

**Economic and Social Council**

Distr.: General
28 March 2019

Original: English

United Nations Forum on Forests**Fourteenth session**

6–10 May 2019

Item 5 of the provisional agenda*

**Means of implementation: progress on the activities
and the operation of the Global Forest Financing
Facilitation Network and availability of resources**

**Letter dated 20 March 2019 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the
Permanent Mission of Suriname to the United Nations addressed
to the Secretary-General**

I have the honour to submit herewith the Krutu of Paramaribo Joint Declaration on high forest cover and low deforestation climate finance mobilization, adopted at the high-level conference on high forest cover and low deforestation climate finance mobilization, held in Paramaribo, Suriname, from 12 to 14 February 2019 (see annex).

The conference was organized by the Government of the Republic of Suriname in collaboration with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat and the Suriname country office of the United Nations Development Programme. The Krutu of Paramaribo Joint Declaration was adopted by developing countries with high forest cover and low deforestation in a joint effort to address observed gaps in climate finance mechanisms affecting these particular countries.

I hereby request that you include the Joint Declaration among the documentation for the fourteenth session of the United Nations Forum on Forests.

(Signed) Kitty Sweeb
Chargé d'affaires a.i.
Deputy Permanent Representative

* E/CN.18/2019/1.



Annex

Krutu of Paramaribo Joint Declaration on high forest cover and low deforestation climate finance mobilization

We, Heads of Delegation and representatives of High Forest Cover and Low Deforestation (HFLD) developing countries met in the city of Paramaribo, Suriname, from 12 to 14 February 2019 on the occasion of the First HFLD Conference on Climate Finance Mobilization;

Reaffirming the recognition by the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) at its 11th session in 2015 of the special needs and requirements of HFLD developing countries in mobilizing financing for sustainable forest management, including conservation;

Recalling the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), particularly its Decision COP14/5, which expresses deep concern that failing to hold the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2° C above pre-industrial levels would place many species and ecosystems with limited adaptive capacity as well as the people that depend on their functions and services, especially indigenous peoples and local communities and rural women, under very high risk, and that escalating destruction, degradation and fragmentation of ecosystems would reduce a capacity of ecosystems to store carbon and lead to increases in greenhouse emissions, reduce the resilience and stability of ecosystems, and make the climate change crisis ever more challenging; and its Decision COP14/30 which encourages greater synergies between international conventions and recognizes the exceptional importance of primary forest and the urgent necessity to avoid major fragmentation, damage and loss of primary forests of the planet;

Also recalling the Paris Agreement, under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), in particular:

- Its preamble that notes the importance of ensuring ecosystem integrity and the protection of biodiversity as well as the importance of forest-based climate action;
- Its Article 5 that recognizes that:
 - Parties should take action to conserve and enhance, as appropriate, sinks and reservoirs of greenhouse gases as referred to in Article 4, paragraph 1(d) of the UNFCCC, including forests;
 - Parties are encouraged to take action to implement and support, including through results-based payments, the existing framework as set out in related guidance and decisions already agreed under the Convention for: policy approaches and positive incentives for activities relating to reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, and the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks in developing countries; and alternative policy approaches, such as joint mitigation and adaptation approaches for the integral and sustainable management of forests, while reaffirming the importance of incentivizing, as appropriate, non-carbon benefits associated with such approaches;
- Its Article 9 which reaffirms the leading role of the developed countries to mobilize climate finance;

Reaffirming the findings in the 4th Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), Climate Change 2007: Mitigation, that concluded that in

the long term, a sustainable forest management strategy aimed at maintaining or increasing forest carbon stocks, while producing an annual sustained yield of timber, fibre or energy from the forest, will generate the largest sustained mitigation benefit in combatting climate change;

Recalling Global Forest Goal 4 of the United Nations Strategic Plan for Forests (2017) to “mobilize significantly increased, new and additional financial resources from all sources for the implementation of sustainable forest management and strengthen scientific and technical cooperation and partnerships”;

Recalling further the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (70/1, 2015), in particular:

- Target 13.a on implementing the commitment to mobilize USD 100 billion annually by 2020 from all sources to address the needs of developing countries in the context of meaningful climate change mitigation action;
- Target 15.b on mobilizing significant resources from all sources and at all levels to finance sustainable forest management and providing adequate incentives to developing countries to advance such management, including for conservation and reforestation; and
- Targets 17.1, 17.2, 17.3, 17.4 and 17.5 on strengthening the means of implementation and revitalizing the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development through finance;

Welcoming multi-stakeholder initiatives involving governments and the major groups as recognized by the United Nations.

1. We call attention to the fact that our countries contain approximately 24 percent of Earth’s remaining forests and hence are custodians of a wide diversity of ecosystems, rich biodiversity and a large proportion of the world’s forest carbon for the benefit of all humanity.
2. We further call attention to the value of standing forests, to the urgent need to avoid both deforestation and forest degradation, and to the need for the price of carbon to adequately reflect the efforts of HFLD countries to maintain and enhance forest carbon stocks and sinks.
3. We reiterate our commitment to sustainable forest management, including conservation, and maintaining biodiversity and ecosystem integrity and carbon stocks, emphasizing the intrinsic relationship that climate change actions, responses and impacts have with equitable access to sustainable development and eradication of poverty.
4. We observe that the high forest cover, including primary forest, of many HFLD developing countries is under immediate threat, inter alia from pressure for economic growth and development, demographic trends and the global economic slowdown, with these threats exacerbated by intensifying adverse impacts of climate change, and in order to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030 while leaving no one behind we look to the international community to support our efforts in maintaining high forest cover and protecting forests, while enjoying sustained economic growth.
5. We note that despite making a critical contribution to fighting climate change, HFLD developing countries are receiving a very small portion of climate finance.
6. We further express our concern that the pace and scale of REDD Plus (reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, and the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks)

finance matches neither the need nor the ambition necessary to answer the call to action of the 2018 IPCC Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5° C.

7. We underscore that many HFLD developing countries are in dire need of adequate international climate finance, technology transfer and capacity building to support the transition towards climate resilient and low emissions development and to achieve the goals set forth in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement.
8. We affirm the important role of forests in contributing directly to the achievement of relevant Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs).
9. We call upon the international community to find practical ways to simplify and better align the financial frameworks and mechanisms to address the urgent and specific needs of HFLD developing countries, in a way which provides economic incentives for the preservation of forest carbon stocks, and thus, recognizing the historic contribution of HFLD developing countries to mitigate climate change.
10. We invite relevant financial institutions, developed country donors, the private sector, philanthropy and other countries in a position to do so, to increase financing for sustainable forest management, including conservation, and to give special consideration to HFLD countries.
11. We welcome the inclusion of the Impact Programme on Sustainable Forest Management within the seventh replenishment period of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) (2018–2022) in support of multiple benefits for biodiversity, climate change and land degradation, and in that context we encourage GEF to continue and strengthen the mobilization of financial resources and funds dedicated to sustainable forest management, including conservation, and invite GEF to consider ways to improve and simplify access to its funding for sustainable forest management, as well as to continue and strengthen the dissemination of information on financing for sustainable forest management and capacity building to access the fund, in particular to HFLD developing countries.
12. We welcome the Green Climate Fund (GCF)'s support for sustainable land use and forest management, including REDD Plus, and in this context encourage the UNFCCC to continue and strengthen the mobilization of financial resources and funds dedicated to sustainable forest management, and invite the GCF to consider ways to improve and simplify access to its funding for sustainable forest management as well as to continue and strengthen the dissemination of information on financing for sustainable forest management and capacity building to access the fund, in particular to HFLD developing countries.
13. We further welcome the support offered by the Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network of the United Nations Forum on Forests in facilitating access to forest finance from all sources, including multilateral financial institutions and other relevant sources of climate finance, and that special consideration should be given to HFLD developing countries as mandated in this regard by the United Nations Strategic Plan for Forests.
14. We encourage the HFLD developing countries to coordinate and advocate for increased delivery of finance and support tailored to our unique needs and circumstances, which will help HFLD developing countries to meet the NDCs and the Sustainable Development Goals at national level.
15. In light of the above, we pledge to increase cooperation among the HFLD developing countries through a platform for dialogue, coordination and facilitation to increase interaction and linkages with international and multilateral institutions and financial arrangements (the Platform), to utilize existing

processes, including within the UNFF, the UNFCCC and regional organizations such as the Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization (ACTO), the Commission of Central African Forests (COMIFAC) and other relevant regional organizations, regarding the contribution of forests of HFLD countries to sustainable development, and in this regard we endeavor:

- a. To increase collaboration, knowledge and exchange of best practices among HFLD countries and develop joint strategies and positions to conserve, maintain and, where appropriate, increase our forest coverage for the benefit of our peoples and all humankind;
 - b. To raise international recognition of the significant contribution that HFLD developing countries provide to the global response to climate change by enabling our forests to serve as vital carbon sinks, through sustainable forest management including conservation, that mitigate climate change and increase resilience of local communities, and look to the international community to provide adequate financial support to help us maintain this treasure;
 - c. To support enhancement of national knowledge, skills and capacities of HFLD developing countries with respect to international climate finance mobilization;
 - d. To encourage improved access to international public and private finance for climate mitigation and adaptation actions in accordance with the Paris Agreement;
 - e. To contribute to global actions in support of limiting the average global temperature increase to 1.5° C above pre-industrial levels in accordance with the Paris Agreement and the 2018 IPCC Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5° C, based on the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities;
 - f. To advocate, in the context of the CBD negotiations for a post-2020 framework, for an ambitious and tangible agreement, with associated financing, that recognizes the contribution of HFLD to ecosystem integrity, biodiversity conservation, resilience and human well-being.
16. We welcome “A Way Forward for HFLD Climate Finance Mobilization”, annexed hereto.
 17. We invite the United Nations system, including UNFF, to support the follow-up of the outcome of this conference within existing mandates and resources.
 18. We invite the Government of Suriname as the Host of the Conference to bring this Krutu of Paramaribo Joint Declaration on HFLD Climate Finance Mobilization to the attention of the international community, including at the upcoming First United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA) – UNFCCC Global Conference on Synergies between the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement (April 2019), at the 2019 Financing for Development Forum (April 2019), at the 14th session of the United Nations Forum on Forests (May 2019), at the 2019 High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development under the auspices of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (July 2019) and under the auspices of the United Nations General Assembly (September 2019), at the Climate Summit to be convened by the United Nations Secretary General (September 2019) and at the 25th Conference of Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP25) (November 2019).

19. We further invite the Government of Suriname to convene the Platform in 2019 during the 14th session of the UNFF and the COP25 and encourage the Platform at its first meeting and thereafter, as necessary and appropriate, to discuss how to realize its objectives, including its working modalities and arrangements and the organization of future meetings and conferences.
20. We express our appreciation and gratitude to the Government and people of Suriname for hosting the First High Level Conference of the High Forest Cover Low Deforestation (HFLD) developing countries, and for the warm hospitality and the excellent organization from which we have benefited.

Adopted in the city of Paramaribo, Suriname on 13 February 2019.

Annex 1**A Way Forward for HFLD Climate Finance Mobilization**

As a result of the HFLD Conference on Climate Finance Mobilization held in Paramaribo (2019), and in particular the articles of its Krutu of Paramaribo Joint Declaration on HFLD Climate Finance Mobilization (the Declaration) related to the Platform, the HFLD developing countries express their interest to collectively take the following action as a follow up to the Conference:

1. To operationalize the Platform in accordance with the provisions in the Declaration.
2. To utilize the relevant multilateral meetings and conferences in 2019 and beyond to convene meetings of attending experts of HFLD developing countries, as appropriate, to coordinate positions and undertake joint actions in regard to steering outcomes of these meetings and conferences towards increasing the delivery of financial and other support to HFLD developing countries.
3. To invite experts from HFLD developing countries to work together in providing advice to the Platform for collective actions, including an agenda and road map for climate resource mobilization in support of its objectives.
4. To mobilize all available existing resources and expertise outside of the Platform, including for capacity building to realize its objectives as set out in the Declaration.
5. To identify and utilize all other means that are beneficial to the purpose of the Platform.

Annex 2

Background Information on Climate Finance in HFLDs

High forest cover, low deforestation countries (HFLDs) are defined as having more than 50% forest cover and a deforestation rate under 0.22%. Based on FAO's Forest Resources Assessment (2015), 24% of the world's forests (close to a billion hectares) are located in HFLDs.

33 countries meet this definition: 25 developing countries, 1 country with an economy in transition, and 7 developed countries. Many of these are small island developing states; others are located in large forest massifs and are home to mega-biodiversity hotspots.

Due to their high cover, forests in HFLDs stock a disproportionately high amount of carbon. It is all the higher as HFLDs are mostly located in the wet tropics where biomass is far greater than other ecosystems.

In the past decade, REDD+ emerged as a prominent approach for reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation but payments are largely based on historical deforestation rates which benefit countries with high deforestation rates. Language has been inserted in UNFCCC decisions to allow for "national circumstances" but HFLDs continue to lose out on climate finance.

Since 2007, HFLDs received under USD 2 billion in climate finance – less than 14% of all climate funds committed. Brazil alone accounted for over half this amount. One reason is that financing mechanisms try to allocate their funds where their impact will be greatest, thereby focusing on countries where forests are already disappearing.

Yet, the forest transition curve theory predicts that under a business-as-usual scenario, many HFLDs will see their deforestation rates increase sharply as a result of economic development. Some HFLDs have already witnessed such a trend.

There is a real risk of more countries dropping out of the list if significant financial resources are not mobilized to support developing HFLDs steer towards a low deforestation, low emissions path to development that would allow them to maintain their forest cover and meet the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030.
