

**Twenty-eighth Session of the FAO Committee on Forestry (COFO
28)**

Rome, 28 September–2 October 2026

Country Statement by India

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

Thank you,

Chairperson, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates,

India appreciates FAO for convening the Twenty-eighth Session of the Committee on Forestry and welcome the 'The State of the World's Forests 2026'.

We recognise the significant potential of Forest and Landscape Restoration in advancing global restoration targets.

India, believes that sustainable forest management brings the various dimensions together at the landscape level, responding to national circumstances and the needs of communities.

India has made consistent progress in enhancing its forest cover. Our forest and tree cover stands at 82.74 million hectares, or 25.17% of our geographical area. The FAO Global Forest Resources Assessment 2025 ranks India 9th globally in forest area and 3rd in net annual forest area gain.

Forests and trees are central to our climate commitments. India created an additional carbon sink of 2.29 billion tonnes of CO₂ equivalent by 2021 and has raised its ambition to 3.5–4.0 billion tonnes by 2035, from 2005 levels.

Under the Bonn Challenge, India has committed to restoring 26 million hectares of degraded land by 2030, and 21.76 million hectares have already brought under restoration efforts.

India believes restoration must be ecologically appropriate, science-driven and landscape-based, while remaining responsive to local socio-economic conditions.

The Aravalli Green Wall has identified approximately 6.45 million hectares of degraded land for restoration. In coastal landscapes, MISHTI initiative

advances mangrove restoration while strengthening climate resilience and local livelihoods. Our number of Ramsar Sites has now reached 101.

India has operationalized the Green Credit Programme for restoring degraded forest lands through public and private participation. Through *Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam – Plant4Mother*, a whole-of-government and whole-of-society movement, more than 3.5 billion saplings have been planted.

India supports stronger coherence among FAO's forestry work, the Global Forest Goals and other forest-related international processes. We also support FAO's efforts to strengthen South-South and triangular cooperation for sharing best practices and solutions.

Chair

International cooperation must translate global commitments into country-driven implementation, capacity development, technology transfer and measurable outcomes on the ground.

We must recognise the need for effective, sustainable financing and investments, particularly for developing countries to overcome barriers to implementation of forest and landscape restoration at scale. In this regard, we encourage FAO to further support developing countries in accessing climate, biodiversity and blended finance, and in developing long-term restoration programmes.

Finally, India looks forward to working closely with FAO and Member States in shaping the UN Decade for Afforestation and Reforestation in line with Sustainable Forest Management, 2027–2036, with the aim of creating a coherent continuum from restoring degraded ecosystems to building resilient, productive and inclusive forest landscapes.

Thank you, Chair.