



WWF FOREST PRACTICE COP27 EXPECTATIONS

October 2022

FORESTS IN THE CLIMATE AND NATURE AGENDA

The 2022 UN climate change conference, COP27, in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, is an opportunity to shift attention from high-level climate commitments to action, developing and disseminating the tools and resources necessary to address threats to forests and nature on the ground, particularly at landscape and jurisdictional scales. COP27 takes place amidst a backdrop of economic instability, food insecurity, energy crises, and natural disasters, all exacerbated by climate change and the destruction of nature. Deforestation is rising at alarming rates with devastating impacts globally,¹ from fires to floods.

Halting deforestation, preserving the forest carbon sink, and restoring forests are vital pieces of the climate action agenda and a [nature-positive](#) future. The world cannot reach the Paris Agreement goal of limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius or reverse nature loss without forests and the land sector. While [commitments to end and reverse deforestation by the public and private sectors at COP26](#) were a welcome step, the scale of action needed to meet the urgency of the deforestation crisis is missing.

States, alongside nonstate actors, need to pivot to implementation—following through on climate finance commitments; building and strengthening multistakeholder partnerships to achieve shared sustainability goals in forest landscapes;² and undertaking [community-led, high-impact, and high-quality nature-based solutions \(NbS\)](#) to protect, manage, and restore forests and other ecosystems. Investments in NbS need to be targeted to transformational interventions that push beyond localized projects, address

systemic drivers, and generate benefits for people, nature, and climate at broader spatial scales.

Key implementation priorities should include:

- policy reforms that address the drivers of deforestation and forest degradation, such as removing subsidies for [unsustainable agricultural and extractive activities](#),³ improving land tenure security and governance, and increasing transparency of financial flows
- more effective implementation of policies and regulations that support land-use planning and prohibit deforestation and habitat conversion in both producer and consumer countries
- active participation of Indigenous peoples and local communities (IPLCs) in decision- and policy-making
- increased finance and better financial vehicles to protect standing forests

INCLUDE FORESTS AND LAND USE IN CLIMATE FINANCE MECHANISMS

WWF calls on countries to deliver on current finance commitments, particularly those made at COP26, and make **clear additional commitments** that will enable tropical forest countries to immediately scale up action to reduce emissions from deforestation and increase carbon sinks through forest landscape restoration, where appropriate. These actions need to be big, transformative, inclusive, and accountable. WWF urges governments to create **ambitious, time-bound targets** to fulfill their existing commitments and a **common transparent framework** for monitoring and verification of such targets.

Now is also the time to **support jurisdictions and associated landscape initiatives**, not only with the promise of results-based payments but also with finance and public-private partnerships to implement the actions needed to deliver change on the ground. Catalyzing real change requires multiple incentives (e.g., public finance, improved market access, and technical partnerships) targeting diverse stakeholders, particularly those on the ground seeking sustainable livelihood alternatives.

¹ <https://www.globalforestwatch.org/blog/data-and-research/global-tree-cover-loss-data-2020/>

² Including deforestation- and conversion-free (DCF) commitments.

³ Each year, about \$520 billion of environmentally harmful subsidies are spent in the agricultural sector, particularly in commodities responsible for driving deforestation and conversion of natural habitats, with impacts on greenhouse gas emissions and biodiversity loss. There is a need to repurpose harmful subsidies and incentives to increase and reallocate finance for sustainable and equitable conservation and management of forests.

CENTER INDIGENOUS AND COMMUNITY VOICES IN CLIMATE DISCUSSIONS AND DECISIONS

IPLCs are vital custodians of the world's remaining natural landscapes. Given their role as the strongest land stewards,⁴ IPLCs and their voices should be present and prominent in planning, governance, and decision-making processes, both internationally and domestically.

Governments can and should improve forest and land governance and **enable the active participation and**

support the agency of IPLCs in national and international processes relevant to climate action by gathering political will and providing financial support to fund more transparent approaches to policy- and decision-making. WWF urges governments, multilateral institutions, and private foundations to prioritize the **establishment of new and direct finance mechanisms to meet this need, codesigning them with IPLC groups.**

SUPPORT CONSERVATION OF FOREST CARBON STOCKS

Halting deforestation and addressing the drivers of deforestation and forest degradation must remain a critical priority in the climate action agenda. However, this needs to go hand in hand with **robust strategies to protect standing forests**, especially intact forest landscapes that are critical for carbon storage and sequestration and conserving biodiversity. In the tropics alone, these areas store some 40%

of the above-ground carbon found in forests. The protection of these intact forests, part of the + in REDD+, has historically received far less attention and dedicated resources. WWF calls for **renewed support from governments** for these forests in the form of **payment for ecosystem services programs and other financial incentives and tools** best suited to these unique ecosystems.

FOSTER MULTISTAKEHOLDER PARTNERSHIPS AND PRIORITIZE JURISDICTIONAL APPROACHES

High-ambition and high-impact actions for forests can only be successful through a **whole-of-society approach** in each country or region combined with market-wide approaches that drive sustainability in demand markets, whether domestic or global.⁵ WWF calls on national to local governments as well as the private sector and civil society to **align their efforts to catalyze action and scale up**

impact, including by prioritizing landscape and jurisdictional approaches. Voluntary and compliance carbon markets have a role to play where governance is improved to ensure integrity.⁶ However, they are one tool in a diverse financial toolbox and cannot substitute for deep decarbonization by countries and companies⁷ across the board.



4 WWF, UNEP-WCMC, SGP/ICCA-GSI, LM, TNC, CI, WCS, EP, ILC-S, CM, IUCN The State of Indigenous Peoples' and Local Communities' Lands and Territories: A technical review of the state of Indigenous Peoples' and Local Communities' lands, their contributions to global biodiversity conservation and ecosystem services, the pressures they face, and recommendations for actions Gland, Switzerland (2021) https://wwflac.awsassets.panda.org/downloads/report_the_state_of_the_indigenous_peoples_and_local_communities_lands_and_territories_1.pdf

5 <https://accountability-framework.org/>

6 <https://tfciguide.org/>

7 WWF's recommended approach to corporate climate leadership is outlined in *Beyond Science-Based Targets: A Blueprint for Corporate Action on Climate and Nature*.



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