

**Global Forest Coalition**

✉ gfc@globalforestcoalition.org  
☎ +31 616 858 011  
🌐 www.globalforestcoalition.org  
📱 @globalforestcoalition  
📧 @gfc123  
📷 global.forest

**Postal Address**

🏠 Global Forest Coalition  
p.a. Social Impact Factory Utrecht  
Vredenburg 40  
3511 BD Utrecht  
Netherlands

**Submission for the First Intergovernmental Consultation  
on nature-based solutions (NbS)  
Global Forest Coalition (GFC)  
May 2023**

The Global Forest Coalition (GFC), an NGO of over 120 organizations of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities, thanks the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) and co-chairs for providing the opportunity to make submissions during the First Intergovernmental Consultation on nature-based solutions (NbS).

GFC joins the voices of countries and stakeholders expressing their concerns on the impacts of nature-based solutions (NbS) on Indigenous peoples, local communities, women in all their diversity, youths and Afro-descendants. [Resolution 5/5](#) recognizes “the **need for analysis of the effects of nature-based solutions...**, acknowledging that they do not replace the need for rapid, deep and sustained reductions in greenhouse gas emissions.” Despite this resolution, nature-based solutions continue to be a concept used to falsely brand highly questionable practices as “green.”

We support the implementation of ecosystem approaches, as a way to address the root causes of the climate crisis, rather than reproducing a colonial climate regime that promotes the greenwashing of carbon offsetting programmes. The ecosystem approach, which is rooted in the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and its COP decisions, is the primary framework for action under the Convention, as described by the [Conference of the Parties](#). The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) also recognizes in its sixth [synthesis report](#) that ecosystem-based adaptation approaches have been effective in climate mitigation.

In accordance with one of the tasks of this consultation, we request that science-based analyses of the effects of NbS, including differentiated impacts on women in all their diversity, Indigenous peoples and underrepresented groups, are carried out prior to continued support for these schemes. A compilation of bad practices in nature-based solutions would also contribute to making an unbiased assessment, enrich the discussion, and address challenges to the most vulnerable groups, especially in the Global South. Market-based approaches inherently favor those with economic power and tend to further entrench inequalities faced by women, Indigenous peoples and other marginalized groups that are economically, socially and politically underrepresented.



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Avoiding any policy framework that allows the continuation of nature-based solutions under the guise of market-oriented processes is fundamental to supporting rights-based and gender-just approaches in biodiversity conservation and climate change mitigation.

GFC also opposes any support for new funding sources from the private sector, especially in the Global South, as well as the financialization of nature through any project seeking investment opportunities arising from the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of nature.

Climate and forest-related policies that are born of existing anthropocentric, colonial and patriarchal mindsets only perpetuate the root causes of the crisis they are supposed to tackle. In doing so, they fail to deal with the uneven distribution of access to and control over resources experienced by frontline communities on the basis of gender, class, race, caste, age and ability, amongst others.

As a result, they maintain an unjust, unequal system with intersecting forms of oppression that reproduces and strengthens structural barriers instead of breaking them down. Women, especially Indigenous and rural women, are more vulnerable to climate change and land use change such as deforestation, and addressing gender inequality is central to effective climate mitigation and adaptation.

The gender-blindness in some areas of climate policy-making, where false solutions are promoted rather than ecosystem approaches, is a huge concern for many civil society organizations, as a recent [case study](#) published by GFC shows. Seeking transformative change through gender and environmental justice demands real solutions to the climate regime, not schemes linked to corporations, industries and governments responsible for much of the historical and ongoing damage to the planet and communities worldwide.

Cutting emissions is far more crucial than nature-based solutions that do not propose transformative action on gender-just and human rights-based approaches. GFC looks forward to continuing to support the United Nations Environment Program in promoting a common agenda that advocates for environmental and gender justice while respecting the principles of multilateralism and plural approaches.