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Seventy-eighth session**Agenda item 18****Sustainable development**

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 13 August 2024

[without reference to a Main Committee ([A/78/L.95](#))]

78/320. Fostering sustainable forest management, including afforestation and reforestation, in degraded lands, including drylands, as an effective solution to environmental challenges

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming its resolution [70/1](#) of 25 September 2015, entitled “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”, in which it adopted a comprehensive, far-reaching and people-centred set of universal and transformative Sustainable Development Goals and targets, its commitment to working tirelessly for the full implementation of the Agenda by 2030, its recognition that eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, is the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development, its commitment to achieving sustainable development in its three dimensions – economic, social and environmental – in a balanced and integrated manner, and to building upon the achievements of the Millennium Development Goals and seeking to address their unfinished business,

Recalling the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change¹ and the Paris Agreement,² the Convention on Biological Diversity³ and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework adopted at the fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention, and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa,⁴ including the Land Degradation Neutrality Target Setting Programme, as well as the outcomes of the high-level political forum on sustainable development,

¹ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1771, No. 30822.

² Adopted under the UNFCCC in [FCCC/CP/2015/10/Add.1](#), decision 1/CP.21.

³ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1760, No. 30619.

⁴ *Ibid.*, vol. 1954, No. 33480.



Welcoming the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework adopted in decision 15/4 of 19 December 2022⁵ at the fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, and its goals and targets,

Recalling the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030⁶ and its global forest goals, as well as the midterm review of the effectiveness of the international arrangement on forests in achieving its objectives, and the declaration of the high-level segment of the nineteenth session of the United Nations Forum on Forests,

Stressing that the sustainable management of forests and trees outside forests is vital to the integrated implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, especially Goal 15,

Emphasizing the continuous need to increase the visibility of the social, economic and environmental benefits of forests and sustainable forest management and place them as an important component of responses to global challenges, and in this regard noting recent forest-related declarations, pledges and developments, including but not limited to the forest-relevant contributions of the Glasgow Leaders' Declaration on Forests and Land Use and the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration (2021–2030),

Recognizing that forests provide essential ecosystem services, such as timber, food, fuel, fodder, non-wood products and shelter, as well as contribute to soil and water conservation and clean air, prevent land degradation and desertification and reduce the risk of floods, landslides, avalanches, droughts, dust storms, sandstorms and other natural disasters, and contribute substantially to climate change mitigation and adaptation and to the conservation of biodiversity,

Recognizing also the valuable contributions of Indigenous Peoples as well as local communities, where applicable, in sustainable forest management, including afforestation and reforestation, in degraded lands, including drylands, and therefore further recognizing the need to promote their full and meaningful participation in forest-related decision-making, contributing to better conserving and managing forests,

Recognizing further the vital role that women play in the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity, and reaffirming the need for their full, equal, effective and meaningful participation at all levels of policymaking and implementation for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity, as well as ecosystem restoration,

Recognizing the Global Initiative on Reducing Land Degradation and Enhancing Conservation of Terrestrial Habitats to prevent, halt and reverse land degradation adopted by the leaders of the Group of 20 in Riyadh in 2020, as well as the Riyadh Leader's Declaration,

Welcoming the convening of the twenty-first session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Samarkand, Uzbekistan, from 13 to 17 November 2023,

Looking forward to the sixteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa, in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, from 2 to 13 December 2024,

⁵ United Nations Environment Programme, document CBD/COP/DEC/15/4, annex.

⁶ See resolution [71/285](#).

Looking forward also to the sixteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity in Cali, Colombia, from 21 October to 1 November 2024,

1. *Emphasizes* that sustainable forest management, including afforestation and reforestation through tree planting, seeding and regeneration in degraded lands, including drylands, can have economic, social and environmental benefits inter alia by increasing biodiversity, providing habitat for diverse plant and animal species, protecting against natural hazards and disasters, contributing substantially to climate change mitigation and adaptation, particularly by absorbing and storing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, as well as providing opportunities for agroforestry and ecotourism;

2. *Also emphasizes* the need to ensure that afforestation and reforestation activities are carried out in line with sustainable forest management and that they do not lead to the degradation of non-forested natural ecosystems;

3. *Strives* to strengthen the provision and mobilization of and access to new and additional resources from all sources, given the importance of predictability for the conservation, restoration and sustainable management of forests, in particular developing countries, including through innovative mechanisms, as well as strives to promote investment, innovative financing mechanisms, and scientific, technological and capacity-building support for efforts towards halting and reversing deforestation and forest degradation by 2030 in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication and to leave no one behind, including through results-based payments, positive incentives for the conservation, restoration and sustainable management of forests, and alternative policy approaches, and make this support accessible and attractive to stakeholders involved in sustainable forest management and use, including forest owners, smallholders, Indigenous Peoples, local communities, women and youth;

4. *Invites* Member States to implement, participate in and support, as appropriate, sustainable forest management, including protection, restoration, afforestation and reforestation projects and initiatives incorporating tree planting, seeding or regeneration in degraded lands, including drylands, as appropriate, taking into account their national circumstances, policies, priorities, capacities, levels of development and forest conditions;

5. *Emphasizes* the importance of strengthening international cooperation, including North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation, as well as public-private partnerships and cross-sectoral cooperation at all levels, to promote sustainable forest management;

6. *Reaffirms* the contribution of nature-based solutions, ecosystem-based approaches and other sustainable management and conservation approaches, in line with United Nations Environment Assembly resolution 5/5 of 2 March 2022,⁷ for combating desertification, reversing land degradation and halting and reversing biodiversity loss;

7. *Emphasizes* the role of forests and trees outside forests in mitigating the effects of air, water and soil pollution, as well as their role as natural barriers against wind, sand and dust storms, preventing soil erosion and further desertification;

8. *Recognizes* the value of afforestation and reforestation, including tree planting, seeding and regeneration programmes, through careful planning and consideration of the local environment and ecosystem, using non-invasive, drought-

⁷ UNEP/EA.5/Res.5.

resistant and productive plant species, adapted to the local climate, soil conditions and environmental conditions in the respective areas;

9. *Also recognizes* the significant contributions of forests and trees outside forests in achieving Sustainable Development Goals, in particular in relation to poverty eradication and food security;

10. *Notes* the importance of appropriate species selection and ensuring long-term maintenance, care and monitoring of trees planted, seeded or regenerated in degraded lands, including drylands, through the development of sustainable and effective maintenance strategies;

11. *Recognizes* the need to work collaboratively to protect, conserve, sustainably manage and restore forests and forest ecosystems in line with the global forest goals and all relevant multilateral agreements and related processes, including through meaningful engagement with and supporting the contributions of partners and stakeholders, including forest owners, Indigenous Peoples, local communities, local authorities, the private sector, non-governmental organizations, women, children, youth, and scientific, academic and philanthropic organizations at all levels;

12. *Emphasizes* the importance of education and awareness-raising programmes to inform the public on the benefits of sustainable forest management, including forest protection, restoration, afforestation and reforestation;

13. *Encourages* relevant United Nations entities, within their respective mandates, to integrate sustainable forest management, including afforestation and reforestation, into their programmes and reporting, as appropriate, when providing support to countries affected by desertification and land degradation, to accelerate the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.⁸

*103rd plenary meeting
13 August 2024*

⁸ Resolution 70/1.