

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Brazil

Environment Department

Biodiversity Division

Brazil's statement on COFO Item 7 – The FAO Forestry Roadmap – From Vision to Action 2024-2031 and FAO's work on forestry under the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31

Brazil appreciates the efforts of FAO to increase the visibility of forests within the FAO Strategic Framework, as the social, economic and environmental benefits of forest cut across the Four Betters.

We do acknowledge the work undertaken to develop the FAO Forestry Roadmap, which contains many elements that resonate with the challenges faced by developing countries, including megadiverse countries. The three proposed objectives seek to promote in a balanced manner the social, economic and environmental dimensions of sustainable development and highlight the importance of supporting IPLCs, women and youth. They also recognize the need to avoid unjustified and unnecessary trade barriers.

At the same time, we do notice that the Roadmap has included many expressions that lack multilaterally-agreed upon definitions and may prejudice ongoing multilateral negotiations, such as “forest-based solutions”, “green value chains”, “carbon governance” and “forest-related carbon markets”. Furthermore, while we acknowledge that the expression “trees outside forests” has been agreed under the UN Strategic Plan on Forests, we note that the Forest Resources Assessment does not contain a definition on how to measure this element, which raises concerns regarding the reporting and monitoring burden. We would further mention that the document contains a reference to “primary forests”, which runs counter the spirit of the UNSPF, where all types of forests are considered. Those concerns may raise the question as to whether this Roadmap would overlap with the UNSPF itself.

As this document is not subject to line-by-line negotiations, we fear it would be premature at this stage to endorse it.

Brazil's comments to document COFO/2024/5.1

The Committee is invited to:

- a. welcome the update on the FAO Forestry Roadmap: From Vision to Action 2024–2031 (as presented in this document in Annex 1); and appreciated the inclusive and transparent and consultative process that led to its finalization;
- b. recommend FAO to implement the FAO Forestry Roadmap through the Programme Priority Areas under the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31, impactful partnerships, including the Collaborative Partnership on Forests, and relevant programmes and projects.

Brazil's statement on document COFO/2024/5.2

Regarding document COFO/2024/5.2, we welcome the updates provided by FAO regarding the activities carried out in the 2022-2023 biennium. We would request further updates on the development of the indicator on the number of forest-dependent people in extreme poverty.

With regards to the global trends, we would highlight that the persistent levels of poverty, inequality and food insecurity remain a prominent challenge in developing countries and they remind us that our conservation and restoration efforts need to consider the three dimensions of sustainable development in a balanced and integrated manner.

Regarding the new priority areas for the 2024-2025 biennium, we would suggest the following amendments. On item BP3, on the One Health approach, we would suggest adding a reference to neglected tropical and vector-borne diseases, which pose significant challenges in some forest-rich regions. Item BP3 could also explore the need to promote equitable access to health products derived from forest genetic resources. With respect to Priority Area 2, we would encourage FAO to increase the visibility of non timber forest products. We do take note with concern that this Priority Area has placed a disproportionate emphasis on the topic of traceability requirements, which could be understood as an encouragement to trade-distortive measures.

In relation to Priority Area 3, we struggle to understand the meaning of “forest-positive value chains” and how this would be measured. We would prefer to use the expression “sustainable value chains”. Furthermore, we would suggest a more nuanced approach to the references to “blended finance”, which are presented as a catch-all concept that would encompass all potential innovative financial mechanisms. From our perspective, there is a wide range of tools available that should be considered, including payments for ecosystem services. Finally, with reference to subsection A, on accelerators, we have noticed that innovation is mostly understood as innovation in data generation or financial solutions. We would appreciate a more comprehensive understanding of innovation, which should include access to technologies that contribute to value addition.