

## **Statement of European Union and its 27 Member States**

### **27th session of the FAO Committee on Forestry**

**Rome, 22-26 July 2024**

#### **Agenda item 5: Scaling up actions on agriculture and forestry linkages**

Madam/Mr Chair,

1. We are honoured to speak on behalf of the European Union and its 27 Member States.
2. [XXX, XXXX, XXXX align themselves with this statement.]
3. Today, we address a topic of paramount importance to our global community: the indispensable linkages between agriculture and forestry and the pivotal role of coordinated actions in ensuring sustainable development.
4. Forests make direct contributions to sustainable agricultural production through essential ecosystem services, including water regulation, soil conservation, carbon sequestration, or providing food and protection. Additionally, around 1 billion people worldwide depend on wild foods sourced from forests. On the other side, agricultural expansion is the main driver of deforestation and forest degradation worldwide, according to FAO estimates.
5. The strong linkages between agriculture and forestry are increasingly recognized at the global policy and political level. Notably, the outcome of the first Global Stocktake produced ahead of the Climate COP28 last year, calls for enhanced efforts to halt and reverse deforestation and forest degradation by 2030. Very recently, in the High Level Political Declaration of UNFF19 ministers have committed to take urgent and accelerated action to halt and reverse deforestation and forest degradation by 20230 and to address threats to forests as well as the significant drivers of deforestation and forest degradation, including unsustainable practices across economic activities and unsustainable patterns of consumption and production. Also, the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) has produced policy recommendations on cross-cutting topics, including sustainable forestry and agroecological and other innovative approaches.
6. There is an urgent need to advance sustainable supply chains that decouple agricultural production from deforestation and forest and land degradation, recognizing the importance of demand and supply-side measures.
7. There is growing evidence of coordinated efforts and cross-sectoral approaches that benefit both agriculture and forestry. These include establishing integrated policy approaches, improving data collection, monitoring and analysis, and optimising agricultural production, with the aim of preserving healthy agricultural and forest

ecosystems and their capacity to deliver services for future generations.

8. Agroforestry exemplifies the synergies between trees and agriculture, providing resilience to environmental shocks and contributing to biodiversity, food security, and crop productivity. However, agroforestry has not received sufficient attention from the agricultural and forestry sectors, including in relation to research and monitoring, and still faces challenges in scaling up. A situation that calls for increased cross-sectoral collaboration to seek greater synergies between agriculture and forestry while minimizing any negative trade-offs .
9. Therefore, we urge Members to advance policies, strategies, and programs that fortify beneficial linkages between agriculture and forestry across land management and throughout value chains, while mitigating associated trade-offs.
10. Furthermore, we encourage Members to further explore the establishment of incentive mechanisms, including innovative public and private financing mechanisms, aimed at bolstering cross-sectoral cooperation and supporting the sustainable development of value chains.
11. We also recommend that FAO support Members upon request in enhancing their capacity for cross-sectoral policymaking, integrated land-use planning, and monitoring to achieve sustainable agricultural and forestry production, while safeguarding primary and old growth forests and biodiversity.
12. We support FAO in its aim to optimize the potential of agroforestry to support transformation to more efficient, resilient and sustainable agrifood systems. We call upon FAO to assist Members upon request, in their efforts to scale up agroforestry, including the continued production of knowledge products, tools, and capacity-building materials. We encourage FAO to continue its work on developing guidance and agroforestry monitoring methodologies and tools.
13. We also remain committed to halt and reverse deforestation and forest degradation by 2030 and prevent land degradation worldwide.
14. Lastly, we call on FAO to keep its catalyst role in strengthening the linkages and synergies between forestry and agriculture and enhance its monitoring guidance on both of these sectors.

Thank you, Madam/Mr Chair.