



ENDING FORESTION DESTRUCTION

A CALL TO COP30

July 2025

Introduction

The protection of forests and other ecosystems is a key feature of the Paris Agreement, yet implementation remains seriously inadequate. The world continues on a path toward climate and biodiversity catastrophe and we are already in the 1.5°C threshold zone. Earth's life support systems are faltering under ecosystem exploitation and destruction. Fossil fuel emissions continue unabated. And key tipping points are becoming an increasingly unpredictable danger to the long-term survival of life on Earth¹. A key milestone was however achieved in 2023, at COP28, when the first Global Stocktake (GST1) secured an outcome² which recognises the importance of enhanced efforts towards halting and reversing deforestation and forest degradation by 2030³.

There is high level political momentum to halt and reverse deforestation and forest degradation by 2030

The COP28 decision builds on other similar high-level initiatives and pledges, including the United Nations Strategic Plan for Forests 2017 – 2030⁴, the 2014 New York Declaration on Forests⁵ (NYDF) and the 2021 Glasgow Leaders' Declaration

https://forestdeclaration.org/about/new-york-declaration-on-forests/

¹ See e.g. <u>https://global-tipping-points.org/conference-2025/conference-statement/</u>

² Outcome of the First Global Stocktake here: https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/cma2023_16a01E.pdf

³ Paragraph 33 of the First Global Stocktake here: https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/cma2023_16a01E.pdf

⁴ See General Assembly resolution 71/285

⁵ New York Declaration on Forests here:

on Forests and Land Use⁶ (GLD). Adding to these calls from the highest levels of Government, the incoming Brazilian COP30 Presidency, as a part of the Global *Mutirão*⁷ against climate change, has now also called⁸ on all public and private stakeholders to work together towards the full implementation of efforts towards halting and reversing deforestation and forest degradation by 2030.

If the Paris Agreement and a COP30 outcome are to be considered credible, countries must now double down on working together to operationalise global efforts to reach this crucial 2030 goal, building on the high level political momentum, and put in place urgent streamlined and efficient implementation measures specifically for the pre 2030 period.



Indigenous People and Local Communities of Lokolama, in the Equateur Province of DRC. © Gosette Lubondo / Greenpeace

⁶ Glasgow Leaders Declaration on Forests and Land Use: https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/ukgwa/20230418175226/https://ukcop26.org/glasgow-leaders-declaration-on-forests-and-land-use/

 $^{^{7}}$ *Mutirão* is a term derived from the Indigenous Tupi-Guarani language meaning a group coming together to work on a shared task, or a collective effort, and has been adopted by the COP30 Brazilian Presidency as an overarching theme of COP30. See here:

https://cop30.br/en/news-about-cop30-amazonia/burkinidi-minka-and-balu-wala-learn-about-the-many-versions-of-cop30s-global-mutirao

⁸ See the third letter of the incoming COP30 President, which states that all public and private stakeholders should work together towards the full implementation of the Paris Agreement by taking into account the findings of the GST. This includes the global calls for efforts towards halting and reversing deforestation and forest degradation by 2030 here:

 $[\]underline{https://cop30.br/en/brazilian-presidency/letters-from-the-presidency/third-letter-from-the-presidency/letters-from-the-presidency/third-letter-from-the-presidency/letters-from-the-presidency/third-letter-from-the-presidency/letters-from-the-presidenc$

A need to overcome fragmentation: An efficient and streamlined Pre 2030 outcome from COP30

Achievement of this 2030 goal is extremely challenging given the fragmented and uncoordinated way forests and ecosystems are currently being approached both at the multilateral level throughout the UN, and within the UNFCCC, as well as at the national level across ministries. There are unconnected tracks of work throughout the UNFCCC technical Subsidiary Bodies (SBs), which raise specific issues concerning forests and ecosystems, including: Matters relating to the GST; the Mitigation Work Programme (MWP); the Just Transition Work Programme (ITWP); Matters relating to Adaptation; and Agriculture. There are also other unconnected relevant tracks under the Paris Agreement, including Further Guidance on Features of Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), finance mobilisation, and the definition of cooperative approaches under Article 6 (markets and non-markets). And 10 years on from its agreement in Paris, Article 5, which contains the ecosystem provisions of the Paris Agreement, has never been fully operationalised. In addition, despite calls for many years⁹, there remains no clear pathway for the essential joint work across the three Rio Conventions. If there is to be any hope of achieving the goal of halting and reversing deforestation and forest degradation by 2030 there is a need for a serious shift in the way things are being done and a far greater emphasis placed on urgent pre 2030 action.

At COP30, the UNFCCC, under the leadership of Brazil, needs to establish a new dedicated 5-year 'Action Plan for Implementation' to halt and reverse deforestation and forest degradation by 2030 (API4Forests).

A dedicated API4Forests would address the current fragmentation, promote coordination, alignment, and equitable ambition, inform the existing workstreams, and create a streamlined and efficient technical programme of work dedicated to implementation. It would promote efficiency, save limited time and resources, prevent overlap and conflicting outcomes, and allow full

⁹ The importance of joint work across the Rio Conventions has been identified in UNFCCC COP decisions since COP25. See Rogers B.M., Mackey B., Shestakova T.A., Keith H., Young V., Kormos C.F., DellaSala D.A., Dean J., Birdsey R., Bush G., Houghton R.A. and Moomaw W.R. (2022) Using ecosystem integrity to maximise climate mitigation and minimise risk in international forest policy. Front. For. Glob. Change, Sec. Forest Management. https://doi.org/10.3389/ffgc.2022.929281. A Programme of Joint Work across the Rio Conventions is supported a.o. by General Assembly resolution 78/155 (December 2023), UNFCCC decisions 1/CP.25, 1/CMA.5, and 7/CMA.6 and CBD Decisions 16/22 on Biodiversity and Climate Change, and CBD/SBSTTA decision 23/3

engagement of all relevant countries, whilst creating a discrete process tailored to addressing and accommodating the complexities unique to forests, other ecosystems, and Indigenous Peoples & local communities (IPs&LCs).

The API4Forests should be, at the very least, mandated by the CMA¹⁰ under the Paris Agreement and established through a COP30 decision request to the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI) as the UN Climate Convention's permanent body to support implementation. Undertaking technical implementation-oriented work through a dedicated track in the SBI should be well coordinated across other relevant existing work streams. The coordination of work should take place through the Chairs of the Subsidiary Bodies, ensuring relevant stakeholder engagement.



Forest near Tapajós River in the Amazon Rainforest. © Diego Baravelli / Greenpeace

A COP30 Action Plan for Implementation

This paper proposes 6 Action Items, intended to enhance efficiencies in approaching the complex subject of forests, and requests that the SBI should make:

• Action Item 1: Guidance on the implementation of national plans to halt and reverse deforestation and forest degradation by 2030: to enhance national

 $^{^{10}}$ Under the UNFCCC, the CMA stand for the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement.

 $[\]underline{https://unfccc.int/process/bodies/supreme-bodies/conference-of-the-parties-serving-as-the-meeting-of-the-parties-to-the-paris-agreement-cma$

strategies for updating Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs)11 and Land Use, Land-Use Change, and Forestry (LULUCF) targets to halt and reverse deforestation and forest degradation by 2030, further guidance is needed. It should encourage Governments to show progress in forest protection and restoration, and align these updates with the GST outcomes¹². This involves setting ambitious LULUCF goals, improving carbon accounting¹³, ensuring ecologically sustainable forestry policies, and supporting implementation through funding, spatial planning, and legislative alignment. Additionally, the guidance should address challenges like land conflicts exacerbated by climate impacts from industries such as meat, dairy, and biomass production. The important role of National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) and the Global Goal on Adaptation¹⁴ should also be considered in achieving these targets through ecosystem-based adaptation, and work should be undertaken urgently to align NDCs, NAPs, and National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs) under the Convention on Biological Diversity. The guidance should also support new or updated legislative frameworks for enhanced implementation that ensure alignment between climate crisis mitigation, biodiversity protection efforts and ecosystem-based adaptation ambition.

- Action Item 2: Measures concerning land rights and tenure of Indigenous Peoples and local Communities: The SBI should provide recommendations acknowledging the essential role of Indigenous Peoples and local communities in combating climate change, with a strong focus on securing their land rights as part of the strategy to halt and reverse deforestation and forest degradation by 2030. In the implementation of the pre 2030 Action Plan, the SBI should collaborate with the Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples Platform (LCIPP) to inform outcomes and recommendations. The SBI should call for urgent support to recognise IPs&LCs in decision making processes and strengthen IP&LC-led organizations via capacity-building programs, including fostering south-south exchanges to enhance their ability to directly access and manage resources¹⁵.
- Action Item 3: Guidance on financial systems reform, debt relief, and scaling up high-integrity finance for forests to halt and reverse deforestation and forest

¹¹ A submissions process has been underway concerning future guidance for features of NDCs referred to in paragraph 26 of decision 1/CP.21. Several countries place emphasis on detailing how to take GST 'calls forward' and how their NDC supports the outcomes of paragraph 33 concerning halting and reversing deforestation and forest degradation by 2030, including AOSIS, Colombia, the EU, Panama and the UK. See here for submissions: https://unfccc.int/documents/644017

¹² As per decision 4/CMA.1, annex I, para. 4(c)

¹³ See Greenpeace publication, Europe's [Green] Recovery. As if the Planet Mattered, on the subject of carbon accounting here: https://www.greenpeace.de/publikationen/20201022_greenrecovery_f_es.pdf
¹⁴ Decision 2/CMA.5

¹⁵ See Principles & Guidelines for Direct Access Funding for Indigenous Peoples' Climate Action, Biodiversity Conservation and Fighting Desertification for a Sustainable Planet. https://encr.pw/Ujzlo

degradation by 2030 and to maintain and restore forest ecosystem integrity: GST1 recognises a need for financial systems reform¹⁶, which needs to prioritize ending forest destruction, including addressing unsustainable debt¹⁷ in the global south as a major driver of deforestation and forest degradation¹⁸. There is an urgent need for guidance to reform financial systems to prioritize nature and rights, including through UNFCCC financial mechanisms like the Green Climate Fund (GCF) as well as a need for dialogue on these matters within the UAE Dialogue. There is also a need for a shift in priorities. For too long, emphasis and investment has focused on forest carbon markets, which have not effectively reduced deforestation¹⁹. Non-market-based approaches should be given more priority and supported to attract investments, which integrate mitigation, adaptation, and rights, in particular ecosystem-based and community-led activities.

- Action Item 4: Addressing drivers of deforestation and forest degradation related to agriculture and commodities trade: There is an urgent need to strengthen international cooperation²⁰ on trade and climate change and ensure a just transition away from deforestation, that protects vulnerable communities including smallholder farmers and Indigenous Peoples. Pre 2030 work under the SBI should recommend actionable steps, including advocating for sustainable trade policies, supporting secure land tenure, and promoting agroecological practices, and in doing so inform the ongoing work of the UNFCCC under the MWP, the UAE Dialogue, the GST Dialogue and GST2, and the Just Transition Work Programme (JTWP).
- Action Item 5: Improving monitoring systems of deforestation and forest degradation through dialogue, reporting, and accountability: leveraging existing frameworks such as the Enhanced Transparency Framework (ETF) under the Paris Agreement is key to strengthening accountability.

¹⁶ Paragraph 2 of Decision 1.CMA/6 - New collective quantified goal on climate finance

¹⁷ Paragraph 6 Decision 1.CMA/6 - New collective quantified goal on climate finance

¹⁸ Jessica Dempsey, Audrey Irvine-Broque, Tova Gaster, Lorah Steichen, Patrick Bigger, Azul Carolina Duque, Amelia Linett, George Porto Ferreira, and Nicole Kaechele, "Exporting Extinction: How the International Financial System Constrains Biodiverse Futures," 2024, The Centre for Climate Justice, Climate and Community Project, and Third World Network. See here: <a href="https://climatejustice.ubc.ca/news/exporting-extinction-how-the-international-financial-system-constraint-patrick-ubc.ca/news/exporting-extinction-how-the-international-financial-system-constraint-patrick-ubc.ca/news/exporting-extinction-how-the-international-financial-system-constraint-patrick-ubc.ca/news/exporting-extinction-how-the-international-financial-system-constraint-patrick-ubc.ca/news/exporting-extinction-how-the-international-financial-system-constraint-patrick-ubc.ca/news/exporting-extinction-how-the-international-financial-system-constraint-patrick-ubc.ca/news/exporting-extinction-how-the-international-financial-system-constraint-patrick-ubc.ca/news/exporting-extinction-how-the-international-financial-system-constraint-patrick-ubc.ca/news/exporting-extinction-how-the-international-financial-system-constraint-patrick-ubc.ca/news/exporting-extinction-how-the-international-financial-system-constraint-patrick-ubc.ca/news/exporting-extinction-how-the-international-financial-system-constraint-patrick-ubc.ca/news/exporting-extinction-how-the-international-financial-system-constraint-patrick-ubc.ca/news/exporting-extinction-how-the-international-financial-system-constraint-patrick-ubc.ca/news/exporting-extinction-how-the-international-financial-system-constraint-patrick-ubc.ca/news/exporting-extinction-how-the-international-financial-system-constraint-patrick-ubc.ca/news/exporting-extinction-how-the-international-financial-system-constraint-patrick-ubc.ca/news/exporting-extinction-how-the-international-financial-system-constraint-patrick-ubc.ca/news/exporting-extinction-how-the-internation-how-the-internation-how-the-internation-how-

 $[\]underline{https://climatejustice.ubc.ca/news/exporting-extinction-how-the-international-financial-system-constrains-\underline{biodiverse-futures/}$

¹⁹ Jones, P.G, and Lewis, S.L. 2023. Forest carbon offsets are failing: Analysis reveals emission reductions from forest conservation have been overestimated. Science, 24 Aug 2023, Vol 381, Issue 6660. pp. 830-831 https://www.science.org/doi/10.1126/science.adj6951. See also Haya, B. K., Alford-Jones, K., Anderegg, W. R. L., Beymer-Farris, B., Blanchard, L., Bomfim, B., Chin, D., Evans, S., Hogan, M., Holm, J. A., McAfee, K., So, I. S., West, T. A. P., & Withey, L. (2023, September 15). Quality assessment of REDD+ carbon credit projects. Berkeley Carbon Trading Project. https://gspp.berkeley.edu/berkeley-carbon-trading-project/redd

²⁰ Paragraph 154 of GST1 outcome Recognises that Parties should cooperate on promoting a supportive and open international economic system aimed at achieving sustainable economic growth and development in all countries and thus enabling them to better to address the problems of climate change, noting that measures taken to combat climate change, including unilateral ones, should not constitute a means of arbitrary or unjustifiable discrimination or a disguised restriction on international trade. See here: https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/cma2023_16a01E.pdf

The SBI should call for dialogue on halting and reversing deforestation and forest degradation as a specific roundtable discussion under the UAE Dialogue and the GST Dialogue. Recommendations should be made for tracking of progress towards achieving the 2030 target through Biennial Transparency Reports (BTRs), and urgent support, including capacity development²¹ should be provided for development of indicators, tools and methodologies. A new Technical Expert Group on Ecosystems Integrity should be established within the UNFCCC to develop methodologies, and improve monitoring of ecosystem integrity, to support tracking forest degradation and ecosystem resilience. And the pre 2030 work under the SBI should make recommendations on alignment and harmonisation of different monitoring and traceability systems, across the Rio Conventions and systems in place to support deforestation-free trade.

• Action Item 6: Enhancing International Cooperation and establishing a legacy of ongoing high-level political engagement to halt and reverse deforestation and forest degradation by 2030 and to align climate action in the land sector with the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework²²: The SBI should support priority joint work across the three Rio Conventions²³ including through workshops, roundtables, and dialogues. Urgent, pre 2030 areas of focus include aligning national plans like NDCs, NAPs, and NBSAPs, scaling up public finance, harmonizing approaches related to IPs&LCs, and ensuring ecosystem integrity and monitoring. The urgent work of the SBI should reflect high level political priorities identified through other initiatives, such as the GLD and Forests & Climate Leaders' Partnership, and the United Nations Forum on Forests.

²¹ Martius, C.; Pingault, N. (2025) Are countries delivering on transparency? Key takeaways from the first Biennial Transparency Reports to the UNFCCC. See here https://www.cifor-icraf.org/knowledge/publication/9366/

²² A Programme of Joint Work across the Rio Conventions is supported by General Assembly resolution 78/155 (December 2023), UNFCCC decisions 1/CP.25, 1/CMA.5, and 7/CMA.6 and CBD Decisions 16/22 on Biodiversity and Climate Change, and CBD/SBSTTA decision 23/3

²³ The importance of joint work across the Rio Conventions has been identified in UNFCCC COP decisions since COP25. See Rogers B.M., Mackey B., Shestakova T.A., Keith H., Young V., Kormos C.F., DellaSala D.A., Dean J., Birdsey R., Bush G., Houghton R.A. and Moomaw W.R. (2022) Using ecosystem integrity to maximise climate mitigation and minimise risk in international forest policy. Front. For. Glob. Change, Sec. Forest Management. https://doi.org/10.3389/ffgc.2022.929281.

COP30 must land a high-ambition outcome on protecting forests and people

As the 2030 deadline to halt and reverse deforestation and forest degradation rapidly approaches, the need for a more efficient and coordinated response under the UNFCCC in the form of dedicated pre 2030 action is urgently needed. Current approaches remain fragmented across multiple workstreams, resulting in duplication, inefficiencies, high costs, high risk, and missed opportunities for synergy. This proposal for an API4Forests at COP30 directly addresses these inefficiencies by offering a streamlined, purpose-built framework focused on implementation. Clear guidance to support achievement of the 2030 targets, together with a dedicated space within the UNFCCC to track progress, enhance understandings through dialogue, share lessons, enable access to finance for Indigenous Peoples and local communities, and maintain the existing political momentum would contribute to strengthening forest protection on the ground in domestic policies.



Tree in DRC Rainforest. © Thomas Einberger / argum / Greenpeace

The API4Forests should be designed to consolidate currently disparate forest-related discussions into a coherent five-year work programme under the SBI, which is coordinated with other ongoing work across the Paris Agreement under the UNFCCC and in alignment with the Rio Conventions and other relevant multilateral environmental agreements. Rather than creating new technical burdens, it can enhance efficiency by integrating and informing existing

mandates, aligning overlapping agendas, and avoiding redundant efforts. It can enable more effective and efficient use of limited time and resources, while ensuring that implementation efforts are mutually reinforcing across climate mitigation, adaptation, and biodiversity goals supporting implementation and enhancement of national plans, enhanced transparency and accountability in reporting, and tracking progress, and contributing to zero deforestation value chains.

The six proposed action items for implementation focus on removing systemic barriers to implementation, such as fragmented finance, disconnected policy frameworks, and misaligned monitoring systems. By establishing clear technical guidance, promoting policy coherence (especially across NDCs, NAPs, and NBSAPs), and facilitating high-level political coordination, the API4Forests would ensure that Parties work smarter, and significantly increase the likelihood of achieving the 2030 goal.

There is no doubt that COP30 should ensure a high-ambition outcome on protecting forests and people. There is no more time to waste and there is high-level political momentum to build on²⁴. The API4Forests would be a practical and cost-effective approach to operationalise forest-related commitments under the Paris Agreement and its first GST outcome. It would deliver what the UNFCCC now most urgently needs: an efficient, coordinated, and implementation-focused pathway to achieve the goal of halting and reversing deforestation and forest degradation by 2030.

²⁴ Glasgow Leaders Declaration on Forests and Land Use: https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/ukgwa/20230418175226/https://ukcop26.org/glasgow-leaders-declaration-on-forests-and-land-use/