

Enhancing Action & International Cooperation for Halting and Reversing Deforestation and Forest Degradation

Discussion paper

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Center for Climate and Energy Solutions¹

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A. Summary

1. The period from the end of the global stocktake (GST) at COP28 (2023) through to COP30 (2025) is critical. During this time period we will learn the collective level of ambition of new climate targets, whether countries have taken into account the outcomes of COP28 in formulating them, and whether countries have put in place the domestic plans, legislation, finance and investment needed to implement those new targets. In the context of the Paris Agreement’s ambition cycle, 2024 is a crucial year for preparation, action, and enhanced international cooperation.
2. The GST decision from COP28 sets out a number of key, transformational global targets and signals to Parties to: (i) inform their next nationally determined contributions (NDCs); and (ii) enhance implementation and international cooperation.¹ Parties are expected to communicate their NDCs by February 10, 2025, with an end date of 2035.² The GST targets and signals form part of guidance and requirements that have been set out from Paris to date, including that:

¹ This paper has benefited tremendously from the feedback, inputs, and insights from a number of experts over the course of 2024, including from Alexandra Deprez, IDDRI.

- Each Party’s successive NDC will represent a “progression” beyond its previous NDC and reflect its “highest possible ambition,” reflecting its common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities (CBDR-RC), in the light of different national circumstances³
 - Parties “shall pursue domestic mitigation measures, with the aim of achieving the objectives” of their NDCs⁴
 - Parties include, as part of the information to facilitate clarity, transparency, and understanding of NDCs:
 - how the Party considers that its NDC is fair and ambitious in the light of its national circumstances⁵
 - how the NDC contributes toward achieving the objective of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, as set out in its Article 2⁶
 - how the NDC is informed by the outcomes of the GST, in accordance with Article 4, paragraph 9, of the Paris Agreement⁷
 - Parties come forward with ambitious, economy-wide emission reduction targets, covering all greenhouse gases, sectors and categories and aligned with limiting global warming to 1.5 degree C, as informed by the latest science, in the light of different national circumstances⁸
 - Parties commit to accelerate action in this critical decade on the basis of the best available science, reflecting equity and the principle of CBDR-RC in the light of different national circumstances and in the context of sustainable development and efforts to eradicate poverty⁹
 - Parties put in place new or intensify existing domestic arrangements for preparing and implementing successive NDCs¹⁰
 - Parties present their next NDCs at a special event to be held under the auspices of the United Nations Secretary-General.¹¹
3. The Presidencies’ Troika letter from March 21, 2024 recognizes the need for leadership among an apparent wealth of actors, events, and pathways for Parties to avail themselves in their efforts to take forward the GST targets and signals.¹² Their second letter from July 23, 2024 further elaborates their Mission 1.5 work plan to engage Parties in a targeted set of activities for the remainder of 2024 to enhance ambition and enable action toward COP29.¹³ While this establishes a welcome platform, Parties and non-Party stakeholders (NPS) may find a more elaborated vision helpful in guiding them in effectively action each of the GST targets and signals, reflect them in new NDCs, and achieve them.
4. In order to implement the GST targets and signals through enhanced NDC ambition and implementation, major barriers must be meaningfully addressed, turned into opportunities for enhanced international cooperation, and translated into development priorities and domestic policies. In the context of making the case for clear leadership to enable such action, this paper:
- focuses on the GST decision’s call to enhance **efforts, support, and investment towards halting and reversing deforestation and forest degradation by 2030**, recognizing the importance of conserving, protecting, and restoring nature and ecosystems toward achieving the Paris Agreement temperature goal¹⁴
 - sets out barriers and solutions, as identified by our work and others, that must be addressed and implemented to enable real action in 2024¹⁵
 - sets out key leadership considerations, such a leadership role can be effectively utilized, and key priorities for 2024-26.
5. There are many obstacles to halting and reversing deforestation and forest degradation. However, three main immediate challenges include: **commodity driven production and extractive industries; forest governance issues**, and the **lack of finance for conservation and restoration efforts**.

6. Parties must respond quickly and tangibly to the call to enhance efforts, support, and investment toward halting and reversing deforestation and forest degradation by 2030. A number of solutions and opportunities exist to help overcome these challenges. At the same time, clear leadership that is inspiring, inclusive, respects the nationally determined nature of NDCs, and meets Parties and NPS where they are in terms of capacity, is essential. Enhanced international cooperation is vital to move from incrementalism to transformative levels of action in 2024 and beyond.

Recognizing the importance of conserving, protecting, and restoring nature and ecosystems toward achieving the Paris Agreement temperature goal, **Parties should develop and include in their NDCs national plans toward halting and reversing deforestation and forest degradation and indicate, ideally with quantified targets, how these efforts contribute to their emissions reduction targets.** These plans may also be included in or have synergies with national adaptation plans (NAPs), long-term low emission strategies (LT-LEDS), and national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs).

Currently a gap in leadership on deforestation and forest degradation exists. To address this, the Troika—the collaborative leadership between the Presidents of COP28 (UAE), COP29 (Azerbaijan) and COP30 (Brazil)— could convene a global forum or task force to identify and endorse a leader focused on halting and reversing deforestation, with the goal of addressing existing gaps and advancing national deforestation strategies.

The Presidency Troika’s leadership approach, including Mission 1.5 and Brazil’s Presidency of the G20, provides a unique opportunity to set out a new model for collaborative leadership. Building on the GST targets and signals from the UAE Consensus, COP29 must give Parties assurance that climate finance—drawn from a variety of sources—will be available such that: (i) Parties can come forward with ambitious NDCs and (ii) subsequently those NDCs. COP30 in Belém must reflect on the level of ambition presented by the NDCs and set the new direction as we head toward the end of this critical decade.

Questions for Consideration

- How are Parties planning to take forward the signal to enhance efforts, support, and investment toward halting and reversing deforestation and forest degradation? How will this be reflected in new NDCs in 2025?
- How can Parties be supported in setting out national plans and quantified targets to reverse and halt deforestation and forest degradation in their NDCs?
- What is the plan to enhance international cooperation toward halting and reversing deforestation and forest degradation by 2030?
- Which organization(s) or countries are best placed to show leadership and build momentum to enhance efforts, support, and investment toward halting and reversing deforestation and forest degradation?

B. Context

7. The GST is a key part of the Paris Agreement’s “ambition cycle.”¹⁶ Parties to the Paris Agreement are required to undertake a GST every five years “to take stock of the implementation of this Agreement to assess the collective progress towards achieving the purpose of this Agreement and its long-term goals...It shall do so in a comprehensive and facilitative manner, considering mitigation, adaptation and means of implementation and support, and in light of equity and the best available science.”¹⁷
8. The outcome of the GST shall inform Parties in: (i) updating and enhancing, in a nationally determined manner, their actions and support (including their NDCs); and (ii) enhancing international cooperation for climate action.¹⁸ The GST outcome also reaffirms sustainable and just solutions founded on meaningful, inclusive participation of all stakeholders and underlines that just transitions can support more robust and equitable mitigation outcomes.¹⁹
9. Parties are encouraged to communicate their NDCs by February 10, 2025, with an end date of 2035.²⁰ There are guidance and requirements for their NDCs that have been set out by Parties from Paris through to COP28 (see “Summary” above).
10. The 2023 Climate Resources *Land Gap Report* analysis of land-based carbon dioxide removal strategies reveals that Parties, through their NDCs and LT-LEDS, expect to restore or afforest one billion hectares by 2060, including 500 million hectares for restoration, which aids ecosystem carbon recovery, and 500 million hectares for afforestation and restoration, which poses high sustainability risks, including food security, biodiversity loss, and human rights issues. A few high-income, high-emitting countries account for nearly 75 percent of this land use, potentially delaying climate action and undermining decarbonization efforts in key sectors.²¹
11. The *Land Gap Report* also provides a detailed analysis of land-based carbon dioxide removal strategies, including afforestation, reforestation, and the restoration of forested landscapes. It finds that, by 2060, NDCs and LT-LEDS indicate that countries plan to use 1 billion hectares of land, 500 million hectares for restoration, which enhances carbon storage without requiring land use change, and 500 million hectares for afforestation and reforestation, typically involving monoculture planting. The latter approach involves land-use change and poses significant sustainability risks, including threats to food security, increased biodiversity loss, and potential human rights and land tenure violations. Additionally, the report highlights that high-income, high-emitting countries are responsible for nearly 75 percent of this land use, which risks insufficient decarbonization in key sectors like power generation and heavy industry. This heavy reliance on land-based solutions could delay essential climate action, as many countries depend on sequestration beyond 2030 or even 2050 to make up for the lack of near-term efforts.²²
12. The most recent NDC synthesis report indicates that only 38 percent of NDCs include measures to reduce conversion of forests and other ecosystems, with only 34 percent of NDCs including the implementation of activities reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries (REDD+).²³ As of September 2023, 20 percent of the 54 NAPs submitted include addressing forest and land degradation.²⁴
13. The June 2024 UNEP report on enhancing NDCs for forests found that the NDCs of 20 countries with the highest emissions due to deforestation fall short of the global goal to halt and reverse deforestation. Of those 20 countries, fewer than half provide quantified targets for reducing deforestation; just over half for afforestation, reforestation, and restoration; and half include at least one forest-related target as part of their greenhouse gas reduction goals.²⁵

14. The year 2024 is therefore a crucial year to take forward the GST targets and signals, translating them into effective domestic policies and measures as well as enhancing international cooperation on climate action. The moment of truth as to whether the GST, in the wider context of the Paris Agreement’s ambition cycle, will have succeeded in increasing ambition will be in the first quarter of 2025 when new NDCs must be tabled by all Parties. The collective impact of these will be set out in a synthesis report to be made available ahead of COP30.²⁶ Furthermore, COP30 in Belém should not be seen as a cliff edge; it will need to set out the world’s response to level of ambition that countries have come forward with.

Reducing Deforestation and Forest Degradation: From Incremental to Transformational Change

15. Forests are vital carbon sinks, capturing large amounts of carbon dioxide through photosynthesis and storing it in their biomass—trees, roots, and soil. This process helps mitigate climate change by offsetting a significant portion of greenhouse gas emissions, particularly in dense tropical rainforests. Transforming land into a net carbon dioxide sink can help achieve sustainable levels of land-based carbon removal.²⁷ According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), protecting, managing, and restoring forests and other ecosystems has the largest mitigation potential of land-based mitigation approaches, with the potential to reduce emissions and/or sequester 7.3 gigatons of equivalent carbon dioxide per year.²⁸
16. However, the 2023 Forest Declaration Assessment found that deforestation has increased by 4-7 percent from 2021-22. In 2022, global gross deforestation reached 6.6 million hectares worldwide and was 21 percent higher than needed to eliminate deforestation by 2030.²⁹ Tropical primary forest loss reached record-high levels in certain regions. Industrial logging in Global North countries is the largest single driver of global tree cover loss.³⁰
17. In 2017, a special UN General Assembly session of the UN Forum on Forests adopted the first ever UN Strategic Plan for Forests 2017-30, which sets out ambitious targets for 2030, including increasing global forest area by three percent, equivalent to 120 million hectares. The plan sets out six global goals on forests and 26 associated targets to be reached by 2030.³¹
18. At COP26 in 2021, more than 140 Parties signed the Glasgow Leader’s Declaration on Forests and Land Use, committing to halt and reverse deforestation by 2030. As part of the declaration, Parties launched the Forest, Agriculture, and Commodity Trade (FACT) dialogue at COP26, a government-to-government dialogue to protect forests while promoting sustainable trade and protecting the biodiversity and climate crisis.³² However, momentum on this Declaration has faltered in recent years.³³
19. At COP27, 28 countries launched the Forest Climate Leadership Partnership (FCLP). The Partnership aims to unite stakeholders to accelerate action toward resilient and sustainable forest management globally and contribute to the Glasgow Leaders’ Declaration on Forests and Land Use. It is a voluntary partnership of 32 countries and the European Union.³⁴
20. The Natural Resource Defense Council and a coalition urged Glasgow Leaders' Declaration signatories to adopt the 2023 Glasgow Dialogue Accountability Framework (GDAF) for improved transparency, policy strength, and equity in achieving the 2030 forest protection goals, with more than 100 NGOs at COP28 backing this call for global action.³⁵

21. Additionally, the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (UNCBD) and the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) both address biodiversity, ecosystem and conservation, and restoration efforts on the global stage. The Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF) was adopted during the UNCBD 15th Conference of the Parties (COP15 in December 2022). The KMGBF committed to a global agreement to halt and reverse biodiversity loss by 2030, support the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and set out an ambitious pathway to reach the vision of global harmony with nature by 2050.^{36,37} (SDG 15 “Life on Land” acknowledges the need to protect, restore, and promote the sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, including responsible forest management, combating desertification, and halting biodiversity loss.³⁸)
22. In recognition of the need to enhance efforts to conserve, protect and restore nature and ecosystems toward achieving the Paris Agreement temperature goal, the COP28 GST decision calls on Parties to enhance **efforts, support, and investment towards halting and reversing deforestation and forest degradation by 2030.**³⁹
23. Committing to halting and reversing deforestation and forest degradation by 2030 could reduce approximately 14 percent of global emissions and significantly enhance the capacity of forests to sequester more carbon. This pledge represents a groundbreaking milestone, as it marks the first time such a commitment has received formal recognition under the UNFCCC.⁴⁰
24. To reach this target, efforts should concentrate on several key areas: strengthening international collaborations, enhancing financial support for forest conservation and restoration projects, and implementing stricter regulations on industries linked to deforestation. Additionally, it is crucial to empower local communities, promote sustainable land use practices, incorporate indigenous knowledge, and actively involve the private sector in responsible sourcing and supply chains. Throughout these efforts, it is vital to prioritize transparency and accountability mechanisms to effectively monitor progress and address any potential setbacks.⁴¹
25. Additionally, the GST outcome at COP28 also included the adoption of the UAE Framework for Global Climate Resilience, which recognized the need for reducing climate impacts on ecosystems and biodiversity and accelerating the use of ecosystem-based adaptation and nature-based solutions.⁴² Further, developing indicators on progress for achieving this target is slated for adoption at COP30/7th Conference of the Parties to the Paris Agreement (CMA7) (November 2025). Further development of these indicators will take place through the new UAE-Belém work programme which will meet through 2024 and conclude in 2025.

Barriers and Solutions for Halting and Reversing Deforestation and Forest Degradation

Barriers

26. Parties still face a number of regulatory, economic, social, and technological barriers to reverse and halt deforestation and forest degradation. As identified by C2ES⁴³ as well as the GST’s Technical Dialogue Synthesis report,⁴⁴ these challenges include:
 - insufficient access to finance
 - pressures from large-scale commodity production and extractive industries
 - commodity demand from developed countries
 - issues of land and human rights violations
 - high rates of violence against environmental defenders
 - perceived illegitimacy of conservation actions due to lack of community participation
 - institutional fragmentation
 - under-resourcing of services

- uneven capability to manage uncertainties and conflicting values
 - reactive governance across competing policy domains collectively locks in existing exposures and vulnerabilities⁴⁵
 - many ecosystems are already near the hard limits of their natural adaptation capacity and additional systems will reach limits with increasing global warming⁴⁶
 - initiatives focused on new growth forests (such as planting new trees) that have no guarantee of long-term viability or survival.
27. Reversing land degradation by 2030 is challenged by several compounding factors. **Insufficient access to finance**, coupled with **pressures from large-scale commodity production and extractive industries**, as well **commodity demand from developed countries** may hinder effective efforts.^{47,48} Beyond financial constraints, **issues of land rights and human rights violations** pose significant barriers, especially in countries with high deforestation rates. High rates of violence against environmental defenders amplify barriers to address land degradation.⁴⁹
28. Many developing countries in particular face challenges that include financial and governance constraints due to agriculture, cropland, urbanization and mining activities. Protected areas, conservation efforts, sustainably made commodity products, agroforestry, and improving governance can help reverse and halt deforestation.
29. The GST decision notes that developing countries need an estimated U.S. \$5.8-5.9 trillion for their efforts to implement their current NDCs for the pre-2030 period (let alone new and more ambitious ones due by February 10, 2025). Climate finance pledged and provided is nowhere near that scale. In this context, the adoption of a new collective quantified goal (NCQG) at COP29 will be vital for setting out a way forward on the scale and type of finance needed to sustain and augment the climate action needed to achieve the goals of the Paris Agreement and net zero by 2050.⁵⁰

Solutions

30. A number of high-impact solutions and opportunities to address key challenges have been identified through a wealth of efforts across different fora. The following list draws from C2ES's work as well as the High-Level Climate Champions' (HLCs) *2030 Climate Solutions*:⁵¹

Actions, solutions, and enablers for halting and reversing deforestation and forest degradation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessing and mitigating deforestation-related risks in financial institutions, in line with the Deforestation-Free Finance Sector Roadmap, and scaling investments in nature-based solutions (Source: 2030 Climate Solutions)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conserving healthy, living forests, and supporting the livelihoods of forest dependent communities, including through large-scale incentive programs (Source: C2ES)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing new tools and resources for civil society and calling on financial institutions to address deforestation and land conversion (Source: 2030 Climate Solutions)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curbing and reversing deforestation and degradation, including by expanding conservation areas, instituting moratoria on forest conversion, securing tenure and protection of Indigenous territories, encouraging sustainable land-use practices, developing sustainable land-use and management plans, and decreasing pressure from the agricultural sector (Source: C2ES)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mainstreaming deforestation guidance in climate transition plans through Investor Climate Action Plan and Net Zero Investment Framework guidance (Source: 2030 Climate Solutions)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementing moratoria on products associated with deforestation and provide support for monitoring and verification of deforestation-related products (Source: C2ES)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Setting policy targets in government institutions for halting and reversing deforestation and land conversion and the recognition and adoption of Free Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) regarding rights of Indigenous communities (Source: 2030 Climate Solutions)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrating local communities and civil society in the planning, implementation, and monitoring of conservation activities to ensure good governance, accountability, rule of law, and defense of human rights (Source: C2ES)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving finance to support climate-proofed, area-based management tools, through tools including funds⁵² or coalitions for private investment (Source: 2030 Climate Solutions)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthening synergies and avoiding trade-offs between climate action and action needed to halt and reverse biodiversity and ecosystem loss and degradation to put nature on a path to recovery by 2030, in a manner that is consistent with the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (Source: C2ES)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expanding support for ecosystem stewardship by indigenous peoples and local communities, including by strengthening legislation for securing land rights of indigenous peoples and local communities according to traditional values and practices of land tenure (Source: C2ES)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoting nature-based solutions and/or ecosystem-based approaches as an adaptation option for terrestrial, freshwater, coastal, and ocean ecosystems and urban environments, including for significantly enhancing resilience and reducing exposure of coastal communities impacted by sea level rise (Source: C2ES)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restoring areas of degraded terrestrial, inland water, mangrove, and marine and coastal ecosystems (Source: C2ES)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conserving and managing areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services through ecologically representative, well-connected, and equitably governed systems of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures (Source: C2ES)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementing deep, rapid, and sustained reductions in global greenhouse gas emissions at their sources, while minimizing other ecosystem stressors different from climate change such as changes in land and sea use, direct exploitation of organisms, pollution, and invasion of alien species (Source: C2ES)

31. The **HLCs and the Marrakech Partnership for Global Climate Action** identify impactful climate solutions and opportunities for international cooperation.⁵³ At COP28, in the context of the conclusion of the GST and building on prior work, the HLCs presented the *2030 Climate Solutions* – an implementation roadmap that sets out solutions framed in specific actions, with insights from a wide range of NPS on effective measures being undertaken that need to be scaled up and replicated as well as current gaps that need to be bridged.⁵⁴ The HLCs’ solutions recommend key actions for halting deforestation and investing in nature.⁵⁵ These recommendations for actions and support overlap with high-impact opportunities and solutions to halt deforestation and invest in nature, as also identified in work by C2ES.

32. The **COP28 and COP30 Presidencies, UNCBD COP15 and COP16 Presidencies, and UNCCD COP15 Presidency** have also highlighted the following policy actions:⁵⁶

- fostering stronger synergies, integration and alignment in the planning and implementation of national climate, biodiversity, and land restoration plans and strategies
- scaling of finance and investments for climate and nature
- ensuring the full, equitable, inclusive, and effective representation and participation

- promoting a whole-of-society approach in the synergetic planning and implementation of national climate, biodiversity and land restoration plans and strategies
- encouraging coherence and interoperability across data sources and data collection, metrics and methodologies, and voluntary reporting frameworks.

33. Additionally, REDD+ has improved national forest monitoring, data quality, and analytical capacities, linking these efforts to mitigation targets in NDCs. To advance REDD+ and meet 2025 NDC goals, increased finance and technical capacity, along with community empowerment, are essential for sustainable forest management and conservation which has mitigation, adaptation, biodiversity, and conservation efforts.⁵⁷

C. Leadership for Halting and Reversing Deforestation and Forest Degradation

34. As an outcome of the UAE Consensus, the COP28 Presidency (UAE) will work together with the incoming Presidencies—Azerbaijan (COP29) and Brazil (COP30)—to drive ambitious collective action, including through the “Roadmap to Mission 1.5C,” an initiative to significantly enhance international cooperation and the international enabling environment to stimulate ambition in the next round of NDCs. This configuration has been called “the Troika.” The Troika, together with the G7 and G20 and including through the Roadmap to Mission 1.5C, broadly seek to drive ambition and enhanced international cooperation.

35. In April 2023, the G7 Climate and Environment Ministers committed to the swift implementation of the KMGBF. The G7 ministers committed to dedicate a significant amount of international climate finance to nature-based solutions, delivering benefits for climate, people, and nature.⁵⁸

36. In April 2024, the G7 Ministers and partners launched the Adaptation Accelerator Hub, which aims to help bridge the gap between the current implementation of adaptation action and what is necessary to urgently respond to the climate impacts in the most climate vulnerable countries and communities. It builds on the Adaptation Pipeline Accelerator which was proposed by the UN Secretary General.⁵⁹ In its April 2024 communique, the G7 Climate, Energy and Environment Ministers committed to:

- swiftly, fully and effectively implement the KMGBF
- advance the implementation of the global effort to halt and reverse deforestation and forest degradation by 2030
- advance sustainable supply chains that decouple agricultural production from deforestation and forest and land degradation
- strengthen international cooperation to halt deforestation and forest degradation
- orient public policies to be forest and nature positive
- develop innovative financial solutions for conserving, protecting and restoring standing forests.⁶⁰

37. Under the Brazilian Presidency, the G20 Environmental and Climate Sustainability working group’s strategic agenda aims to increase coordination and cooperation between G20 members, with a view to identifying concrete and innovative solutions for payment for ecosystem services.⁶¹

38. The UN-REDD program, which works with 65 developing country partners to protect their forests, is led by UNEP, FAO, and UNDP. It helps build capacity for monitoring, reporting, and verifying emissions reductions and encourages the participation of indigenous peoples and local communities in forest management. As a result of REDD+ activities, 16 countries reported a reduction of nearly 11 billion tons of carbon dioxide—almost twice the total net greenhouse gas emissions. These countries are now eligible to seek results-based financing.⁶²

39. The landscape features individual country leadership, key organizations, and the initiatives and declarations (see “Reducing Deforestation and Forest Degradation: From Incremental to Transformational Change” section and Annex). However, the international forestry sector lacks a clear international leader to take forward the work of halting and reversing deforestation and forest degradation by 2030.

2024 Climate and Biodiversity Events, with a Focus on Deforestation

40. Adaptation and forest-related organizations, coalitions, and initiatives may meet or engage at a number of events throughout 2024. These events include:

FEBRUARY
26-29 February, 6 th session of the UN Environment Assembly (Nairobi, Kenya)
MARCH
1 March, 6 th session of the UN Environment Assembly (Nairobi, Kenya)
6-8 March, FACT Dialogue 2024: Moving Together on Sustainable Trade – Coordinating Efforts on Approaches to Sustainable Commodity Production and Consumption
11-15 March, Accelerating Nature Based Solutions Conference, (Livingstone, Zambia)
18-19 March, Annual Adaptation Forum 2024 by the Adaptation Committee (Bonn, Germany)
21-22 March, Copenhagen Climate Ministerial (Copenhagen, Denmark) <i>Presentation of the Troika vision and approach and official launch of its work for the year</i>
APRIL
22-25 April, NAP Expo (Dhaka, Bangladesh)
25-26 April, Petersberg Climate Dialogue (Berlin, Germany)
29-30 April, G7 Climate, Energy and Environment ministerial meeting (Venaria Reale, Italy)
30 April, Enhancing Forest Data Transparency for Climate Action(virtual)
MAY
6-10 May, 19 th Session of the UN Forum on Forests (New York, NY)
13-18 May, 26 th meeting of the Subsidiary Bodies to the Convention on Biological Diversity (Nairobi, Kenya)
15-17 May, UAE-Belém work programme on indicators (Paro, Bhutan)
22-23 May, Nature-based Solutions Investment Summit (Sao Paulo, Brazil)
22 May, UN International Day for Biological Diversity
JUNE
3-13 June , SB60 (Bonn, Germany) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mountains and Climate Change Dialogue • REDD+ and forests in the GST and Biennial Transparency Reports
16-21 June, 3 rd World Biodiversity Forum (Davos, Switzerland)
17-19 June, G7 Summit (Putignano, Puglia, Italy)
JULY
22-26 July, 27 th session of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Committee on Forestry (COFO 27) (Rome, Italy)
22-23 July, Ministerial on Climate Action (Wuhan, China) <i>Troika’s second majlis with a focus on supporting the conservation, protection and restoration of forests, sinks and reservoirs, including through synergies between biodiversity and climate</i>
26-27 July, Presidency Heads of Delegation retreat (Shamakhi, Azerbaijan)
AUGUST

12-16 August, NDCs 3.0 Regional Forum for the Pacific (Apia, Samoa)
27-29 August, NDCs 3.0 Regional Forum for Latin America and the Caribbean (Bogota, Colombia)
SEPTEMBER
3-5 September, NDCs 3.0 Regional Forum for Eastern Europe and Central Asia (Istanbul, Türkiye)
5-6 September, Fifth Global Conference on Strengthening Synergies between the Paris Agreement and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil) <i>Troika's third majlis with a focus on galvanizing political momentum to enhance adaptation action and global resilience by 2030, including by addressing the adaptation finance gap</i>
9-13 September, 26 th meeting of the Adaptation Committee (Bonn, Germany)
10-24 September, UN General Assembly (New York, NY) <i>A high-level Troika event to showcase the leadership of early movers of 1.5 aligned NDCs</i>
19-20, September 12th International Conference on Sustainable Development (New York, NY)
22-23 September, Summit of the Future (New York, NY)
23-25 September, NDCs 3.0 Regional Forum for the Middle East and North Africa (Tunis, Tunisia)
30 September to 2 October, NDCs 3.0 Regional Forum for Asia (Bangkok, Thailand)
OCTOBER
7-9 October, NDCs 3.0 Regional Forum for Africa (Kigali, Rwanda)
8-10 October, Global Nature Positive Summit 2024 (Sydney, Australia)
8-9 October, UAE—Belém work programme on indicators (Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt)
10-11 October, Pre-COP29 (Baku, Azerbaijan) <i>Troika High-level Dialogue to focus on NDC ambition and implementation to date</i>
23-25 October, G20 Joint Meeting of Climate Change and Finance Ministers (Washington, DC)
22-27 October, Annual Meetings of the World Bank Group and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) (Washington, DC) <i>High-level Troika even on climate finance and investment frameworks to enhance ambition and enable implementation of NDCs</i>
21-31 October, 16th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (COP16) (Cali, Colombia)
NOVEMBER
1 November, 16th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (COP16), (Cali, Columbia)
11-24 November, 29th session of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP29) (Baku, Azerbaijan) <i>A leaders-level event to focus on taking stock of the Troika's work and opportunities for strengthened ambition in 2025</i>
18-19 November, G20 Summit (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil)
DECEMBER
2-13 December, 16th session of the Conference of the Parties to the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (COP16), (Riyadh, Saudi Arabia)
10-11 December, 21st Replenishment of the International Development Association (IDA21) Final Pledging and Replenishment Meeting

Capacity Building and Support for the Protection of Forests in NAPs and NDCs

41. Other initiatives can provide critical capacity-building support for the development of climate policy and NDCs. One key initiative is **UNDPs Climate Promise**.⁶³ Climate Promise leverages Parties' NDCs and brings together UNDP's infrastructure, networks and breadth of substantive offers to provide comprehensive support on NDC implementation. UNDP provides support to help countries take bold

action to reduce their emissions, increase their resilience to climate impacts and support sustainable development priorities.

42. In April 2024, UNDP unveiled the next stage of Climate Promise, Climate Promise 2025, which will support countries in developing and delivering their pledges and draws on UNDP’s newly established Climate Hub.⁶⁴ Climate Promise 2025 will link climate diplomacy and thought leadership with climate action and sustainable development at national and local levels to align the next generation of NDCs with the Paris Agreement goals.
43. Another key initiative is the **NDC Partnership**.⁶⁵ Leveraging more than 200 members and more than 80 institutions, the Partnership responds to requests for support needed to translate identified NDC implementation priorities into actionable policies and programs. Based on these requests, the membership offers a tailored package of expertise, technical assistance, and funding. This collaborative response provides developing countries with efficient access to a wide range of resources to adapt to and mitigate climate change and foster more equitable and sustainable development.
44. In June 2024, the NDC Partnership and the UNFCCC secretariat launched the NDC 3.0 Navigator. The NDC 3.0 Navigator is an interactive tool designed to support countries in raising NDC ambition and accelerating the implementation of the next round of NDCs. It brings together expert-created strategies, resources, and country insights to support countries in updating their NDCs.⁶⁶ The NDC Navigator also set out strategies for Parties’ “global efforts” on forests in climate mitigation and adaptation, land-use strategies, enhancing forest related targets, national forest monitoring, and sustainable forest management.⁶⁷ The NDC Navigator also set out strategies for Parties translating mitigation for biodiversity from the first GST into national planning efforts.⁶⁸
45. Also of note, in 2022, the Biodiversity and Climate Change Adaptation Expert Group under the Nairobi Work Programme published a technical brief on how to increase synergies between national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs) and NAPs.^{69,70}

Recommendation

46. Recognizing the importance of conserving, protecting and restoring nature and ecosystems toward achieving the Paris Agreement temperature goal, **Parties should develop and include in their NDCs national plans towards halting and reversing deforestation and forest degradation and indicate, ideally with quantified targets, how these efforts contribute to their emissions reduction targets.** These plans may also be included or have synergies with NAPs, LT-LEDS, and NBSAPs.
47. Momentum on halting and reversing deforestation and land degradation has slowed in recent years. The Troika, as a leader on ambition, can leverage its role to reinvigorate momentum and support cooperative leadership on halting and reversing deforestation and forest degradation by:
 - encouraging financial pledges from developed countries for reversing and halting deforestation and forest degradation through payment for ecosystem services or results-based payments⁷¹
 - reaffirming the Troika’s commitment to the Glasgow Leader’s Declaration on Forests and Land Use
 - promoting Parties to maximize synergies and minimize tradeoffs between their climate and biodiversity actions by aligning their NDCs, NAPs, LT-LEDS, and NBSAPs to reduce emissions, increase adaptive capacity, and reverse and halt deforestation and forest degradation, while increasing the integration of forest conversation and nature-based solutions

- encouraging Parties in their NDCs to include quantified targets for reducing deforestation; efforts to increase afforestation, reforestation, and restoration; and forest-related targets as part of their GHG reduction goals
 - building political momentum for the Glasgow Declaration Accountability Framework and the KMGBF, which precisely aims to promote a mechanism to track forest degradation and deforestation
 - encouraging collaboration among Parties to share best practices and adapt successful models such results-based payments and REDD+ for halting and reversing deforestation.
48. As previously mentioned, despite numerous actors involved in reforestation and afforestation efforts, a clear and credible international leader has yet to emerge. A leader could drive these networks, organizations, and coalitions of countries to coordinate their efforts more effectively in pursuit of the goal to halt and reverse deforestation and forest degradation by 2030.
49. Brazil has made halting deforestation a priority. At COP27, Brazilian President Lula da Silva announced Brazil's intention to host COP30 and pledged to halt and reverse deforestation in the Amazon. In June 2023, President da Silva and Minister of the Environment Marina Silva introduced a package of eight presidential decrees aimed at enhancing Brazil's leadership in climate change mitigation and curbing deforestation. Additionally, President Lula committed to achieving zero deforestation by 2030.
50. As COP30 President, Brazil could make deforestation, biodiversity, and nature conservation central themes of COP30 and galvanize momentum through the course of 2025. Brazil and/or the Troika could convene a global forum or task force to identify and endorse an international organization to address existing gaps and advance the integration of national deforestation strategies into NDCs with the aim of halting and reversing deforestation. Such a leader should use innovative thinking to drive global forest conservation, have experience in successfully implementing forest policies and programs, deploy diplomatic skills to foster international cooperation, and expertise in mechanisms like payment for ecosystem services and results-based payments.⁷² (See “Annex” for a list of actors and/or leaders taking forward action in 2024 and beyond).

Ongoing Leadership is Needed

51. The Troika and the Roadmap to Mission 1.5 provide a promising model of collaborative leadership that can provide continuity and a trajectory for enhanced international cooperation across critical years. The near-term goal is action and implementation that inform enhanced NDCs and ambition up through the deadline for new NDCs in the first quarter of 2025. In the longer-term, such leadership will be critical for informing subsequent implementation.
52. The Troika should seek opportunities to leverage high-profile political events, such as COP29, to urge Parties to enhance their efforts in halting and reversing deforestation and forest degradation by 2030. The Troika's planned high-level events in the latter half of 2024 can be crucial for mobilizing ministers and government leaders to take decisive action on these issues.
53. The outcome of the negotiations on the NQCG in 2024 and broader financial developments will impact the environment for international cooperation. Once there has been sufficient time to analyze the NDCs in the annual update of the NDC synthesis report that will be made available ahead of COP30, it will become clearer whether the GST will have succeeded.⁷³ But this also means that Belém will not be the “NDC COP.”

54. As such, 2025 will demonstrate how much more Parties are willing to commit to achieving the Paris goals. It is also possible that NDCs will reveal themselves to more usefully be investment plans or tools.⁷⁴
55. The year 2025 will also mark the year that the Paris Agreement’s enhanced transparency framework will be fully operational. New processes, like the facilitative multilateral consideration of process, provides opportunities for Parties to share best practices and lessons learned in implementing their NDCs.
56. Troika leadership and the incoming Brazilian Presidency must utilize the Roadmap to 1.5C and the outcomes of COP29 to skillfully build on the picture of progress drawn earlier in 2025 to a successful outcome at COP30 that nevertheless remains critical to ambition and enhanced international cooperation in 2026. COP30 in Belém should not be seen as a cliff edge, but a steppingstone to COP31 and beyond. In 2026, the second GST process begins again.

Conclusion

57. While there is a strong case for clear leadership to respond to the call to reverse and halt deforestation and forest degradation by 2030, there is also a need for an inclusive approach. Clearer leadership on implementing and coordination on the deforestation and forest degradation target, including how efforts are enacted on the ground, may elicit reactions that Parties are “being told what to do.” As such, the national determinedness of NDCs, NAPs, NBSAPS, and LT-LEDS and their domestic implementation must be clearly reiterated and respected.
58. At the same time, the value of clear leadership on the deforestation target will enable far greater and faster implementation than would otherwise be the case. In addition, tracking progress toward the achievement of the target at COP29 and COP30 is crucial to generate further momentum. Early action must be captured in the next round of NDCs due by February 10, 2025, laying a strong foundation for further efforts.

Annex: Reducing Deforestations Actors and Action in 2024

1. Rather than starting anew, momentum to implement the GST targets and signals from COP28 might more effectively be built by activating existing international organizations, coalitions and initiatives. Those that are well placed to focus attention and effort toward halting deforestation by 2030 include (and are not limited to):
 - the **Land Use Breakthrough**, which aims for more than 10 gigatons of equivalent carbon dioxide mitigated per year through nature-based solutions by 2030⁷⁵
 - **Glasgow Leaders' Declaration on Forest and Land Use**, which 145 global leaders signed in a collective commitment to halt and reverse forest loss and land degradation by 2030 while delivering sustainable development and promoting an inclusive rural transformation.⁷⁶ At COP27, 26 countries and the European Union launched the Forests and Climate Leaders' Partnership to drive accountability through annual high-level events and progress reports.⁷⁷
 - the **Forest Declaration Platform** (related to the New York Declaration on Forests), which is intended to foster political ambition, scale up and accelerate action, and, through the Forest Declaration Assessment, enable critical accountability to end natural forest loss and restore 350 million hectares of degraded landscapes and forestlands by 2030;⁶⁶ this is also in line with the Bonn Challenge.⁷⁸
 - the **Bonn Challenge**, launched to restore degraded and deforested landscapes globally. It's a significant international effort with ambitious targets. Surpassing the 150-million-hectare milestone for pledges by 2017 shows strong commitment from countries and organizations toward ecosystem restoration. The aim to reach 350 million hectares by 2030 underscores the urgency and scale of the challenge, highlighting the importance of sustainable land use and biodiversity conservation.
 - The **Glasgow Declaration Accountability Framework** demonstrates ongoing efforts to operationalize and ensure that States uphold their global commitment to halting deforestation and forest degradation by 2030.⁷⁹
 - the **Green Gigaton Challenge**, which is a global effort that brings together public, private, and philanthropic partners to transact one gigaton of high-quality emissions reductions from forest-based natural climate solutions by 2025 (and annually after that).⁸⁰
 - the **High Ambition Coalition for Nature and People**, which aims to protect and conserve 30 percent of land and ocean by 2030, led by Costa Rica and France.⁸¹ More than 100 countries joined the coalition, and the 30x30 target was enshrined in the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.
 - the **FACT Dialogue**, which convenes producers and consumers of internationally traded agricultural commodities;⁸² and the Tropical Forest Alliance, which aims to remove deforestation from supply chains, hosted by the World Economic Forum.⁸³
 - the **UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration (2021–30)**,⁸⁴ which the UN announced at COP15 for the UNCBD in Montreal (December 2022), recognizing ten initiatives that aim to restore more than 68 million hectares and declared them World Restoration Flagships.⁸⁵
 - Parties established the **REDD+ framework** to protect forests as part of the Paris Agreement in 2015. "REDD" stands for "Reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries". The '+' stands for additional forest-related activities that protect the climate, namely sustainable management of forests and the conservation and enhancement of forest carbon stocks. Developing country Parties can receive results-based payments for emission reductions for reducing deforestation.⁸⁶

- **Business for Nature**, a global coalition that brings together business and conservation organizations and forward-looking companies to encourage companies to commit and act to reverse natural loss and advocate for greater policy ambition.⁸⁷
 - the Science Based Targets Initiative (SBTi) has elaborated the Forest, Land and Agriculture (FLAG) Guidance, which provides a standard method for companies in land-intensive sectors to set science-based targets that include land-based emission reductions and removals.⁸⁸
 - the **Finance Sector Deforestation Action (FSDA)**, which was launched at COP26 as a results-driven collaborative of financial institutions that unites signatory organizations around an engagement approach to addressing nature-related risks and opportunities by tackling deforestation and creating essential convergence across other climate and nature related initiatives. 38 financial institutions with more than U.S. \$8.9 trillion in assets under management have committed to eliminating agricultural commodity-driven deforestation risks (e.g., from cattle, soy, palm oil, pulp, and paper) in their investment and lending portfolios by 2025.⁸⁹
 - the **Race to Resilience** campaign, which has partners that are innovating science-based solutions to accelerate action on ocean and coastal ecosystems including: the Ocean Risk and Resilience Alliance (ORAA), the Global Mangrove Alliance, and Global Fund for Coral Reef.
 - the **KMGBF**, which set up specific quantified targets for halting ecosystem loss, restoring degraded ecosystems, and effectively conserving and managing areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services, in addition to targets related to tools and solutions for implementation and mainstreaming.
2. The UNFCCC at the 60th Subsidiary Bodies held a dialogue on mountains and climate change. The dialogue focused on enhancing understanding of climate change in mountains and downstream communities, showcasing solutions for resilience of mountain ecosystems and discussing ways to accelerate climate action for resilience of mountain ecosystems.

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- ¹⁷ UNFCCC, *Paris Agreement*, Arts. 14.1, 14.2.
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- ⁶⁷ "Aligned to the Paris Agreement Temperature Goal: Exploring Sector-Specific Opportunities," NDC Navigator, accessed July 18, 2024, <https://ndcnavigator.org/routes/temperature-goal/sector-specific-opportunities>.

⁶⁸ “Aligned to the Paris Agreement Temperature Goal: Exploring Sector-Specific Opportunities,” NDC Navigator, accessed July 18, 2024, <https://ndcnavigator.org/routes/temperature-goal/sector-specific-opportunities>.

⁶⁹ UNFCCC, *Promoting Synergies Between Climate Change Adaptation and Biodiversity Through the National Adaptation Plan and National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan Processes* (October 4, 2022), https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/UNFCCC-NWP_synergies_NAP-NBSAP_technical-brief.pdf.

⁷⁰ Issues related to biodiversity and climate change are inherently interlinked, the processes of formulating and implementing national adaptation plans and national biodiversity strategy actions plans present opportunities for alignment of the global agendas of UN Convention on Biological Diversity and UNFCCC, ensuring that actions under both plans are mutually supportive and not undertaken in isolation from one another. Finally, long term low emissions development strategies are national voluntary plans for achieving a low-carbon economy, outlining how to reduce emissions across sectors like energy and agriculture. They emphasize forest preservation due to its critical role in carbon sequestration and ecosystem services, including measures to prevent deforestation and promote sustainable land use.

⁷¹ Additionally, as an example in Brazil, IPAM is advancing the CONSERV initiative, which offers financial incentives to farmers for avoiding legal deforestation. Currently in the pilot phase, this initiative is focused on the principle that preserving existing forests is more effective than planting new ones, which require significant time to mature and may face survival challenges. “Conserv,” Woodwell Climate Research Center, accessed August 9, 2024, <https://www.woodwellclimate.org/project/conserv/>.

⁷² Currently, there is no clear leader to take forward this work. Consideration could be given to UNDP, UNEP, or the UN Food and Agriculture Organization. Additionally, it may be worthwhile whether the Forest Climate Leadership Partnership could be asked by the Troika, G7, and/or G20 to lead on these efforts, provided it addresses its existing challenges, such as tracking progress and ensuring regular public reporting.

⁷³ UNFCCC, *Glasgow Climate Pact*, Decision 1/CMA.3, ¶ 30.

⁷⁴ UNFCCC, *Building Support for More Ambitious Climate Actions* (March 14, 2024), <https://unfccc.int/news/building-support-for-more-ambitious-national-climate-action-plans>.

⁷⁵ HLCs, *2030 Climate Solutions: Implementation Roadmap*.

⁷⁶ Adriana Erthal Abdenur, *The Glasgow Leaders’ Declaration on Forests: Déjà Vu or Solid Restart?* (United Nations University: New York, NY, 2022), <https://collections.unu.edu/eserv/UNU:8669/COP26ForestGovernance.pdf>.

⁷⁷ Rishi Sunak and Cabinet Office, “World Leaders Launch Forests and Climate Leaders’ Partnership to Accelerate a Solutions-oriented Approach to the Paris Agreement’s Global Stocktake 51 Momentum to Halt and Reverse Forest Loss and Land Degradation by 2030,” *UK Government*, November 7, 2022, <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/world-leaders-launch-forests-and-climate-leaders-partnership-to-accelerate-momentum-to-halt-and-reverse-forest-loss-and-land-degradation-by-2030>.

⁷⁸ “About the Challenge,” The Bonn Challenge, accessed May 17, 2024, <https://www.bonnchallenge.org/>.

⁷⁹ Jennifer Skene, “Advancing the Glasgow Declaration Accountability Framework.”

⁸⁰ Green Gigaton Challenge, accessed September 17, 2024, <https://www.greengigaton.com/>.

⁸¹ “About Us,” High Ambition Coalition for People and Nature, accessed November 14, 2023, <https://www.hacfornatureandpeople.org/>.

⁸² “What is the FACT Dialogue?” FACT Dialogue, accessed November 14, 2023, <https://www.factdialogue.org/>.

⁸³ Tropical Forest Alliance, “Tropical Forest Alliance: Forest Positive Collective Action for Deforestation Free Commodity Supply Chains”, accessed November 14, 2023, <https://www.tropicalforestalliance.org/>.

⁸⁴ “Preventing, Halting and Reversing Loss of Nature,” United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration, accessed November 14, 2023, <https://www.decadeonrestoration.org>.

⁸⁵ “UN recognizes 10 pioneering initiatives that are restoring the natural world,” *UNEP*, December 13, 2022, <https://www.unep.org/news-and-stories/press-release/un-recognizes-10-pioneering-initiatives-are-restoring-natural-world>.

⁸⁶ “What is REDD+?,” UNFCCC.

⁸⁷ “About Business for Nature,” Business for Nature, accessed May 17, 2024, <https://www.businessfornature.org/about>.

⁸⁸ “Forest, Land, and Agriculture (FLAG),” Science Based Targets, accessed May 17, 2024, <https://sciencebasedtargets.org/sectors/forest-land-and-agriculture>.

⁸⁹ “Tackling Deforestation + Scaling Nature-Based Solutions (NBS),” HLC, accessed May 14, 2024, <https://climatechampions.unfccc.int/system/nature-and-tackling-deforestation/>.

