

COAG 29 Item 2.3 Scaling up Actions on Agriculture and Forestry Linkages

Monday, 30 September 2024

Speaking Notes

Mr Pierre Taty, Chairperson of the Committee on Forestry (COFO)

Thank you, Madam Chair,

Excellencies, Distinguished Colleagues,

It is an honor to address you today on this important topic.

FAO, with its broad mandate to enhance global food security, nutrition, poverty alleviation, and sustainable resource management, is uniquely positioned to promote integrated approaches, linking agriculture and forestry.

The collaboration between COFO and the Committee on Agriculture (COAG) since 2022 has elevated global recognition of the critical interconnections between forestry, crops, livestock, and fisheries, and the need to develop coherent, long-term solutions, and to *“showcase and promote existing and complementary practices between agriculture activities and the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of forests, avoiding deforestation and maintaining ecosystem services, noting that agriculture and forestry can synergistically support sustainable development”* – as recommended by the FAO Council.

It is therefore for the second time that both Committees have this joint agenda item.

As the Chairperson of the Committee on Forestry, I welcome the continued collaboration between COFO and COAG, and FAO Members, on this important matter.

Forests and trees are vital for sustaining and transforming agrifood systems and integral to water security. The removal of forest cover increases local temperatures and disrupts weather patterns in ways that compound the local effects of global climate change, with potentially severe consequences for agricultural productivity.

Forests make direct contributions to sustainable agricultural production. Wild-harvested forest foods are important for the food security and nutrition of many forest-dependent communities, especially in remote areas and when agricultural production falls, such as during drought.

At the same time, to meet rising global demand for food and other products and maintain the ecosystem services, agrifood systems need to produce larger quantities of more diverse and nutritious foods and other products in a sustainable way.

This requires joint and integrated approaches.

Excellencies, Distinguished Colleagues,

The 27th Session of the Committee on Forestry was held from 22 to 26 July 2024 here in Rome.

Under its agenda item 5 “Scaling up actions on agriculture and forestry linkages”, COFO acknowledged collaboration between COFO and COAG.

COFO 27 also recognized FAO's efforts in bringing together its expertise to address this important topic in a cross sectorial manner, especially through the cooperation between FAO Forestry Division and the Plant Production and Protection Division.

Furthermore, COFO 27 encouraged Members to strengthen cross-sectoral collaboration and promote policies, strategies and programmes to strengthen food security, agriculture and forestry linkages in land management and throughout relevant value chains, to mitigate deforestation and biodiversity loss, to not create unnecessary barriers to trade and to benefit the situation of small-scale producers who are key for global food production.

In terms of recommendations for the future FAO's work in this area, COFO 27 recommended, *inter alia*, FAO to support Members to improve their capacity, including through sharing of knowledge and practices for integrating land-use planning and monitoring to achieve sustainable agriculture and forestry, addressing threats to forests as well as significant drivers of deforestation and forest degradation.

Excellencies, Distinguished Colleagues,

I would also like to acknowledge the joint work conducted by the COAG Sub-Committee on Livestock (COAG-LI) and the COFO Working Group on Dryland Forests and Agrosilvopastoral Systems, and the continues work on "Grazing with Trees Global Initiative".

In this regard COFO 27 requested the Working Group to continue strengthening the collaboration with the COAG Sub-Committee on Livestock, and to inform both, COAG and COFO, on progress made.

Excellencies, Distinguished Colleagues,

Special attention was given to agroforestry at COFO 27.

COFO recommended FAO to support Members, in their actions to scale up agroforestry through projects, knowledge products, tools and capacity development.

A High-level dialogue on scaling up agroforestry “An investment in resilient agrifood systems” was held during COFO 27.

The importance of agroforestry for strengthening livelihoods, improving the resilience and food security of smallholder farmers was emphasised. The remaining barriers to scaling-up agroforestry, including technical, financial, and knowledge gaps were highlighted by Members. The dialogue also showcased how FAO is responding to the needs of through i) Promoting and implementing agroforestry as sustainable production systems; ii) Improving agroforestry monitoring; and iii) Supporting national agroforestry policy and strategy development.

Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates,

I take the opportunity to express my sincere gratitude to my predecessor, Mr. Gunter Walkner, the Chair of the 27th Session of the Committee on Forestry as well as Madame Julie Emond, the Chairperson of the 29th Session of the Committee on Agriculture, for their leadership during the last two years leading to the successful COFO 27 and COAG 29.

I also would like to thank the COAG Bureau members and the members of the COFO Steering Committee for their support to this important collaboration.

I'm looking forward to continuing working with you all, the respective Members of the Bureau and the Steering Committee, and FAO Secretariat, to advance and scale up the ongoing work and critical actions on agriculture and forestry linkages.

I look forward to our discussions today as we build upon the outcomes of COFO 27.

Thank you for your attention.