

Poland

i. Title/Heading.

The Ministerial Katowice Declaration on „Forest for the Climate”

ii. Context and rationale.

The recently published IPCC SR on 1,5 degrees has shown that it is not possible to limit the temperature increase without the use of removals. All the IPCC pathways take into account removals as an indispensable element of limiting global warming under 1,5 degrees. For this reason it is important to ensure, as the Paris Agreement states, the maintenance and enhancement of our sinks, including forests.

The Polish presidency of COP24 wanted to highlight this issue not only through the organization of the Forest Day (7th of Dec 2018) at COP24, but above all, through the encouragement of Parties to take adequate action. For this reason we have initiated the Ministerial Katowice Declaration “Forests for the Climate”, which is an appeal to take appropriate steps to maintain and enhance sinks by 2050.

The declaration highlights the role of carbon sinks and reservoirs in climate change mitigation and the need for them to simultaneously adapt to climate change. Emphasizes the need to conserve terrestrial ecosystems including forests as great GHG sinks and reservoirs. Raises awareness of the role of forest ecosystems in the accumulation of carbon in trees and soils, and subsequently in harvested wood products. It presents a call for collective actions aimed at ensuring that global forest carbon stocks are maintained and further enhanced by 2050. Moreover, it encourages the scientific community, including the IPCC, to explore and quantify the contribution of sinks and reservoirs to achieving a balance between anthropogenic emissions and removals.

iii. An overview of the contribution.

A global initiative to enhance the role of forests in reaching the Paris goal with 79 Parties to the UNFCCC endorsing the declaration so far.

iv. How the contribution leverages living natural systems as a solution to avert climate change?

The declaration includes a pledge to accelerate actions to ensure that the global contribution of forests and forest products is maintained and further supported and enhanced by 2050, in order to support the achievement of the long term goal of the Paris Agreement. The various actions implemented in order to enhance natural systems will be nationally determined.

Moreover, it encourages the scientific community to continue to explore and quantify the contribution of sinks, and reservoirs of greenhouse gases in managed lands, including forests, to achieving a balance between anthropogenic emissions by sources and removals by sinks of greenhouse gases in the second half of this century, as well as to explore ways to increase this contribution and welcome the work done up to now.

v. How might the contribution support both climate, mitigation and adaptation as well as other important co-benefits and social, economic and environmental outcomes in coming years. They may include:

a. Reduction in carbon emission and carbon capture (GTonnes)

Countries supporting the declaration pledge to accelerate actions to ensure that the global contribution of forests and forest products is maintained and further supported and enhanced by 2050, in order to support the achievement of the long term goal of the Paris Agreement. Thus, countries supporting the declaration are aiming to decrease emissions and increase removals from natural systems, as well as to increase carbon storage through i.a. harvested wood products.

b. Increasing climate resilience

Countries supporting the declaration recognize that climate change is affecting forests, under certain circumstances, as a result of natural disasters, leading to increased emissions, affecting the carbon storage capacity of forests and underlining the need to increase the capacity of forests to adapt to climate change. Adaptation of forests is an important element of the declaration.

c. Social impact (job increase; poverty reduction; Just transition, etc.)

The declaration recognizes the role of indigenous peoples and local communities in conserving and sustainably managing forests for the benefit of present and future generations as there are dependent communities on forest products for their livelihoods.

d. Net economic impact (total in US\$; how was it achieved?)

Challenging to aggregate the economic impact globally as actions will be implemented and determined on a country level.

e. Impact on realization of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (in particular SDGs 1,2,6,12,13,14,15,16)

The declaration impacts all of the SDGs, but above all SDG 13 and 15 as these are the two pillars of the declaration.

f. Food security

Through the preservation of forests, the declaration contributes to food security of communities as 1,6 billion people rely on forest resources for their livelihoods.

g. Minimising species extinction and ecological losses and fostering an increase of biodiversity.

The declaration will have a very large impact on these issues as most of the global species live in forest ecosystems and that's where one can find the largest biodiversity on the planet. Preserving forests for the climate has the additional advantage that it simultaneously preserves habitats for biodiversity and allows for its further increase.

vi. Which countries and organisations are involved in the contribution?

79 countries (Albania, Andorra, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Belarus, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cambodia, Canada, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Mexico, Monaco, Morocco, Myanmar, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Palau, Paraguay, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Sudan, Spain, Sri Lanka, St. Lucia, State of Palestine, Sudan, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Viet Nam).

vii. How have stakeholders (for example local communities, youth and indigenous peoples, where applicable) been consulted in developing the contribution?

This is a declaration adopted at the government level, so all consultations with the above stakeholders would have taken place domestically, at the country level.

viii. Where can the contribution be put into action?

It can be put into action at the country level, with a subsequent global assessment of actions.

ix. How the contribution will be delivered? How will different stakeholders be engaged in its implementation? What are the potential transformational impacts?

It is up to each country to implement the pledge domestically. The scope of the national contribution to the pledge is also determined at the national level, as well as the engagement of different stakeholders.

x. Is this initiative contributing to other Climate Action Summit work streams (industry transition; energy transition; climate finance and carbon pricing; infrastructure, cities and local action; resilience and adaptation; youth and citizen mobilization; social and political drivers; mitigation strategy)?

Thanks to the multifunctionality of forests ecosystems, their protection and enhancement can contribute to all of the above issues. Forests are also a crucial element of reaching carbon neutrality as they provide negative emissions (removals), therefore, they constitute an important element of mitigation strategies.

xi. How does this contribution build upon examples of experience to date? How does the contribution link with different ongoing initiatives?

The declaration builds on existing initiatives and ensures their continuation and the coherence of policies and actions. It builds on milestone documents and processes such as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and its SDGs, the UNFCCC and related legal instruments, the Warsaw Framework for REDD+, the CBD and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, and the UN Strategic Plan for Forests, as well as other, global and regional initiatives regarding sustainable forest management, and stresses the importance of strengthening synergies at the national level in implementing UNFCCC, CBD, UNCCD, UNFF, where appropriate.

xii. What are the mechanisms for funding (with specific emphasis on potential for partnerships)?

The declaration is not linked to any funding mechanism. The text of the declaration encourages non-party stakeholders including cities, regions, businesses and investors, to continue to display their ambition and commitments in their forestry related climate actions through the Marrakech Partnership for Global Climate Action and the NAZCA Platform. Thus, it catalyzes partnerships and collaboration, but it does not provide by itself a source of financing.

xiii. What are the means of stewardship, metrics for monitoring?

Monitoring will be implemented at the country level with a follow up at the global level of the actions implemented.

xiv. What is the communication strategy?

Our communication goal is the further strengthening of the presence of the theme of removals by forest ecosystems in the international discourse (within the UNFCCC) and further promote the forest declaration. This will be achieved through:

- **Cooperation with Polish and international journalists;**
- **Publications on the COP24 website;**
- **Publications on COP24 social media channels:**
 - **Twitter (21 270 followers)**
 - **Facebook (8494 followers)**
 - **Instagram (1751 followers)**

xv. What are the details of proponents (indicating the degree of commitment among the countries and organizations that are named).

The degree of commitment varies among Parties. Since the declaration was endorsed only in December 2018 it is still too early to measure and report on the levels of commitments and implementation.