

- Slovakia aligns itself with the statement made by Hungary on behalf of the European Union and its Member States.
- Building on this statement, we would like to address a few additional points.
- Forests and sustainable forest management have a great potential to address interconnected challenges, such as climate change and water management.
- In this context, we stress the important role of specific forest management approaches, such as close-to-nature forestry in many areas in our country, with specific natural conditions, in enhancing the water-climate-forest nexus.
- Close-to-nature forest management, as an integral part of sustainable forest management, has a potential to contribute to climate change mitigation through ensuring stable carbon sequestration in forests in a long run and, at the same time, providing wood for wood-based products that store carbon. It has a potential to create forests that are well adapted and resilient to threats accelerated by climate change. Moreover, it also has a potential to improve water retention function of forests and regulation of water cycles.
- Slovakia has recently adopted its new National Forest Programme for 2030 with an ultimate goal to support sustainable forest management. As an integral part of this programme, the goal is to apply close-to-nature forest management principles on 25 percent of the total forest land in our country by 2030, based on specific natural and socio-economic conditions.