

Statement of European Union and its 27 Member States

27th session of the FAO Committee on Forestry

Rome, 22-26 July 2024

Agenda item 8.2: Contribution of forestry to FAO's work on climate change and integrated water management

Madam/Mr Chair,

1. Hungary is honoured to speak on behalf of the European Union and its 27 Member States.
2. [XXX, XXXX, XXXX align themselves with this statement.]
3. As a leading global advocate for sustainable forest management, climate and biodiversity action, the European Union recognizes the pivotal role of forests in mitigating the impacts of climate change and biodiversity loss, and ensuring water security for present and future generations.
4. Forests serve as natural carbon sinks, absorbing and storing significant amounts of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. Additionally, they play a crucial role in regulating water cycles, contributing to watershed protection, flood prevention, mitigating the effects of drought and the provision of clean water.
5. To continue providing such ecosystem services, we underline the importance of halting and reversing deforestation and forest degradation by 2030 and implementing sustainable forest management. In this line, we welcome the alignment of the FAO Strategy on Climate Change 2022-2031 with the Strategic Framework 2022-2031.
6. In light of these critical functions, the European Union and its 27 Member States calls for a comprehensive approach to forest management that integrates climate, water, and biodiversity considerations. This entails promoting sustainable land use and water management practices, restoring degraded forests, and enhancing the resilience of forest ecosystems to climate-related disturbances. In this regard, we request FAO to continue the data collection and analysis on the drivers of deforestation, forest degradation and land degradation and on this basis to elaborate definitions.
7. Furthermore, we stress the importance of promoting inclusive and gender responsive governance mechanisms that respect the rights of Indigenous People and local communities.
8. In line with these considerations, we request FAO to continue to keep forest high on the global climate agenda and their importance for climate change adaptation. The European Union stands ready to collaborate with FAO and its member states to advance the contribution of forestry to climate change mitigation and adaptation, and

sustainable and integrated water management, in line with our shared commitment to building a sustainable and resilient future for all.

Thank you, Madam/Mr Chair.

