

Embassy of Bangladesh
Rome, Italy

Statement by Bangladesh

28th Session of the FAO Committee on Forestry (COFO 28)

Agenda Item 4: State of the World's Forests 2026: Restoring forests and landscapes – the way forward for a sustainable future

Mr. Chairperson,

Bangladesh aligns itself with the statement delivered by **Malaysia on behalf of the Asia Regional Group** and wishes to make the following remarks in its national capacity.

Bangladesh welcomes the report, *The State of the World's Forests 2026* and appreciates FAO's continued efforts to advance **forest and landscape restoration, biodiversity conservation, climate resilience and sustainable development**.

As highlighted in SOFO 2026, **forest and land degradation continues globally**, with serious implications for biodiversity, ecosystem services, **climate resilience** and livelihoods, calling for accelerated and sustained restoration efforts. [Paras. 1–4]

Mr. Chairperson,

Forests cover **31% of the world's land and are fundamental to life** on our planet. They are integral to food and agriculture, protecting soil and water resources, sustaining ecosystems, strengthening climate resilience and supporting the livelihoods of millions of people.

We therefore emphasize that an **integrated approach to forest restoration, agriculture and land-use planning**, including through agroforestry, is essential for food security, biodiversity conservation and sustainable development. [Paras. 12, 15–19]

Mr. Chairperson,

In Bangladesh, forests are largely linked to climate resilience, biodiversity, food security and local livelihoods. Our forest ecosystems include the Sundarbans mangrove forest, hill and Sal forests, and coastal plantations.

The Sundarbans, in particular, serves as a **vital natural barrier against cyclones and storm surges**, while sustaining rich biodiversity and the livelihoods of surrounding communities.

Bangladesh has pursued afforestation and reforestation, social forestry, coastal greenbelt development, landscape restoration and agro-forestry, with strong emphasis on community participation. To that effect, the Government of Bangladesh has undertaken an **initiative to plant 250 million trees** over the next 5 years.

Mr. Chairperson,

Bangladesh would like to highlight four priorities for FAO's consideration.

First, restoration efforts should be country-driven, people-centric and aligned with relevant **national policies and priorities**.

Second, we encourage FAO to promote greater coherence and coordination among relevant climate and environmental financing mechanisms, **minimizing duplication**.

Third, FAO should facilitate more **effective access to resources for forest and landscape restoration**, particularly for developing and climate-vulnerable countries.

Fourth, FAO should ensure that the role of forests and landscape restoration is appropriately reflected in the broader global climate agenda, including through its engagement in the **UNFCCC process and COP31**. [Paras. 25–32]

Mr. Chair,

Bangladesh remains committed to working with FAO, fellow Members and development partners to **conserve existing forests and strengthen the contribution of forests** to resilient agrifood systems, biodiversity, livelihoods and sustainable development.

I thank you, Mr. Chairperson.