

Remarks

Mr Ainsley A. Henry

CEO & Conservator of Forests

COFO 2022

At

FAO, Rome, Italy

October 3, 2022

Greetings and salutations

Allow me to first congratulate you Mr President on your appointment and to thank the FAO for organizing this event and the people and government here in Rome for their hospitality.

As the current president of the Latin America and the Caribbean Forestry Conference I will now provide a brief update on our activities.

The last session of the LACFC was a virtual event hosted by Jamaica, held from the 6th to the 10th of September 2021. I am happy to report that attendance

was quite good with participants from 32 countries and observers from 32 international, regional and national organizations.

The LACFC addressed several issues common to all Regional Forestry Conferences and in line with the recommendations of the FAO's regional office, the next session of the LACFC will be organized in the first semester of next year. I am also pleased to announce that Ecuador has offered to host the next session. Additionally, a virtual Regional Conference for Latin America and the Pacific was held in Ecuador in March of this year where the LACFC chair participated and presented the main results of the last LACFC session. Unfortunately, the intersessional activities of the LACFC have not yet taken place and we are advised that these will be difficult to organize due to a lack of funding and human resources. It should however be noted that a cross-sectoral approach is under consideration with the Regional commission on Animal Husbandry (CODEGELAC) and a common paper on silvo-pastoral systems as a form of climate smart animal husbandry is being considered.

The LACFC also made several recommendations for the consideration of COFO covering a wide range of topics including but not limited to the impact of the Covid 19 pandemic, forestry financing to support the reinvigoration of the forest

sector, mechanisms to facilitate the role of forests in food security and sustainable production chains, the promotion of the bioeconomy through forestry products as a tool for sustainable forest management and climate change mitigation, the promotion of measures to strengthen the capacity of countries in integrated fire management, measures to strengthen the capacity of local communities and forestry sector organizations in self-governance.

They also asked that COFO continues to support countries in integrating the forestry sector into NDCs, promote the development of urban forestry, discuss mechanisms to facilitate access to forestry education in countries with limited access, such as the SIDS, and provide opportunities to share successful experiences in topics such as forest restoration, reduction of deforestation and land degradation, conservation and sustainable use of forests, forest traceability systems, incentives, and effective zoning.

Thank you Mr President and best wishes for a successful COFO 2022.