

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

**Statement by Indian Delegation, Government of India, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change at the Twenty seventh session of Committee on Forestry, COFO held from 22-26 July 2024.**

Mr. Chairperson and Distinguished Delegates,

India welcomes the document presented towards scaling up actions on agriculture and forestry linkages, and thank the Secretariat for the presentation.

India has been strategically promoting agroforestry as a sustainable source of timber and other non-timber produce to reduce the dependence on natural forests and pave way for sustained incomes of farmers and tree growers. Towards this end, the Government of India launched the National Agroforestry Policy in 2014, while also making agricultural landscapes more resilient to the risks of climate change.

The comprehensive policy incentivises agroforestry initiatives and addresses the increasing demand for timber, food, fuel, fodder, fertiliser and fibre, while also creating employment opportunities and generating income to farmers. As a result of our concerted efforts, agroforestry and trees grown outside forests fulfil **more than 90% of the timber demand.**

To promote agroforestry, India relaxed the regulatory regimes governing the felling and transit of timber, while also fostering technological interventions to make farm forestry attractive and productive. Further, India through the Forest Survey of India, has developed a robust data and biennially estimates the trees outside forests, including area under agroforestry.

The Indian Forest and Wood Certification Scheme launched by the Government in 2023 offers voluntary third-party certification to agroforestry to foster sustainability and traceability, while also providing market incentives to entities that adhere to responsible agroforestry management practices in their operations.

Mr. Chairperson,

We are happy to share that our collective efforts, policy interventions and technological support resulted in an increase of agroforests by over 2.10 million hectares in the last decade.

India is ready to support the members through technical cooperation, knowledge sharing and capacity building in sustainable agroforestry practices under the aegis of South-South and Triangular Cooperation through FAO.

We urge FAO to support Members through policies, strategies, research, and programmes to promote agroforestry including promotion of unrestricted transfer of technologies to developing countries. These interventions would go a long way in mitigating the pressure on natural forests and forest ecosystems.

Thank you chair