Statement of the International Forestry Students' Association (IFSA)

28th Session of the Committee on Forestry and 10th World Forestry Week

FAO Headquarters, Rome, Italy, 28 September to 2 October 2026

Agenda item 5 (Written):

Forests for food security and nutrition: Strengthening the contribution of forests and trees to sustainable agrifood systems

IFSA welcomes the Committee's consideration of forests and trees as contributors to food security, nutrition and resilient agrifood systems.

In our regional consultations, participants in Latin America and the Caribbean identified fruit trees, agroforestry and silvopastoral systems as practical connections between forests, food production and rural livelihoods. In Sri Lanka, respondents described students working with farmers on agroforestry. Young participants from the Near East and North Africa proposed demonstration initiatives developed jointly by universities and farming communities.

These opportunities require more than isolated planting activities. The consultations pointed to insufficient extension services, the need for technical assistance, and a lack of sustained support for locally appropriate initiatives.

IFSA encourages Members to strengthen community-based agroforestry programmes and involve young practitioners in their design and delivery. FAO's Forest and Farm Facility provides an existing pathway for cooperation with forest and farm producer organizations, including those led by women and young people. Partnerships of this kind could link youth initiatives with producer knowledge, technical advice and opportunities for viable livelihoods.

We further encourage Members to assess whether these initiatives contribute to diverse food systems, resilient rural livelihoods and sustainable management of trees on farms.

For the young people consulted, forests and food security are not separate priorities; they are part of the same landscape and livelihood.