



CONFERENCE

Forty-third Session

Rome, 1-7 July 2023

Report of the 26th Session of the Committee on Forestry (Rome, 3-7 October 2022)

Executive Summary

The 26th Session of the Committee on Forestry brings to the attention of the Council and the Conference its findings and recommendations.

Matters requiring the attention of the Council

The Council is invited to endorse the findings and recommendations of the Committee on Forestry, and attention is drawn in particular to:

- *State of the World's Forests (SOFO 2022), paragraph 13;*
- *Forests and sustainable production of wood and non-wood forest products, paragraph 15;*
- *FAO priority areas of work in forestry in 2022-23 and beyond, paragraph 27;*
- *Agriculture and forestry linkages, paragraph 17;*
- *Progress report on the implementation of the FAO Strategy on Mainstreaming Biodiversity across Agricultural Sectors and its 2021-23 Action Plan, paragraph 22;*
- *Global Forest Resources Assessment and Remote Sensing Survey, paragraph 23;*
- *Restoration and the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration 2021-2030, paragraph 25;*
- *Action Plan for the implementation of the FAO Strategy on Climate Change 2022-2031, paragraphs 19, 15 e);*
- *Forests Fires and the Global Fire Platform, paragraph 20;*
- *Dialogue with Statutory Bodies in Forestry, paragraph 26;*
- *Outcomes of the XV World Forestry Congress, paragraph 28;*
- *Implementation of the UN Strategic Plan for Forests and strengthening FAO's contribution to the International Arrangements on Forests, including the Collaborative Partnership on Forests and the mid-term review in 2024, paragraph 30; and*
- *Development of regional action plans for the FAO Science and Innovation Strategy (2022-25), paragraph 31.*

Matters requiring the attention of the Conference

The Conference is invited to endorse the findings and recommendations of the Committee on Forestry, and attention is drawn in particular to:

- *FAO priority areas of work in forestry in 2022-23 and beyond, paragraph 27;*
- *Forests and sustainable production of wood and non-wood forest products, paragraph 15;*
- *Agriculture and forestry linkages, paragraph 17;*
- *Progress report on the implementation of the FAO Strategy on Mainstreaming Biodiversity across Agricultural Sectors and its 2021-23 Action Plan, paragraph 22;*
- *Global Forest Resources Assessment and Remote Sensing Survey, paragraph 23;*
- *Restoration and the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration 2021-2030, paragraph 25;*
- *Action Plan for the implementation of the FAO Strategy on Climate Change 2022-2031, paragraphs 19, 15 e);*
- *Forests Fires and the Global Fire Platform, paragraph 20;*
- *Development of regional action plans for the FAO Science and Innovation Strategy (2022-25), paragraph 31;*
- *Dialogue with Statutory Bodies in Forestry, paragraph 26;*
- *Outcomes of the XV World Forestry Congress, paragraph 28;*
- *Implementation of the UN Strategic Plan for Forests and strengthening FAO's contribution to the International Arrangements on Forests, including the Collaborative Partnership on Forests and the mid-term review in 2024, paragraph 30.*

Suggested action by Council and Conference

The Council and Conference are invited to endorse the Report of the 26th Session of the Committee on Forestry.

Queries on the substantive content of this document may be addressed to:

Malgorzata Buszko-Briggs
Secretary of the Committee on Forestry (COFO)
Tel: (+39) 06 570 55762
Email: Malgorzata.Buszkobriggs@fao.org

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Committee on Forestry held its 26th Session from 3 to 7 October 2022. The Session was convened in a hybrid format, on an exceptional basis, in light of the global COVID-19 pandemic and the associated public health concerns and constraints. This followed consultations by the Secretariat with the Steering Committee of the 26th Session of COFO and endorsement by the Committee Members on the alternative arrangements for the holding of the Session virtually.

2. Of the 120 Members of the Committee, 109 registered their delegations for the Session, including five ministers and four vice-ministers, 119 Members of the Organization, five United Nations agencies, nine intergovernmental organizations and 15 non-governmental organizations participated as Observers. The list of participants is available at <https://www.fao.org/events/detail/cofo-26/en>.

II. OPENING OF THE SESSION (Item 1)

3. Mr Glenn Hargrove, Vice-Chairperson of the Committee and Chairperson of the North American Forest Commission, opened the Session and welcomed the participants.

4. Mr QU Dongyu, Director-General of FAO, inaugurated the meeting and delivered a statement.

5. Her Royal Highness Princess Basma bint Ali of Jordan, FAO Goodwill Ambassador for Near East and North Africa, made her keynote statement.

6. Ms Cécile Ndjebet, Founder of the African Women's Network for Community Management of Forests and Wangari Maathai Forest Champion 2022, delivered her statement.

7. Ms Analí Bustos, Youth Forest Change-maker 2022, made her statement as youth representative.

8. In the absence of the Chairperson, and in line with Rule I of the Rules of Procedure of the Committee, Mr Glenn Hargrove chaired the Session. The Chairperson introduced the Vice-Chairpersons who are the members of the Steering Committee of the 26th Session of COFO, namely:

- Mr Alaa Azouz (Egypt) – Chairperson of the Near East Range and Forestry Commission;
- Ms Liubov Poliakova (Ukraine) – Chairperson of the European Forestry Commission;
- Mr Ainsley Henry (Jamaica) – Chairperson of the Latin American and Caribbean Forestry Commission;
- Mr José Ilanga (Democratic Republic of the Congo) – Chairperson of the African Forestry and Wildlife Commission;
- Mr Oyunsanaa Byambasuren (Mongolia) – Chairperson of the Asia-Pacific Forestry Commission.

9. The Committee agreed, on an exceptional basis, to hold the 26th Session in a hybrid modality.

10. The Committee further agreed:

- a) that the hybrid meeting should constitute a formal regular Session of the Committee, convened in accordance with Rule XXXII, paragraph 3 of the General Rules of the Organization and Rule II of COFO's Rules of Procedure.
- b) that the normal Rules of Procedure and practices of COFO should apply, save to the extent that any rule or practice were incompatible with the hybrid modality and/or could not be complied with due to the unique circumstances, in which case those rules or

practices would be suspended on an exceptional basis in accordance with the Rules of Procedure.

- c) that the Session would be webcast and the recordings would be made available in the Webcast archive on the FAO Internet site.
- d) that special procedures or amended working modalities, as might be required for the efficient conduct of the Session, would apply as set out in document COFO/2022/INF/3.

III. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA (Item 2)

11. The Agenda (*Appendix A*) and the provisional timetable were adopted. The documents considered by the Committee are listed in *Appendix B*.

IV. DESIGNATION OF THE DRAFTING COMMITTEE (Item 3)

12. The Committee was assisted by a Drafting Committee composed of Argentina (Chair), Australia, Brazil, the Czech Republic¹, Ethiopia, Japan¹, the Russian Federation², Sudan and United States of America¹.

V. STATE OF THE WORLD'S FORESTS 2022: FOREST PATHWAYS FOR GREEN RECOVERY AND BUILDING INCLUSIVE, RESILIENT AND SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIES (Item 4)

13. The Committee:

- a) took note of the key findings of the 2022 edition of the *State of the World's Forests* (SOFO 2022) and its three interrelated pathways, and recognized the potential of forests to help mitigate the impacts of global challenges, including climate change, biodiversity loss and the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- b) invited FAO and Members to use and disseminate SOFO 2022 findings, as appropriate, to work collectively to halt forest loss and degradation, restore degraded lands and drylands and enhance the sustainable management and use of forest resources, taking into account national priorities and circumstances, and to promote the important role of forests and their social, economic and environmental benefits, including as a contribution to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Global Forest Goals.
- c) highlighted the technical role of FAO to support scaling up sustainable agriculture practices to contribute to conservation and sustainable use and management of forests, minimizing environmental degradation, increasing productivity, and unlocking the potential of science and innovation, with particular attention to addressing main drivers of deforestation, *inter alia* as described in SOFO 2022.
- d) invited Members to strengthen cooperation on science, research, technology and innovation to support conservation and sustainable use and management of forests and the production and use of forest products, including through the voluntary sharing of knowledge and practices, research and technology transfer on mutually agreed terms and through increased global, regional, and interregional partnerships, including with micro-, small- and medium-scale producers.
- e) invited FAO to continue supporting the provision of sufficient, reliable information and knowledge, the development of innovative tools, as well as mobilization of finance on the topics covered in SOFO 2022, for science- and evidence-based policy decisions and

¹ The Russian Federation disassociated itself from the support for the election of the Czech Republic, Japan and the United States of America as members of the Drafting Committee

² Canada, the European Union and Member States of the European Union which are Members of the Committee, Japan, Ukraine, the United Kingdom and the United States of America disassociated themselves from consensus on the election of the Russian Federation as a member of the Drafting Committee.

effective programmes for forestry and agrifood systems transformation and development at national, regional and global levels and contributing to poverty eradication efforts, in a coherent manner according to, and dependent on, national context and capacities.

- f) invited FAO to continue raising awareness about the socio-economic role of forests, including on the role of forest-based value chains as an essential element in the development of a bioeconomy.
- g) invited FAO to continue supporting Members' efforts, upon request, to promote that small-scale producers, women, Indigenous Peoples and local communities take an active and leading role in scaling up action on the ground on the forest pathways.

VI. FORESTS AND SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTION OF WOOD AND NON-WOOD FOREST PRODUCTS – MEETING DEMANDS AND SUPPORTING RESILIENT LOCAL ECONOMIES (Item 5)

14. The agenda item was introduced through a moderated discussion by a high-level panel.

15. The Committee:

- a) took note of the recommendations of the XV World Forestry Congress, including the Ministerial Call on Sustainable Wood, to promote and scale up sustainable wood products as part of national strategies, support the promotion of multiple environmental objectives and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and to include them, as appropriate, in the nationally determined contributions and strategies, plans, and projects of the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration.
- b) recommended FAO to support Members to promote the development and sustainable consumption and production of wood and non-wood forest products, contributing to improved livelihoods, including through building capacities of women, youth, Indigenous Peoples and local communities.
- c) encouraged FAO to continue to support Members to enhance their ability to monitor and demonstrate legal and sustainable wood production and value addition as an essential contribution to trade in legally harvested wood products and sustainable consumption of wood products.
- d) acknowledged the need to accelerate sustainable use of non-wood forest products and their value chains, including better access to technology, markets and data, for improved food security, nutrition, health, and livelihoods.
- e) encouraged FAO to promote awareness raising, capacity building, research and innovation, and to facilitate access to markets and investments – including through global, regional and national policy dialogues, as appropriate – and technical exchanges, for an effective contribution of sustainable wood products and their value chains to mitigate climate change and support climate adaptation, substituting carbon-intensive products and increasing resilience to climate change, including through the Collaborative Partnership on Forests' joint initiative "Sustainable Wood for a Sustainable World" and the inclusion of sustainable wood in FAO's Climate Change Action Plan.
- f) recommended FAO to continue supporting Members with technical expertise to strengthen policies, inclusive financial mechanisms, transparency, legal and institutional arrangements, where possible, to enhance sustainability and increase the productivity of wood and non-wood forest products' value chains from natural and planted forests for both domestic and international markets, as a contribution to a sustainable bioeconomy.
- g) recommended FAO to support Members to enhance and facilitate access of family farmers, producer organizations and small and medium enterprises to markets, industries, innovation and finance for sustainable wood and non-wood forest products value chains, including through existing programmes such as the Forest and Farm Facility.
- h) invited FAO to consider collecting, assessing, and disseminating good practices of sustainable production and trade of charcoal and other forms of wood energy, with a view to supporting Members' efforts and dialogue towards the transition to sustainable uses of wood fuels and

meeting the SDG targets of sustainable energy for all by 2030 and net zero emissions by 2050.

- i) encouraged FAO to support Members to accelerate South–South and Triangular Cooperation, including through voluntary sharing of knowledge and practices, research, and technology transfer on mutually agreed terms with a view to promoting the development and use of sustainable wood and non-wood forest products, addressing the challenges faced by developing countries, including Small Island Developing States (SIDS), on this issue.
- j) invited FAO to engage with Members and public and private sectors, on sustainable development in its three dimensions (economic, social and environmental) and to foster science and innovation.
- k) recommended FAO to continue supporting, as appropriate, increased cooperation and coordination between international policies and activities related to wood and non-wood forest products, especially through the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF), to maximize synergies and co-benefits.
- l) encouraged Members to promote, as appropriate, in line with national contexts and priorities, the analysis of ecosystem services trade-offs, especially those directly impacting women, youth, Indigenous Peoples and local communities, when making decisions about increasing or continuing the sustainable production of forest products.

VII. AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY LINKAGES (Item 6)

16. The agenda item was introduced through a moderated discussion by a high-level panel.
17. The Committee:
 - a) acknowledged the multiple linkages between the agriculture and forestry sectors, and underscored the need to achieve better synergies between them through inter-sectorial approaches, for more sustainable agrifood systems.
 - b) requested FAO to continue actively identifying the important and mutually beneficial linkages between agriculture and forestry and scaling up its related activities in the relevant Programme Priority Areas (PPAs) of its Strategic Framework.
 - c) recommended FAO to continue collecting and analysing necessary science- and evidence-based data on agriculture and forestry interdependencies, including on the direct and underlying drivers of deforestation and land degradation, by further enhancing consistency between agricultural and forest data sets, and compiling case studies and good practices which should be reported at COFO 27, and requested the COFO Secretariat to share this information with the Committee on Agriculture (COAG) and Committee on Fisheries (COFI) Secretariats.
 - d) invited FAO to support Members, upon request, to further identify opportunities and implement actions to improve complementarity between the agriculture and forestry sectors and strengthen coordinated policy responses towards the realization of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, recommending that these initiatives do not create unnecessary barriers to trade and benefit the situation for small-scale producers who are key for global food production.
 - e) invited FAO to conduct, subject to available extra-budgetary resources, a global assessment of the status and scaling-up potential of agroforestry, including agroecological principles and practices and other innovative approaches, to update the Global Forest Resources Assessment (FRA) categories covering production systems integrating trees and forests, and to report on progress to COFO 27, and requested the COFO Secretariat to share this information with the COAG and COFI Secretariats.
 - f) recommended FAO to lead discussions with Members, as well as with relevant international organizations as appropriate, to define “forest degradation” within the FRA process.
 - g) encouraged FAO to continue playing an active role in relevant international and regional fora by promoting open dialogue on enhancing and promoting sustainable agrifood systems and further working with other international partners, including all relevant stakeholders and

particularly members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF), to upscale synergies between agriculture and forestry.

- h) invited FAO to report regularly on the mainstreaming of biodiversity in the agriculture and forestry sectors.
- i) on drivers of deforestation and land degradation, requested FAO and Members to put greater emphasis on ways to decouple growth in agricultural production from forest and other biodiversity loss, keeping in mind the necessity of poverty eradication and fighting hunger, and the needs of developing countries in terms of financial assistance and capacity building.
- j) invited Members to promote greater and inclusive policy coherence between the agriculture and forestry sectors, including through integrated land use planning, landscape approaches and secured access to land, as well as support to small-scale producers, family farmers, women, youth, Indigenous Peoples and local communities.

VIII. FOREST SOLUTIONS FOR COMBATING CLIMATE CHANGE (Item 7)

18. The Committee:

- a) welcomed FAO's work on forests and climate change in the context of the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31 and the FAO Strategy on Climate Change 2022-2031.
- b) recommended FAO to continue its support for strengthening the role of forest ecosystems in global climate policy, and support Members, upon their request, in developing their capacities for forest-related climate action, facilitating access to climate finance, and scaling up action on the ground, and report back to the Committee on this work, as appropriate.
- c) invited FAO to assist Members in optimizing the mitigation, adaptation and resilience potential of forests by halting forest loss and degradation, restoring degraded lands and drylands, and implementing sustainable forest management, taking into account national contexts, priorities and capacities.
- d) recommended FAO to assist Members in implementing integrated risk management approaches and forest-related adaptation measures, including through relevant regional networks, as well as accessibility to supporting information.

IX. ACTION PLAN FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE FAO STRATEGY ON CLIMATE CHANGE 2022-2031 (Item 7.1)

19. The Committee:

- a) commended the development of the FAO Strategy on Climate Change 2022-2031 through an inclusive and consultative process, and further commended its endorsement by the 170th Session of the Council.
- b) acknowledged that the Action Plan will be a living document to implement the FAO Strategy on Climate Change 2022-2031 and will be complemented by a results framework and monitoring and reporting, aligned with the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- c) highlighted that apart from their carbon sequestration role, forests provide multiple other benefits to mitigate and adapt to climate change, and for these benefits to be considered in the implementation of the Action Plan.
- d) recommended that the Action Plan for the implementation of the FAO Strategy on Climate Change 2022-2031 clearly sets out FAO's priorities for climate action in agrifood systems at a sectoral level, including for the crop, forest, fisheries and aquaculture, and livestock sectors, at local, national, regional and global levels, and takes into account synergies with work by other relevant UN agencies and international organizations.
- e) recognized the importance of mobilizing additional resources to support the implementation of the FAO Strategy on Climate Change 2022-2031 through its Action Plan, including for forest-related climate action, as well as promoting inclusive collaboration to adopt low-emission, good practices and innovative solutions, leaving no one behind.

- f) called on FAO to continue to organize open, inclusive, transparent, and timely consultation processes, and to take into account the guidance provided by Members in refining and further developing the Action Plan.
- g) called on FAO to provide regular updates to the Governing Bodies on the implementation of the FAO Strategy on Climate Change 2022-2031 through its Action Plan.

X. FORESTS FIRES AND THE GLOBAL FIRE PLATFORM (Item 7.2)

20. The Committee:

- a) noted with concern the risks associated with the increase in frequency and intensity of damaging wildfires around the globe, which are driven, *inter alia*, by climate change and unsustainable land-use change.
- b) welcomed the joint FAO and United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) initiative to develop and implement the Global Fire Management Platform to reduce the negative impacts of wildfires on livelihoods, landscapes and the global climate, in consultation with, and building on, Members' expertise, existing processes and expert networks to avoid duplication and overlaps.
- c) appreciated the FAO's Fire Management Strategy and tools developed by FAO to strengthen forest fire management and recommended that FAO continue to support Members in their efforts to implement Integrated Fire Management, as appropriate.
- d) invited FAO to support coordinated efforts among Members in areas such as knowledge sharing, fire review and analysis, risk reduction, readiness, response and recovery, e.g. through fire management networks.

XI. DECISIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF FAO BODIES OF INTEREST TO THE COMMITTEE (Item 8.1)

21. The Committee:

- a) acknowledged the decisions and recommendations of the FAO Bodies of Interest to the Committee on Forestry (COFO).
- b) welcomed the strengthened coordination between the Committee on Forestry (COFO) and the Committee on Agriculture (COAG) and encouraged FAO to continue its intersectoral work.

XII. PROGRESS REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE FAO STRATEGY ON MAINSTREAMING BIODIVERSITY ACROSS AGRICULTURAL SECTORS AND ITS 2021-23 ACTION PLAN (Item 8.2)

22. The Committee:

- a) welcomed progress made in the implementation of the FAO Strategy on Mainstreaming Biodiversity across Agricultural Sectors and its 2021-23 Action Plan, and encouraged FAO to continue to provide support to its Members in their efforts to mainstream biodiversity, in particular on forestry related actions.
- b) reviewed and welcomed the development of the draft 2024-27 Action Plan for the Implementation of the FAO Strategy on Mainstreaming Biodiversity across Agricultural Sectors, and invited FAO to ensure that the 2024-27 Action Plan takes a balanced approach to mainstreaming biodiversity that takes into account the needs and priorities of Members and requested to continue open, inclusive and transparent consultations with Members for the finalization of the Action Plan.
- c) recommended FAO to reflect the importance of addressing deforestation, forest biodiversity loss and of scaling up the conservation and sustainable use of forest biodiversity in the implementation of the 2024-27 Action Plan.

- d) recommended FAO to support sustainable land management approaches within the implementation of the FAO Strategy on Mainstreaming Biodiversity across Agricultural Sectors and the draft 2024-27 Action Plan, acknowledging that sustainable forest management and sustainable intensification approaches can play a role at the landscape level to simultaneously support biodiversity outcomes and help meet global wood demand, alongside agroforestry and other multiple-use forest management approaches.
- e) recommended FAO to finalize the 2024-27 Action Plan taking into account other FAO Strategies, guidance provided by the Committee and further developments under the Convention on Biological Diversity, the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, and the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture and the Intergovernmental Technical Working Group on Forest Genetic Resources.

XIII. GLOBAL FOREST RESOURCES ASSESSMENT AND REMOTE SENSING SURVEY 2021-2022 (Item 8.3)

23. The Committee:

- a) welcomed the ongoing improvements of the FRA process, the recent FAO FRA Remote Sensing Survey, and the improved and intuitive online platform for reporting and disseminating forest resources data.
- b) welcomed progress made in the preparations for the FRA 2025, and a flexible approach to voluntary reporting on key indicators.
- c) recommended FAO to continue the development and harmonization of methods and definitions for forest data collection, including for primary forests, and recommended further efforts towards a definition of “forest degradation” during the FRA 2025 cycle. This includes using remote sensing and conducting related capacity development to help reduce the reporting burden, enhance information sharing and increase transparency of forest-related data and reporting.
- d) stressed the need for Members to nominate or confirm FRA National Correspondents and their alternates for the compilation of the FRA 2025 country reports.
- e) invited FAO to further strengthen the network of remote sensing experts for sharing experiences and lessons learned during the FAO FRA Remote Sensing Survey for the monitoring of forest resources.
- f) invited FAO to develop, in collaboration with FAO Members, approaches towards reconciling regional results of FRA country reporting and the FAO FRA Remote Sensing Survey.
- g) invited FAO and its Members to continue the development and sharing of, upon Members’ request, new analysis tools and inform the Members of the availability of new data sources.
- h) highlighted the importance of field inventory data in quality control and validation of remote sensing derived results.
- i) recommended FAO to continue and strengthen collaboration with the Collaborative Forest Resources Questionnaire (CFRQ) partners, members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF) and other partners, including UN entities, to reduce the reporting burden, enhance synergies and increase transparency of reporting processes and resulting data.
- j) recommended FAO to continue, in coordination with CPF members, the promotion and dissemination of the Global Core Set of Forest related indicators, and to improve their tier levels.

XIV. FINANCE AND INVESTMENT IN FOREST PATHWAYS (Item 8.4)

24. The Committee:

- a) acknowledged that increased finance and investment are urgently needed for forest-related actions to address climate change, biodiversity loss, poverty and inequality, and that all sources of finance will need to be mobilized.

- b) recalling paragraphs 6 and 7 of the FAO Strategy on Climate Change 2022-2031 and relevant international obligations, encouraged Members to provide resources to support the conservation, restoration, sustainable use and management of forests and the development of sustainable forest value chains, particularly in developing countries, to enhance capacity building and technical and scientific cooperation.
- c) recommended FAO to support Members in their efforts to access finance opportunities for forest-related actions, including by building capacities to mobilize finance for forests and by integrating sustainable forest-related value chains into their climate and land restoration strategies, in complementarity and synergy with other initiatives and organizations, including the Collaborative Partnership on Forests and its initiatives and the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network and its Clearing House.
- d) invited FAO to continue compiling empiric and scientific evidence and good practices and facilitate exchanges on innovative finance and investment models to halt and reverse forest loss and degradation, enhance restoration and increase the sustainable use of forests, taking into account the needs of local stakeholders, with a focus on long-term and risk-reducing financial tools to support all three forest pathways.
- e) encouraged Members to promote coherence across public finance policies and mechanisms, to consider increasing financial support to enhance the contribution of forests and trees to sustainable agrifood systems, and to promote innovative financial mechanisms to assign value to the conservation, restoration and sustainable management of forests, such as payments for ecosystem services.

XV. RESTORATION AND THE UNITED NATIONS DECADE ON ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION 2021-2030 (Item 8.5)

25. The Committee:

- a) welcomed FAO and UNEP co-leadership to promote the implementation of the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration 2021-2030.
- b) encouraged Members to support the activities of the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration 2021-2030 and enhance their ecosystem restoration efforts, in particular forest landscapes, and to share information and knowledge on successful restoration.
- c) recommended FAO to support Members with tools, methodologies and capacity development initiatives to strengthen their capacity to scale-up forest ecosystem restoration efforts, to share good practices and monitor progress, and to facilitate access to finance in order to scale-up forest ecosystem restoration efforts and ensure the sustainability of restored areas, taking into account national contexts and capacities while fostering synergies with the UN Decade of Family Farming 2019-2028.

XVI. DIALOGUE WITH STATUTORY BODIES IN FORESTRY (Item 8.6)

26. The Committee:

- a) acknowledged the importance of the Regional Forestry Commissions (RFCs) and:
 - i. stressed the need for them to have a more policy-relevant role in the FAO Regional Conferences, and invited FAO to support further integration of important regional forest-related matters;
 - ii. invited FAO to continue to review and consult with Members on ways to further improve the RFCs as well-established mechanisms for technical and policy dialogue, including through consideration of the ongoing governance reviews, as appropriate;
 - iii. invited FAO to support further strengthening of the cross-sectoral work of the RFCs, especially on forestry and agrifood systems.
- b) reviewed the work of the Committee on Mediterranean Forestry Questions - *Silva Mediterranea* (*Silva Mediterranea*) and invited *Silva Mediterranea* to further align the work plans of its Working Groups with global and regional agendas.

- c) reviewed the activities of the Advisory Committee on Sustainable Forest-based Industries (ACFSI) and invited ACSFI to continue facilitating partnerships between FAO and the private sector to promote a forest-based bioeconomy and restoration of productive ecosystems.
- d) reviewed the work of the International Commission on Poplars and Other Fast-Growing Trees Sustaining People and the Environment (IPC) and:
 - i. took note of the IPC Strategy 2022-2032, and encouraged its implementation;
 - ii. encouraged FAO Members to consider membership in the IPC in view of its new mandate.
- e) reviewed the work of the COFO Working Group on Dryland Forests and Agrosilvopastoral Systems and:
 - i. welcomed the progress made in the work of the Working Group;
 - ii. encouraged the Working Group to support the preparations for the UN International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists in 2026 by facilitating cross-regional expertise exchange on innovative, sustainable agrosilvopastoral systems.

XVII. FAO'S WORK IN FORESTRY UNDER THE FAO STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK 2022-31 (Item 9.1)

27. The Committee:

- a) noted with appreciation the accomplishments of FAO's work in forestry in the 2020-2021 biennium.
- b) endorsed the priority areas of work in forestry in 2022-23 and beyond, and welcomed their strong alignment with the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31, as well as their contributions to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the UNSPF's Global Forest Goals.
- c) encouraged FAO to continue to pursue its reinvigorated business model, including through better interlinking technical and operational work, fostering partnerships, and strengthening responsiveness to Members' needs and delivery at country level.
- d) requested FAO to continue supporting sustainable forest management actions at country level within key thematic strategies approved by governing bodies and FAO corporate initiatives, such as the Hand-in-Hand Initiative and the One Country One Priority Product Initiative, as appropriate and aligned with FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31.
- e) invited FAO to continue to provide support to the high-level segments convened during regular UNFF sessions, as per ECOSOC resolution E/RES/2015/33.
- f) recommended FAO to provide regular updates on the implementation of FAO's activities in forestry within the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31, as appropriate, including in the Programme Implementation Reports.
- g) recalled the decision³ and recommendations of the 169th Session of the Council, and stressed the technical role of FAO in addressing the impact of all ongoing armed conflicts on the regional and global forest sector, including on the livelihoods of forest-dependent people.

XVIII. OUTCOMES OF THE XV WORLD FORESTRY CONGRESS (Item 9.2)

28. The Committee:

- a) took note of the outcomes of the XV World Forestry Congress and expressed its deep appreciation to the Republic of Korea for the excellent hosting of the Congress.
- b) invited FAO and Members to implement the Congress recommendations, as appropriate, taking into account national contexts and existing international obligations.

³ Roll call (decision-CL 169 REP, para. 10-11) vote with total votes cast: 27; votes in favour: 23; votes against: 4; abstentions: 16.

- c) appreciated the Youth Call for Action made at the XV World Forestry Congress and invited Members to consider appropriate actions for supporting youth engagement in forestry at all levels.

XIX. MULTI-YEAR PROGRAMME OF WORK OF THE COMMITTEE ON FORESTRY 2020-2023 (Item 9.3)

29. The Committee:

- a) welcomed the adjustment of the Multi-Year Programme of Work (MYPOW) 2020-2023 based on the request by the 25th Session of the Committee on Forestry (COFO 25).
- b) welcomed the progress in the implementation of the MYPOW 2020-2023 and the efforts of the Committee and FAO towards the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
- c) recommended to align the planning cycle of the COFO MYPOW with that of the other Technical Committees starting in 2024 in order to facilitate cross-sectoral work among the Committees.

XX. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE UN STRATEGIC PLAN FOR FORESTS AND STRENGTHENING FAO'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE INTERNATIONAL ARRANGEMENTS ON FORESTS, INCLUDING THE COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIP ON FORESTS AND THE MID-TERM REVIEW IN 2024 (Item 9.4)

30. The Committee:

- a) welcomed the progress and accomplishments of FAO's work in support of the Global Forest Goals, the UN Strategic Plan for Forests (UNSPF) and the CPF.
- b) recommended FAO to strengthen its leadership role in the CPF, and facilitate active participation of CPF members in the mid-term review of the International Arrangement on Forests, in particular of the CPF.
- c) encouraged FAO to contribute expertise, statistical data and knowledge to the policy discussions of the UNFF.
- d) invited FAO to continue supporting the participation of RFCs in regional dialogues related to UNFF, as appropriate and within FAO's mandate.

XXI. DEVELOPMENT OF REGIONAL ACTION PLANS FOR THE FAO SCIENCE AND INNOVATION STRATEGY (2022-25) (Item 9.5)

31. The Committee:

- a) commended the development of the FAO Science and Innovation Strategy (2022-25) through an inclusive and consultative process, and further commended its endorsement by the 170th Session of the Council.
- b) reviewed and welcomed the high-level framework that will be used for the development of regional action plans for the effective implementation of the FAO Science and Innovation Strategy (2022-25), taking into account the outcomes and recommendations of the regional consultations and the FAO Regional Conferences in 2022.
- c) encouraged FAO to continue to organize open, inclusive, transparent and timely consultation processes, to take into account the guidance provided by Members in refining and further developing the regional action plans, and to ensure the plans capture actions in the FAO Science and Innovation Strategy (2022-25) at all levels – global, regional and country.
- d) encouraged FAO to ensure that the regional action plans align with and contribute to the implementation of the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31.

- e) invited FAO to continue to report progress on implementation of the FAO Science and Innovation Strategy (2022-25) to the relevant Governing Bodies, in particular in relation to forests and the involvement of RFCs.
- f) called on FAO to include relevant forms of science and innovation in forestry in the preparation of the regional action plans.

XXII. ELECTION OF OFFICERS (Item 10)

32. The Committee elected by acclamation Mr Günter Walkner, Minister Plenipotentiary, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Austria to FAO and World Food Programme (WFP), to the position of Chairperson of the 27th Session of COFO.

XXIII. DATE AND PLACE OF THE NEXT SESSION (Item 11)

33. The Committee agreed that the 27th Session of COFO will be held in Rome in the third quarter of 2024. The exact date would be determined by the Director-General in consultation with the COFO Steering Committee, for presentation to the next FAO Council in December 2022 and 43rd Session of the FAO Conference in 2023.

XXIV. ADOPTION OF THE REPORT (Item 12)

34. The Committee adopted the Report as amended by consensus.

XXV. CLOSURE OF THE SESSION (Item 13)

35. The Chairperson closed the session at 20.30 hours on Friday, 7 October 2022.

APPENDIX A – Agenda of the 26th Session of the Committee on Forestry

1. Opening of the Session
2. Adoption of the Agenda
3. Designation of the Drafting Committee
4. State of the World's Forests 2022: Forest pathways for green recovery and building inclusive, resilient and sustainable economies
5. Forests and sustainable production of wood and non-wood forest products - meeting demands and supporting resilient local economies
6. Agriculture and forestry linkages
7. Forest solutions for combating climate change
 - 7.1. Action Plan for the implementation of the FAO Strategy on Climate Change 2022-2031
 - 7.2. Forests Fires and the Global Fire Platform
8. Progress in implementation
 - 8.1. Decisions and Recommendations of FAO Bodies of Interest to the Committee
 - 8.2. Progress report on the implementation of the FAO Strategy on Mainstreaming Biodiversity across Agricultural Sectors and its 2021-23 Action Plan
 - 8.3. Global Forest Resources Assessment and Remote Sensing Survey 2021-2022
 - 8.4. Finance and investment in forest pathways
 - 8.5. Restoration and the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration 2021-2030
 - 8.6. Dialogue with Statutory Bodies in Forestry
9. Other Matters
 - 9.1. FAO's work in Forestry under the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31
 - 9.2. Outcomes of the XV World Forestry Congress
 - 9.3. Multi-year Programme of Work of the Committee on Forestry 2020-2023
 - 9.4. Implementation of the UN Strategic Plan for Forests and strengthening FAO's contribution to the International Arrangements on Forests, including the Collaborative Partnership on Forests and the mid-term review in 2024
 - 9.5. Development of regional action plans for the FAO Science and Innovation Strategy (2022-25)
10. Election of Officers
11. Date and Place of the Next Session
12. Adoption of the Report
13. Closure of the Session

APPENDIX B – List of Documents

COFO/2022/1 Rev.1	Provisional Agenda
COFO/2022/2 Rev.1	State of the World's Forests 2022: Forest pathways for green recovery and building inclusive, resilient and sustainable economies
COFO/2022/3 Rev.1	Forests and sustainable production of wood and non-wood forest products - meeting demands and supporting resilient local economies
COFO/2022/4	Agriculture and forestry linkages
COFO/2022/5	Forest solutions for combating climate change
COFO/2022/5.1	Action Plan for the implementation of the FAO Strategy on Climate Change 2022-2031
COFO/2022/5.2	Forests Fires and the Global Fire Platform
COFO/2022/6	Progress in implementation
COFO/2022/6.1	Decisions and Recommendations of FAO Bodies of Interest to the Committee
COFO/2022/6.2	Progress report on the implementation of the FAO Strategy on Mainstreaming Biodiversity across Agricultural Sectors and its 2021-23 Action Plan
COFO/2022/6.3	Global Forest Resources Assessment and Remote Sensing Survey
COFO/2022/6.4	Finance and investment in forest pathways
COFO/2022/6.5	Restoration and the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration 2021-2030
COFO/2022/6.6 Rev.1	Dialogue with Statutory Bodies in Forestry
COFO/2022/7.1	FAO's work in Forestry under the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31
COFO/2022/7.2	Outcomes of the XV World Forestry Congress
COFO/2022/7.3	Multi-year Programme of Work of the Committee on Forestry 2020-2023
COFO/2022/7.4 Rev.1	Implementation of the UN Strategic Plan for Forests and strengthening FAO's contribution to the International Arrangements on Forests, including the Collaborative Partnership on Forests and its review in 2024
COFO/2022/8	Development of regional action plans for the FAO Science and Innovation Strategy (2022-25)
COFO/2022/INF/1 Rev.1	Provisional timetable
COFO/2022/INF/2 Rev.1	Provisional list of documents
COFO/2022/INF/3	Note on Special Procedures for a hybrid meeting of the Committee on Forestry
COFO/2022/INF/4	List of participants
COFO/2022/INF/5	Statement of Competence and Voting Rights Submitted by the European Union (EU) and its Member States
COFO/2022/INF/6	Streamlining reporting on restoration through Global Forest Resources Assessments
COFO/2022/INF/7	Digital innovation for data collection and dissemination on forest resources, their management and uses
COFO/2022/INF/8	Report on forestry relevant deliberations at the UN Food Systems Summit 2021
COFO/2022/INF/9	Update on the FAO Strategy on Climate Change 2022-2031
COFO/2022/INF/10	Update on the FAO Strategy on Science and Innovation
COFO/2022/INF/11	Progress report on the implementation of the recommendations of the 25th Session of the Committee on Forestry
COFO/2022/INF/12	Recommendations of FAO's Regional Forestry Commissions for the FAO Programme of Work in Forestry

APPENDIX C – Members of the Committee on Forestry

- Afghanistan
- Algeria
- Angola
- Argentina
- Armenia
- Australia
- Austria
- Azerbaijan
- Bangladesh
- Belarus
- Belgium
- Bolivia
(Plurinational State of)
- Brazil
- Bulgaria
- Burkina Faso
- Burundi
- Cabo Verde
- Cameroon
- Canada
- Chad
- Chile
- China
- Colombia
- Congo
- Costa Rica
- Côte d'Ivoire
- Croatia
- Cuba
- Cyprus
- Czechia
- Democratic People's Republic of Korea
- Democratic Republic of the Congo
- Dominican Republic
- Ecuador
- Egypt
- El Salvador
- Equatorial Guinea
- Eritrea
- Estonia
- Ethiopia
- European Union
(Member Organization)
- Finland
- France
- Gabon
- Gambia
- Georgia
- Germany
- Greece
- Guatemala
- Guinea
- Haiti
- Hungary
- India
- Indonesia
- Iran (Islamic Republic of)
- Ireland
- Israel
- Italy
- Jamaica
- Japan
- Jordan
- Kenya
- Kuwait
- Latvia
- Lebanon
- Lesotho
- Liberia
- Libya
- Lithuania
- Madagascar
- Malaysia
- Mali
- Mauritania
- Mexico
- Morocco
- Mozambique
- Myanmar
- Netherlands
- New Zealand
- Nicaragua
- Niger
- Nigeria
- Norway
- Pakistan
- Panama
- Paraguay
- Peru
- Philippines
- Poland
- Portugal
- Republic of Korea
- Romania
- Russian Federation
- San Marino
- Saudi Arabia
- Senegal
- Seychelles
- Slovakia
- Slovenia
- South Africa
- South Sudan
- Spain
- Sri Lanka
- Sudan
- Sweden
- Switzerland
- Thailand
- Tunisia
- Türkiye
- Uganda
- Ukraine
- United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
- United Republic of Tanzania
- United States of America
- Uruguay
- Uzbekistan
- Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)
- Yemen
- Zambia
- Zimbabwe