the country. This policy emphasizes the need for continued conservation, sustainable utilization and the sharing of benefits from biodiversity in a fair and equitable manner. It has clear targets, actions and timelines for implementation and calls for active participation by all stakeholders. This policy also compliments Malaysia's obligation under the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity and SDGs.

Malaysia is a firm advocate of Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) and recently launched an overarching national forestry policy which is Malaysia Policy on Forestry on 21 Mac 2021. These policies cover key areas which include SFM, protection and conservation of biodiversity, climate change mitigation and adaptation, application of latest forestry technology, strengthening research and development as well as enhancing sharing of knowledge. Malaysia Policy on Forestry is in line with the Shared Prosperity Vision 2030's commitment to achieve sustainable growth. Through strategic partnerships with various stakeholders, forest being a shared natural capital could be protected and well managed. In addition, Malaysia also has completed developing the Social Forestry Strategic Plan of Malaysia 2021-2025, that aims to support the implementation of the national policies and acts.

As for the agricultural sector, the National Agrofood Policy 2.0 also places emphasis on the need for the conservation of ecological landscape including forest resources and wildlife in sustaining agrofood activities. Therefore, it is compelling for us to continuously strive to achieve better synergies between agriculture and forestry sectors. In this connection, we call on FAO to report regularly on the mainstreaming of biodiversity in the agriculture and forestry sectors.

Thank you.

Agenda	5
Item	Item 5: Forests and sustainable production of wood and non-wood forest products – meeting demands and supporting resilient local economies

MALAYSIA'S INTERVENTION

*Mr. Chairman,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and gentlemen,*

The recently launched National Agricommodity Policy 2021-2030 informs the overarching strategies for the development of a sustainable and resilient local economy through modernizing the timber industry. Since 2001, Malaysia has been implementing forest certification via the Malaysian Timber Certification Scheme (MTCS), endorsed by the PEFC and FSC since 1997, as a voluntary national timber certification scheme. The MTCS has since become a leading timber certification scheme for tropical forests in Southeast Asia and has accorded international recognition. As of 31 August 2022, a total of 5.6 million hectares of forests had been certified sustainably managed under the MTCS. Additionally, a total of 367 companies are issued with the PEFC Chain of Custody certificate covering 22 types of certified timber products.

The Malaysian Criteria & Indicator for Sustainable Forest Management (MC&I SFM), which is the certification standard used under the MTCS also elaborates requirements that encourage the utilization of non-wood forests product (NWFP) to derive optimum benefits from sustainable forest management. In order to promote the development of non-wood forest product (NWFP) value chains to safeguard nutrition, health, and livelihoods of rural communities and to conserve biological diversity, the Malaysian Timber Certification Council (MTCC) in collaboration with local stakeholders, is currently developing guidelines for NWFP in certified forests.

Malaysia also recognizes the importance of small and medium-sized enterprises and the potential for local communities to contribute to the supply of legal, sustainably produced wood, provide renewable energy and innovative new materials, and move towards a circular bioeconomy and climate neutrality. A number of initiatives are currently underway in supplementing raw material supply to the timber industry, including development of forest plantations and community forestry. Through the PEFC global alliance, MTCC is also developing the local standards for certification of trees outside of forest.

Thank you, chair

Agenda	7
Item	Item 7 Forest Solutions for Combatting Climate Change

MALAYSIA'S INTERVENTION

*Mr. Chairman,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and gentlemen,*

At the Rio Earth Summit in 1992, Malaysia has made a pledge to maintain at least 50 percent of Malaysia's land mass under forest and tree cover. Today, Malaysia still upholds that pledge, Malaysia's forest cover is currently at 55.31% or 18.27 million hectares of its total land area.

The current management of forests needs to address emerging issues such as climate change impacts, ensuring food security and sustaining livelihoods. In these contexts, Malaysia had just introducing overarching national forestry policy, Malaysia Policy on Forestry that has been launched on 21 Mac 2021. Currently, the National Policy on Biological Diversity (NPBD) 2016 – 2025 is undergoing the review process.

Malaysia also has amended National Forestry Act 1984 (Amendment) 2022 which this bill has already been approved in the Parliament on 8th August 2022. This amendment aims to tighten the process of degazettment of Permanent Reserve Forest and at the same time will reduce development pressure on existing Permanent Reserve Forest areas which includes the compulsion to hold a public inquiry before an area of Permanent Reserve Forest is gazette out and the need for simultaneous replacement of the gazette Permanent Reserve Forest.

Malaysia have successfully certified our forest under the Malaysian Timber Certification Scheme (MTCS) and the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), which requires that stakeholder consultation, especially with local communities and indigenous peoples, be conducted with free, prior and informed consent. The implementation of forest certification in Malaysia continues to strengthen the role of indigenous people in climate action through forest-based solutions.

Realizing that forest dependent communities play a significant role in promoting conservation of natural resources, environmental protection and utilizing forest resources sustainably, Malaysia strongly upholds its commitment to involve them in the various government development programs such as engaging and incorporate the forest dependent communities with job opportunity through social forestry program.

Agenda	7.1
Item	Item 7.1 Action Plan for the implementation of the FAO Strategy on Climate Change: elements for comments and inputs
MALAYSIA'S INTERVENTION	
<p><i>Mr. Chairman, Distinguished delegates, Ladies and gentlemen,</i></p> <p><i>Malaysia welcomes FAO's early initiative to develop the Action Plan for the implementation of the FAO Strategy on Climate Change. While we fully recognize that forestry, agriculture and climate change are closely intertwined, we believe that to ensure operability in the agrifood system, the action plan should be sector and regional-specific at the same time, and to do this we call on FAO to maintain inclusive consultation process for its development.</i></p> <p><i>Malaysia supports the proposed duration of the Action Plan for four years (2022-2025) and fully agree that the action plan will remain as a living document which allow regular updates as Member Countries deem fit.</i></p> <p><i>Thank you.</i></p>	

Agenda	7.2
Item	Item 7.2 Forest Fires and the Global Fire Platform
<p style="text-align: center;">MALAYSIA'S INTERVENTION</p> <p><i>Mr. Chairman, Distinguished delegates, Ladies and gentlemen,</i></p> <p><i>Malaysia has also taken measures to curb forest fires, particularly in forest reserves, including the following:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>(i) developed forest fire prediction system in the Permanent Reserved Forest (PRF) using Big Data Analytics (BDA) since 2019 in collaboration with other related agencies. The BDA analysis system helps to analyses and predict forest fire in the PRF with combination of environmental data such as weather, soil dryness, land use and history of hot spot. The system generates location and distance of forest fire and location of water resources by providing geographical coordinate data for agencies such as fire department, district forest office and Civil Defense Department to extinguish the fires and the spread of fires can be controlled;</i> <i>(ii) collaborate with a community group to monitor along the forest buffers to prevent open burning especially peatland forest fires;</i> <i>(iii) cooperating with the Malaysian Meteorological Department and National Space Agency to detect hotspots as well as to obtain the latest information on the position of hot spots and fire risk areas;</i> <i>(iv) cooperation with the Malaysian Fire and Rescue Academy in holding training or courses on forest fire prevention and management for staff of forestry departments;</i> <i>(v) building tube wells, fire breaks and check dams/mini dam in areas at risk of forest fires;</i> <i>(vi) build Lookout Towers in areas that have the potential to experience forest fires; and</i> <i>(vii) carry out R&D related to the forest fires issue especially in the degraded peat swamp forest in order to established the forest fire management plan.</i> <p><i>Thank you, chair.</i></p>	

Agenda	8.3
Item	Item 8.3: Global Forest Resource Assessment and Remote Sensing Survey 2021-2022

MALAYSIA'S INTERVENTION

*Mr Chair
Distinguished Delegates
Ladies and Gentlemen*

Malaysia welcomes initiatives taken by the FAO to finalize the scope and other preparations for the FRA 2025 and initiate the country reporting process. During the 17th session of the UN Forum on Forests, Malaysia has been highlighting that the challenge of compiling data related to socio-economic aspects of forests and forestry.

Malaysia would like to propose that the implementation of any new reporting format and requirements, should consider the technical and financial implications to the member states, especially on the data regarding the multiple socioeconomic benefits of forests, national forest resource inventories, and the role of forests in poverty eradication, human well-being, income generation and employment, and the understanding of public and private finance flows.

Besides that, Malaysia is of the opinion that the scope of the Global Forest Resources Assessment (FRA) reporting 2025 should be providing sufficient data to the global forest goals, implementation of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030 and national voluntary reporting of the member states. These actions can reduce the burden of the member states in providing the reports and in line with the actions to be taken under the Omnibus resolution of UNFF17.

Thank you.

Agenda	8.5
Item	Item 8.5: Restoration and the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration 2021-2030

MALAYSIA'S INTERVENTION

*Mr. Chairman,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and gentlemen,*

Since 2016, Malaysia has embarked on forest restoration and rehabilitation activities to increase the quality of degraded forest areas back to its original functions as a protection and conservation areas. Malaysia has made remarkable achievements in rehabilitation and restoration efforts from mining area such as Forest Research Institute of Malaysia (FRIM) Campus in Selangor and Bidor Research Station, FRIM in Perak. Apart from that, the indigenous people and local communities (IPLC) also have been actively involved in rehabilitation and restoration activities undertaken by Forest Department Sarawak and Sabah Forestry Department. IPLC, both men and women had actively participated in various forest restoration and community development activities in Sabah and Sarawak.

Federal Government has recognised that the rehabilitation and restoration of degraded forest areas needs to be undertaken continuously. In this regard, a total of RM51 million has been allocated under the Eleventh Malaysian Plan in Peninsular Malaysia for the projects and thus far a total of 828.90 hectares of degraded forest has been rehabilitated with the planting of 476,404 trees. In Sabah, a total of RM58.31 million has been allocated and thus far a total of 848.63 hectare of degraded forest has been rehabilitated with the planting of 254,589 trees. Meanwhile in Sarawak, a total of RM35.80 million has been allocated and thus far a total of 294.49 hectare of degraded forest has been rehabilitated with the planting of 167,926 trees.

Apart from that, a major initiative such as Central Forest Spine (CFS) project were implemented since 2010 where it attempts to reconnect and restore forest landscapes in Peninsular Malaysia's sensitive area network. The CFS spans across 8 states and 4 forest complexes making it the largest area maintained for biodiversity. Malaysian Government in February 2005, agreed to the inception of the planting of mangrove and other suitable species programme with the idea to enhance protection of coast and improve ecosystems of mangrove forests at national level with the involvement of several stakeholders. After 17 years of implementation, Malaysia managed to replant nearly 3,241 hectares of coastal areas with 7.12 million mangroves tree and other suitable species.

The federal government committed to continue the rehabilitation and restoration project under the Twelfth Malaysia Plan until all the degraded forest within the Permanent Reserved Forests and other sensitive areas are restored and rehabilitated.

Thank you.

Agenda	8.4
Item	Item 8.4: Finance and investment in forest pathways
<p>MALAYSIA'S INTERVENTION</p> <p><i>Mr. Chairman, Distinguished delegates, Ladies and gentlemen,</i></p> <p><i>Malaysia took great interest of the proposal and recommendation of this document, especially taking into consideration the deficit and gap we experienced in not only accessing the institutional mechanism and financial opportunities, but also in developing capacity and transfer of knowledge to operationalize the instruments toward sustainable landscape and REDD Plus activities.</i></p> <p><i>In the domestic front, Malaysia have embarked on the formulation of the REDD Plus Financial Framework (RFF) and various innovative financial instrument such as the Ecological Fund Transfer (EFT) to support the State's government and forest owner in the conservation and protection of forest in Malaysia. We have also recently launched the carbon trading platform through Bursa Malaysia which will provide a market place to trade carbon credit that will be generated through various sectors, including forestry.</i></p> <p><i>While recognizing various financial options and opportunities, domestically and internationally, we stress the urgent need for FAO to assist and develop capacity building to enable various stakeholder that want to participate in the conservation and forest related mitigation activities to fully tap the potential and resources available to them. We also urged the necessity to make these options and opportunities to be easily and practically accessible, reducing the red tape and various pre-requisite that made it difficult for the project proponent to utilize such fund to achieve their objectives.</i></p> <p><i>Thank you, chair.</i></p>	

Agenda	9.5
Item	Item 9.5: Development of regional action plans for the FAO Science and Innovation Strategy (2022-2025)

MALAYSIA'S INTERVENTION

Mr. Chairman,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and gentlemen,

Malaysia joins many distinguished members who spoke earlier in welcoming the framework for development of regional action plans for the FAO Science and Innovation Strategy and their proposed outputs. Malaysia hopes that FAO continues to support countries especially developing countries, least developed countries and Small Island Developing States in implementing the Framework.

Malaysia highly appreciates the consideration given to local, national and regional circumstances and differences in developing the regional action plans. This in our view would ensure workability of the action plans on the ground thus facilitating their smooth implementation.

We support the proposed duration of the regional action plans for four years (2022-2025) but would like to emphasize that the duration should be broken down further in guiding the prioritization of action plans which may comprise action plans for immediate implementation as well as those that can be implemented at a later stage.

We take note of the need for the action plans to be consistent with and mutually reinforce FAO strategic documents including the Strategy on Climate Change considering the fact that the strategies are intertwined.

We particularly call on FAO to give increased recognition of the importance and contribution of traditional knowledge in the proposed outputs. We opine that the proposed establishment and strengthening of national and regional innovation platforms and hubs for knowledge sharing under Outcome 2.2, should consider specifically the inclusion of sharing of traditional knowledge in addition to its recognition as one of the enablers.

We call on FAO to maintain inclusivity throughout the process of developing detailed action plans by mobilizing regional experts and other stakeholders who could significantly contribute to its formulation.

Thank you, Chair.

Agenda	9.2
Item	Item 9.2: Outcomes of the XV World Forestry Congress
<p>MALAYSIA'S INTERVENTION</p> <p><i>Mr. Chairman, Distinguished delegates, Ladies and gentlemen,</i></p> <p><i>Malaysia welcomes the outcomes of the XV World Forestry Congress and commends the Republic of Korea for the excellent hosting of the congress. Malaysia take note on the six key messages conveyed through The Seoul Forest Declaration to achieve a green, healthy, resilient and sustainable future.</i></p> <p><i>As a forest-rich developing nation with a long-tradition in forest-based industry, Malaysia welcomes the outcomes of the Congress, particularly to “scale up sustainable wood-based pathways to a carbon-neutral future and increasing the share of wood-based solutions in Nationally Determined Contributions”. However, Malaysia would like to highlight that maintaining a robust forest industry to support the bio-circular and carbon-neutral economy has become more challenging due to increased regulatory requirements in importing markets that left the onus for additional investment and technological advancement solely on the producers.</i></p> <p><i>As with many other developing countries, Malaysia relies on forestry and agricultural sector to fulfill our needs. In this regard, FAO’s continuous support on capacity building, financial and technical assistance is requested.</i></p> <p><i>Thank you.</i></p>	

