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New York Declaration on Forests

**GLOBAL PLATFORM**

**NEW YORK DECLARATION ON FORESTS  
ENDORSER PERSPECTIVES REPORT**

**Progress, Challenges and Enabling  
Conditions for Action**

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**About the NYDF Global Platform:** The NYDF Platform seeks to increase ambition, forge new partnerships and accelerate progress on the NYDF goals by responding to NYDF endorsers' requests for a dedicated, multi-stakeholder platform to re-invigorate political endorsement of the NYDF, to facilitate coordination and communication, to share best practices, resources and lessons, and to support ongoing monitoring of progress.

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## PREFACE



Five years ago, nearly 200 governments, companies, non-governmental organizations, indigenous groups and local communities, agreed on a set of ten ambitious goals for forests. This agreement – the New York Declaration on Forests – was a moment of hope in the run-up to the Paris Agreement and the Sustainable Development Goals.

Five years on, much has changed in the world. There is a much deeper societal awareness of climate change as an urgent and existential crisis. The science on forests and climate change has come into sharper focus, with a clearer picture of how and why forest intactness is so critical to the ability of forests to be carbon sinks instead of carbon sources. The number of corporations making commitments on deforestation-free supply chains is closing in on 500, and the commitments are closing in on one thousand. Our ability to monitor deforestation has increased exponentially – we now have near daily high-resolution satellite coverage of every corner of the earth, and citizen-powered web portals to monitor and report deforestation.

Five years on, little has changed in the world. The findings of a recent report “Climate Change and Land” by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, coupled with the findings of the recent “Protecting and Restoring Forests – Five Year Assessment Report,” paint a sober picture for forests. Simply put, we are not on track to meet our collective forest goals, and we have not changed the trajectory for climate and development. The number of corporations able to meet their commitments for deforestation-free supply by 2020 remains very low; some reports claim that not a single corporation will meet its commitments. Moreover, we have achieved less than a fifth of the Bonn Challenge goal for restoration.

And in many ways, the situation is getting worse. Since 2014, when the New York Declaration on Forests was signed, deforestation has accelerated significantly – by 44%! Every year since then, we have been losing an area of forests the size of the United Kingdom, and that loss accounts for the entire 2017 emissions of the European Union. Human rights abuses and killing of indigenous peoples over land rights have increased, as have threats and killings of environmental journalists.

That is why this report is so timely. As we approach 2020, and as we begin to think about what is needed to accelerate progress, it is vital to take stock of progress. We must examine the actions that NYDF endorsers have taken since 2014, and to understand how those actions have had an impact and have created change. We must also take a closer look at the challenges and enabling conditions that prohibit or accelerate progress.

With this clear-eyed look at the past, we can – and must – chart a pathway not only of bold commitment, but equally bold action.

Haoliang Xu  
Director of Bureau for Policy and Programme Support  
United Nations Development Programme

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents perspectives from the endorsers of the New York Declaration on Forests (NYDF), examining endorser progress to achieve the 10 goals, including enabling conditions for endorser action, barriers to progress, and lessons learned five years since the launch of the Declaration in 2014. NYDF endorser challenges, actions and progress towards the NYDF goals have been captured, recognizing that measurable, collective action is necessary now to make considerable progress to address deforestation.

Eight lessons emerged from the consultation with endorsers.

### **Lesson 1: Implementation of deforestation-free commitments by companies and governments is slow due to barriers that require multi-level and multi-sectoral solutions**

Each commitment to stop forest loss and protect and restore forests brings us closer to our shared forest and climate goals, but measurable action to deliver on these commitments and the pathway to implement them has proven to be more elusive. Overcoming such barriers requires support for activities such as the development of measurable and time-bound targets; multi-stakeholder collaborations; renewed political will at a high level; shifting gray to green finance and increasing financial incentives to scale-up implementation; consistent monitoring and accountability strategies, preferably through an independent third-party vendor; and policies that support demand for deforestation-free products.

### **Lesson 2: Strong governance and policy are essential enabling conditions for endorser action; but also a barrier to implementation when absent**

The presence or absence of strong, consistent policy and governance conditions can either support or prevent action to address deforestation and protect, restore and sustainably manage forests and lands. Weak political will, limited transparency, the presence of corruption, and a lack of law enforcement to address illegal deforestation are all major barriers to endorser action. Further work is needed to ensure that forests and forest communities are protected despite political changes.

### **Lesson 3: Individual leadership and forest champions can shape action across an organization and an industry**

High-level individual political leadership is critical for the adoption of commitments across institutions and the implementation of such commitments on the ground. Countries and jurisdictions with stronger institutional frameworks and meritocratic systems in place can avoid negative influences of government turnover. High-level corporate leadership that champions forest and climate action is critical for the adoption of commitments and implementation on the ground. Indigenous peoples have strengthened alliances and champions across the globe to influence the international forest and climate agendas.

### **Lesson 4: Implementation of forest commitments often hinges on multi-stakeholder engagement and partnerships**

Concerted action and engagement across multiple sectors and actors are essential to achieve the ambitious goals of the NYDF. These partnerships and multi-stakeholder collaboration activities prove essential because they facilitate cross-sector trust, especially valuable for progress in an often-contested area. Endorser feedback on multi-stakeholder collaboration focused on developing links with financial or implementing partners, connecting with other endorsers in the same geographic or commodity area, and sharing lessons and challenges through learning exchanges and other specific linkages.

### **Lesson 5: Accountability and transparency technology has accelerated in recent years but access to open and transparent data remains a challenge**

There is insufficient transparency and limited traceability across agricultural commodity supply chains. Multiple NYDF company endorsers cited the challenge of transparency, often due to either limited or incomplete data or concerns about competitiveness and reputation. There was broad recognition of the need for joint industry action and monitoring across industries, especially beef, palm oil, soy, paper, coffee, cocoa, and rubber but action to achieve this has been limited.

### **Lesson 6: Land tenure is a precondition to eliminate conflict and sustainably conserve and manage forests**

Indigenous and local communities are stewards to a quarter of the world's natural carbon stock and collectively hold more than 50 percent of the world's land, but much of this land is not formally recognized and titled. Solutions to address the contested status of land tenure include generating agreements on the process for clarifying and consolidating land rights and securing financial support implement such processes.

### **Lesson 7: Although negative financial investments work against forests, and positive financial investments are insufficient to achieve forest goals, new models for forest finance hold promise**

Although nature provides as much as USD 125 trillion in economic value, the world grossly underinvests in safeguarding nature, and finance is the engine behind the leading drivers of forest loss and degradation. Our current economy doesn't account for the true value and benefits of forests; forests and improved land management receive only 2 percent of public mitigation finance. We need a new economy and a paradigm perspective shift in the narrative regarding the contribution of forests. Even modest changes to the current paradigm could have major positive outcomes for forests.

### **Lesson 8: Nature Based Solutions yield societal benefits but those values are not fully recognized**

The value of forests is often not recognized by the governments and corporations that drive systemic forest loss and degradation. This leads to a distorted valuation of forests and a missed opportunity to capitalize on forests to support achievement of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). NYDF endorser actions to protect restore and sustainably manage forests contributes to multiple SDGs, yet linking the important contribution of their activities to benefits that support the SDGs was often overlooked.

### **The post-2020 vision**

As 2020 approaches, and taking into account the findings of the NYDF Assessment report in 2019, there is a need for renewed ambition and action by all endorser groups, coupled with increased accountability, in order to reverse increasing deforestation trends and advance towards global forest and climate targets. Nearly two-thirds of consulted NYDF endorsers have reported action plans for post-2020 objectives with specific priorities emerging, including: a) implementing safeguards and policies to reduce forest risks, b) support for livelihoods and capacity building, c) nature-based solutions and conservation, d) agricultural markets, including demand and consumption, e) transparency and accountability, f) harmonizing the development, biodiversity and climate agendas, and g) governance. The NYDF Global Platform's post-2020 vision will focus on incorporating the recommendations and feedback collected from over 80+ NYDF endorser consultations including strategies for strengthening implementation, addressing accountability, maximizing synergies with initiatives and coalitions, and supporting knowledge sharing.



# INTRODUCTION



## FORESTS, CLIMATE AND THE 2030 AGENDA

Forests provide vital functions and services for social, economic and ecological wellbeing. Many of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) depend on balanced and healthy forest ecosystems, including climate action, food security, water quantity and quality, sustainable livelihoods, economic development, environmental health, and disaster reduction. Currently, more than 1.6 billion people depend on forests for food, water, fuel, medicines, traditional cultures and livelihoods. Forests support up to 80 percent of terrestrial biodiversity and play a vital role as a climate mitigation solution; Restoring the 150 million hectares of degraded and deforested lands committed under the Bonn Challenge would provide approximately \$84 billion per year in net benefits that could improve the livelihoods and income opportunities for rural communities, as well as sequester 47 Gigatons of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent (GtCO<sub>2</sub>e) (IUCN, 2019), approximately the annual emissions of Switzerland.

Yet forest loss has continued at an unsustainable pace, often with devastating impacts on the environment, biodiversity, and local forest communities and indigenous peoples. Tropical primary forest loss has increased by 44 percent relative to the baseline period of 2002-13, growing from 3.0 to 4.3 million hectares per year.<sup>1</sup> Deforestation, agricultural conversion and unsustainable land use are leading contributors to greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions; according to the IPCC Special Report on Land (2019),<sup>2</sup> an estimated 23 percent of total anthropogenic GHG emissions (2007-2016) derive from agriculture, forestry and other land use (AFOLU).

1 NYDF Assessment Partners. (2019). Protecting and Restoring Forests: A Story of Large Commitments Yet Limited Progress – Five Years After the New York Declaration on Forests. Climate Focus (coordinator and editor). Accessible at [www.forestdeclaration.org](http://www.forestdeclaration.org).  
2 IPCC (2019). IPCC Special Report on Climate Change and Land. <https://www.ipcc.ch/site/assets/uploads/2019/08/SRCCL-leaflet.pdf>

Achievement of the collective climate goal to hold warming to 1.5 degrees celsius will not be possible without addressing deforestation, by accelerating forest protection, restoration and sustainable forest and land management efforts.

**In 2018, gross annual carbon dioxide emissions from tropical tree cover loss (4.2 Gt CO<sub>2</sub>) were significantly lower than the peak observed in 2016 (6.1 Gt CO<sub>2</sub>). However, annual average emissions since the NYDF was endorsed are still 57 percent higher, increasing from 3.0 to 4.7 gigatons of CO<sub>2</sub> per year, more than entire Europe's 2017 greenhouse gases emissions from all sources (e.g. energy, cars, and industry).<sup>3</sup>**

To make forests an efficient and cost-effective pathway towards a healthy climate, and to support achievement of the SDGs, forests must be protected, restored and sustainably managed, particularly in tropical countries. Through multi-stakeholder collaboration the global community can:

- protect and restore degraded forests and lands;
- align forest action to existing targets and commitments, including the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Aichi Biodiversity Targets, and Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) under the Paris Agreement;
- secure indigenous rights, recognizing that indigenous peoples manage or have tenure rights over more than a quarter of the world's land surface<sup>4</sup> and 22 percent of the forest carbon is stewarded by local forest communities;<sup>5</sup>
- improve the sustainable management of land to ensure climate change mitigation and adaptation, biodiversity conservation, food security and the prevention of desertification; and
- avoid conversion of natural forests for agriculture and other land uses and improve forest-friendly agriculture.

With renewed cooperative action and adequate finance, the world can slow, halt and reverse global forest loss while simultaneously supporting achievement of the SDGs. Reducing emissions from deforestation and increasing forest restoration will be essential for limiting warming and achieving our climate goals. In fact, forests and improved land management represent one of the largest, most cost-effective and proven climate solutions available today. Forests can contribute to economic growth, poverty alleviation, rule of law, food and water security, climate resilience and biodiversity conservation. In addition, actions to conserve, sustainably manage and restore forests can help secure the rights of forest dependent indigenous peoples, while promoting their participation in decision-making.

3 NYDF Assessment Partners. (2019). Protecting and Restoring Forests: A Story of Large Commitments Yet Limited Progress – Five Years After the New York Declaration on Forests. Climate Focus (coordinator and editor). Accessible at [www.forestdeclaration.org](http://www.forestdeclaration.org).

4 Garnet et al. (2018) A spatial overview of the global importance of Indigenous lands for conservation <https://www.cifor.org/library/6991/>

5 Rights and Resources (2018). A Global Baseline of Carbon Storage in Collective Lands. [https://rightsandresources.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/A-Global-Baseline\\_RRI\\_Sept-2018.pdf](https://rightsandresources.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/A-Global-Baseline_RRI_Sept-2018.pdf)

## NEW YORK DECLARATION ON FORESTS

Launched at the UN Secretary -General's Climate Summit in September 2014, the New York Declaration on Forests (NYDF) outlines ten ambitious global goals<sup>6</sup> to protect and restore forests and end natural forest loss by 2030. The NYDF combines goals expressed in a number of individual pledges and international agreements, including the Paris Agreement, the Sustainable Development Goals, the Bonn Challenge, the 2020 Strategic Plan on Biodiversity, climate and forest financing pledges, and supply chain commitments.



If realized, the NYDF goals have the potential to accelerate achievement of climate commitments by reducing annual carbon emissions by 4.5 to 8.8 billion tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>-equivalent per year, roughly equivalent to the annual emissions of the United States.<sup>7</sup> The emissions reduction from deforestation, together with enhanced carbon removals from forest restoration and other nature-based solutions, could provide up to a third of the climate mitigation solution<sup>8</sup>.



“At the UN Secretary-General’s Climate Summit in September 2014, the NYDF was jointly endorsed by a broad alliance of governments, civil society groups, indigenous peoples and private sector leaders. It was a unique chance to convene stakeholders from so many different constituencies working together to stop deforestation and increase forest restoration. BMU is convinced that such alliances are key to address the deforestation and forest landscape restoration challenges.”

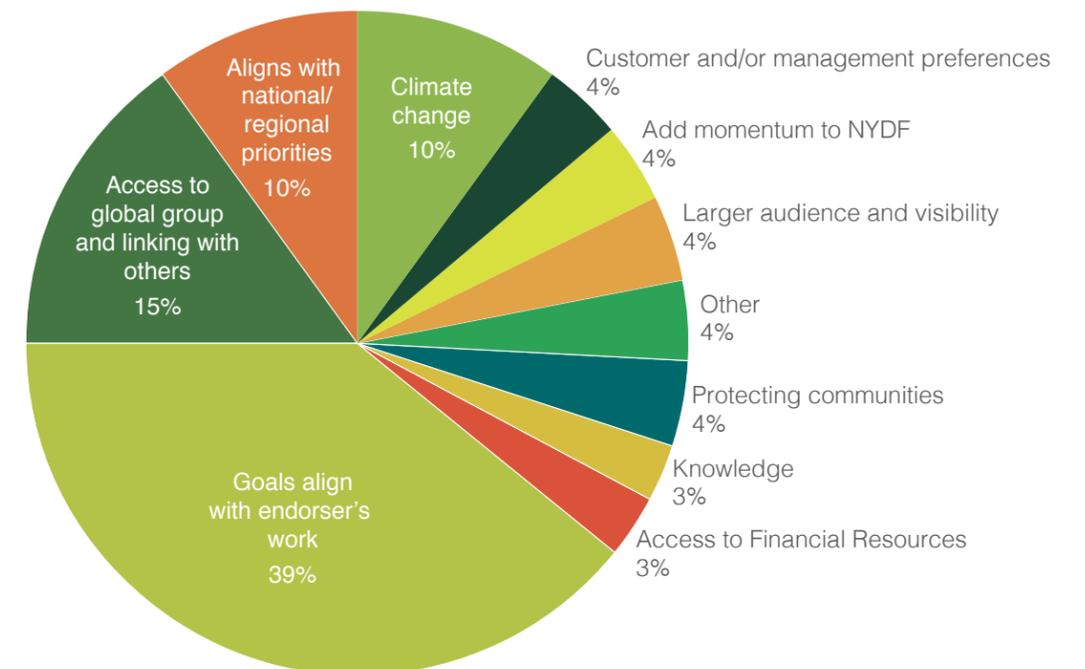
–Germany

6 <https://nydfglobalplatform.org/#goals>  
 7 <http://forestdeclaration.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/2017-NYDF-Goals-8-and-9-Assessment-Report.pdf>  
 8 Griscom et al. 2017. Natural Climate Solutions. Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences. 144 (44) <http://www.pnas.org/content/114/44/11645>

## THE NYDF ENDORSERS

The New York Declaration on Forests has been endorsed by more than 200 national and sub-national governments from forest and donor countries, companies, financial institutions, indigenous peoples’ organizations, and international and local non-governmental organizations (NGOs). With its cross-sectoral reach of endorsers representing 62 governments (41 national, 21 subnational), 64 NGOs, 50 companies, 22 indigenous peoples organizations, and 9 financial institutions, the NYDF acknowledges that the key to successful forest and climate action lies in multi-stakeholder collaboration.

Figure 1: Motivations for joining NYDF



NYDF endorsers have expressed a diverse array of reasons for endorsing the Declaration (Figure 1). A majority of endorsers noted that the NYDF goals aligned with their work and priorities, while others mentioned wanting to join a global community; their interest in creating links with others; and the role of the Declaration in creating a stronger link between forests and climate change forest conservation and restoration.

Within each endorser group there were several shared reasons for endorsing the NYDF, including recognition of the importance of multi-stakeholder engagement and collaboration, the importance of strengthening links with others and the need to share lessons and insights across stakeholder groups.

“We stand for sharing the vision of the NYDF. Indigenous and local communities are very active in protecting the forest and as a state we are supportive of these efforts and the goals of the NYDF. We have a lot of experience in sustainable forest management and we can share these experiences as well as learn from the NYDF endorsers.”

– Cross River State, Nigeria

Several corporate endorsers identified the strong alignment of the NYDF with their existing corporate strategies and/or their customer demands.. In many cases having strong upper management and CEO support for sustainability was a major factor in not only endorsing the NYDF but in taking action toward the goals.

**In 2014 the Norwegian government met with and encouraged companies to endorse the NYDF. We had a dialogue with customers to ask - how can we do more and be part of the solution? In October 2015 we signed the Norwegian commitment on soy and forest along with four compound feed companies covering 100 percent of the feed market for farm animals. It is part of our Nordic culture for the companies to take on high levels of responsibility.**

– Denofa

Several large global NGO and donor country endorsers said they joined to offer their support to the declaration and build momentum around the goals.



**We see it [NYDF] as one of the clearest and most comprehensive instruments for describing what should be achieved in the Paris Climate Agreement. We wanted to add our voice of support to say that it's a good thing that should be widely respected and followed."**

– Wildlife Conservation Society

Representatives from indigenous peoples' (organizations) and local forest communities view the NYDF as a platform for their voices to be heard and as a way to communicate to a global multi-stakeholder community that 'forests are life'.

**We want [our] voices to be heard because forests are [our] homes, something to maintain—[we] have been living there for generations. It is a heritage for the next generations, not something to look at as just something to conserve—it is home.**

– REPALEAC

To harness this motivation to endorse the NYDF and take action to address forest loss, the Global Platform for the New York Declaration on Forests was launched in 2017.

## THE NYDF GLOBAL PLATFORM

The Global Platform for the New York Declaration on Forests (NYDF Platform) was launched on the margins of the UNFCCC Climate Change Conference (COP 24) in November 2017. It was created to engage and support the endorsers of the Declaration and to accelerate achievement of the NYDF goals.

The NYDF Global Platform is designed to:

- convene and facilitate multi-stakeholder dialogue and collaboration to advance global advocacy and promote implementation of forest commitments;
- catalyze existing partnerships and initiatives to build on the work that has already been done and avoid duplication of efforts;
- promote networking, communication and collaboration among countries, companies, indigenous peoples and local communities, and civil society organizations to open dialogue, share solutions and barriers to shared challenges, and develop partnerships to better achieve the NYDF and other commitments;
- provide access to expert knowledge, tools, resources, peer-to-peer exchanges and other services needed to develop capacities, exchange knowledge, influence policy, and scale up forest and climate action;
- strengthen global recognition for leadership in forest conservation and restoration, sustainable development, and climate action; and
- promote the role of forests as a climate solution through communications and through participation in key major events.

## CHARTING PROGRESS: THE NYDF PROGRESS ASSESSMENT AND THE NYDF ENDORSER CONSULTATION

### The NYDF Progress Assessment

Each year the NYDF Assessment Partners produce the NYDF Progress Assessment report, capturing global progress to achieve the ten NYDF goals. The 2019 report, *Protecting and Restoring Forests: A Story of Large Commitments yet Limited Progress – New York Declaration on Forests Five-Year Assessment Report*, presents the status of the goals, recognizing we are not seeing sufficient progress to halt deforestation and protect and restore forests. Some of the main findings<sup>9</sup> include:

- Restoring forests is essential but does not offset deforestation, particularly of primary forests, as it takes decades to centuries to recover lost ecosystem function and services.
- We must preserve natural, and in particular primary, forests, as well as restore natural forests, with a particular focus on protection and restoration efforts in tropical developing countries.

<sup>9</sup> NYDF Assessment Partners. (2019). *Protecting and Restoring Forests: A Story of Large Commitments Yet Limited Progress – Five Years After the New York Declaration on Forests*. Climate Focus (coordinator and editor). Accessible at [www.forestdeclaration.org](http://www.forestdeclaration.org).

- Efforts to fight deforestation and forest landscape restoration should be pursued in coordinated and integrated processes seeking to maintain and increase forest cover – currently they are not.
- To date, efforts to address the drivers of deforestation and provide the conditions (e.g. finance, governance) needed to protect and restore forests have been inadequate to meet global climate and conservation targets.
- In addition to new finance, there is a need to shift existing finance from activities that may be harmful to forests toward activities that have a clear conservation or sustainability outcome for forests.
- More effective legislation and enforcement is needed for producer and consumer countries to protect forests, in particular tropical forests.
- Effective conservation of forest ecosystems includes recognizing the contribution of indigenous peoples and local communities to forest conservation.

### The NYDF Endorser Consultation

In early 2019, the NYDF Secretariat began global informal consultations including survey questions (Appendix II) with the NYDF endorsers to capture the specific challenges and constraints preventing progress for achieving the NYDF goals as well as examples of endorser actions in order to better understand endorser impact, the conditions that support progress, and strategies for scaling these actions to accelerate achievement of the NYDF goals.

Endorser consultations were conducted with:

- 15 national and 8 sub-national governments (representing 37 percent of all government endorsers)
- 29 non-governmental and civil society organizations (representing 45 percent of NGO & civil society organization (CSO) endorsers)
- 21 companies (representing 36 percent of company endorsers)
- 11 indigenous peoples organizations (representing 50 percent of indigenous peoples endorsers)

On the fifth anniversary of the New York Declaration on Forests, this NYDF Endorser Perspectives Report aims to summarize the findings and distill lessons learned from the NYDF endorser consultations, and to showcase the actions of endorsers pursuing progress on the goals, while recognizing the need to shift from standalone actions to mainstreamed forest implementation.

An aerial photograph of a lush green forest with a winding river. The river is a dark brown color and flows through the center of the forest. The trees are dense and vibrant green, with some shadows cast on the ground. The overall scene is a natural, serene landscape.

**NYDF ENDORSER  
PERSPECTIVES ON  
PROGRESS TO DATE**



## NYDF ENDORSER PERSPECTIVES ON PROGRESS TO DATE

The 84 NYDF endorsers that participated in the NYDF Endorser Consultation reported 155 forest-related policies, projects and initiatives that illustrate their progress to date for achieving the overarching NYDF Goal 1 to end natural forest loss by 2030 through forest protection, restoration and sustainable management.<sup>10</sup> These actions included national, regional and local policies, programs and projects; regional and global agreements and political declarations; financial support; and research and knowledge sharing. Many of the endorser actions mentioned (more than one third) were at the global level, followed by the subnational/jurisdictional level and then the national level.

The actions cut across many areas of work related to the NYDF goals including rights and participation of indigenous peoples, local forest communities and small-holder farmers; forest restoration and reforestation; sustainable agriculture and deforestation-free commodities; promoting and integrating forests as a climate solution, including through REDD+ policies; and sustainable land management and conservation. The actions were grouped into five main categories: 1) actions related to carbon and climate; 2) agriculture and commodities; 3) conservation and land management; 4) restoration and reforestation; and 5) rights and law enforcement (see Figure 2).

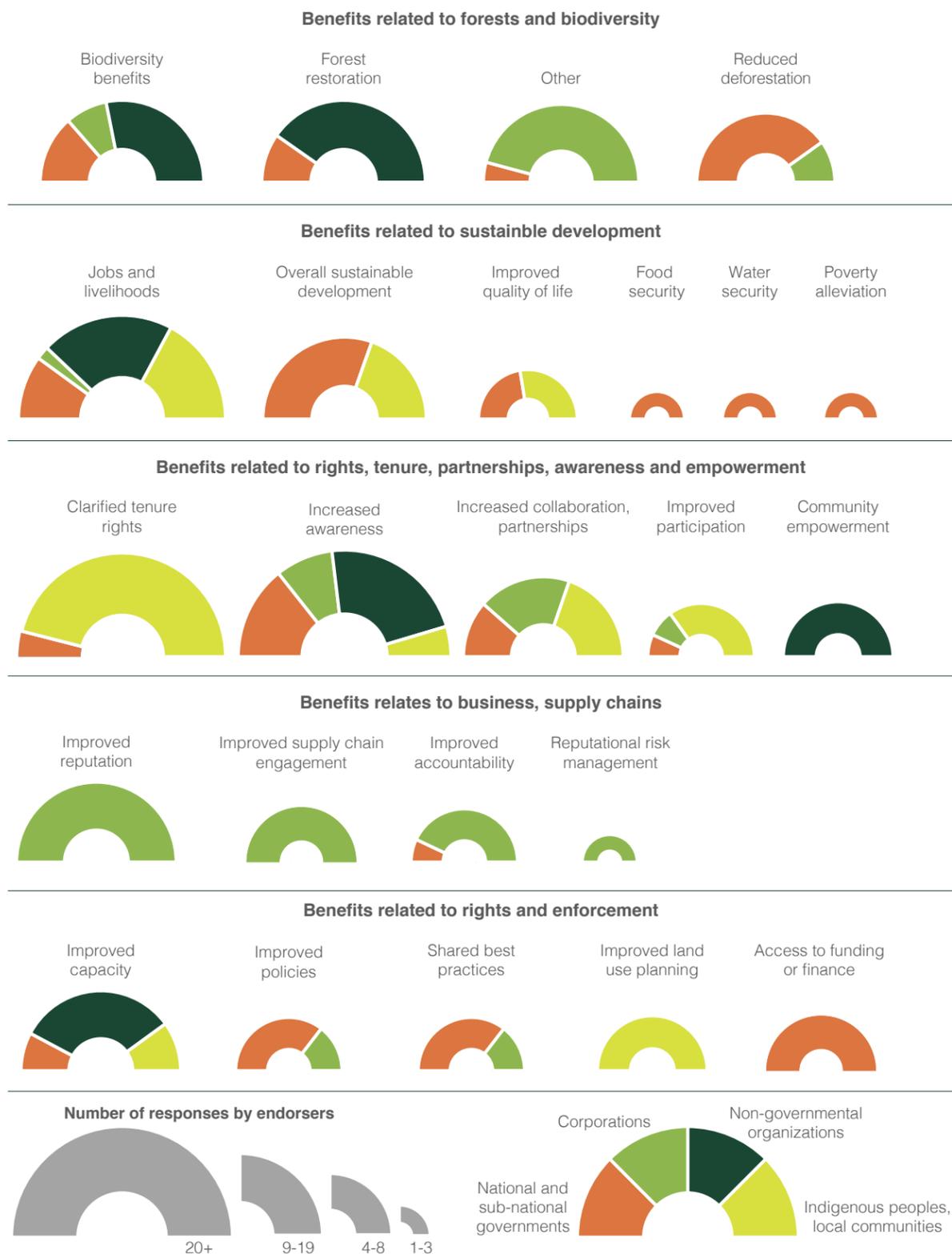
In addition to sharing details on the actions and progress made to achieve the NYDF goals, endorsers described the leading benefits accrued as a result of their activities. Benefits were grouped into five main categories: 1) benefits related to forests and biodiversity; 2) sustainable development; 3) rights, tenure, partnerships, awareness and empowerment; 4) business and supply chains; and 5) policies, finance and capacity building (See Figure 3). A marginal number of endorsers highlighted carbon mitigation or climate adaptation as benefits of their actions, and only a couple of the respondents identified SDG-related benefits (apart from jobs and livelihoods) such as food and water security. This suggests that endorsers have either not been monitoring for those benefits, or that the indicators are not yet showing a clear impact.

<sup>10</sup> Mention of NYDF endorser actions is not an endorsement of the endorser activities or intended to promote their actions as "best practice", but rather an example of what steps endorsers are taking to achieve the NYDF goals and the various challenges they face, the conditions that have supported their progress and lessons learned.

Figure 2: Progress to date – Endorser actions taken to achieve the NYDF Goals



Figure 3: Progress to date – Benefits of actions taken to achieve the NYDF Goals



## GOVERNMENT ACTIONS TO ADVANCE THE NYDF GOALS

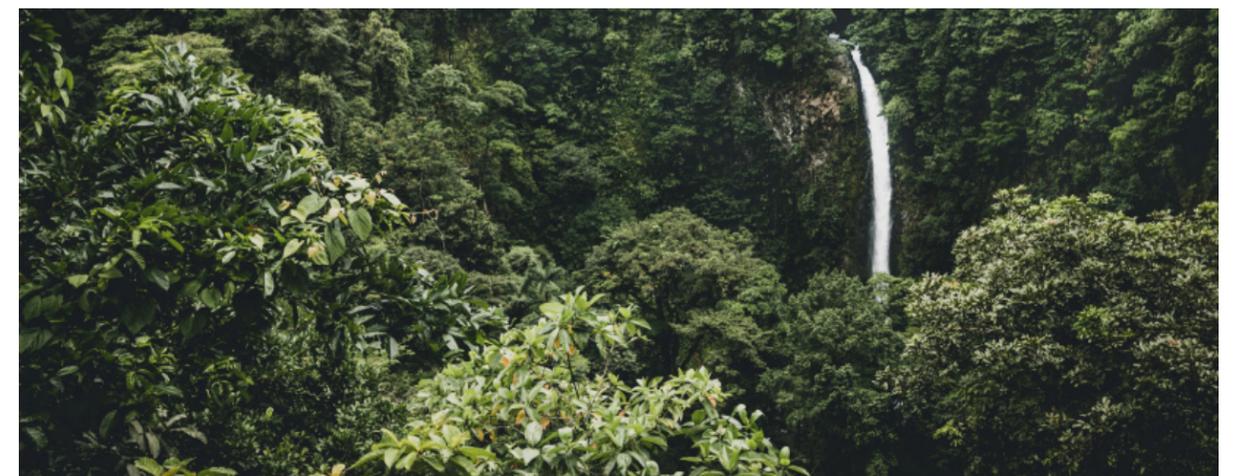
The NYDF Secretariat heard from 23 national and sub-national government endorsers presenting over 50 examples of progress. These governments discussed their progress in three main areas: 1) actions related to carbon and climate including, national-level REDD+ processes, low-carbon development strategies and carbon mapping initiatives; 2) conservation and land use planning and management approaches; and 3) activities to restore native forests. In addition, governments highlighted activities on consumption and demand related to agriculture and commodities as well as actions related to rights and enforcement, especially illegal logging control and mining-related actions. The NYDF national and sub-national government endorsers identified a range of actions from policies and laws to projects and finance that have supported progress to eliminate deforestation and protect and restore forests. See below examples of leading actions from governments to advance the NYDF Goals.

### National REDD+ Strategy: Ecuador

One of the main pathways for governments to achieve their forest commitments is through REDD+ to address emissions from deforestation and forest degradation and enhance forest conservation, sustainable management as well as enrich forest carbon stocks. Ecuador is recognized globally as a mega-diverse country with more than 60 percent of the country covered by forests and undisturbed natural ecosystems and one third of the land area is formally protected. It is home to 12.6 million hectares of native forests with three quarters located in the Amazon region, with more than 2 million people who depend on forest ecosystems for their livelihoods.

Ecuador formally recognized the rights of nature in its Constitution (2008) and has numerous public policies and initiatives to protect forests, biodiversity and associated environmental services. The National Development Plan (2017-2022) established deforestation reduction targets, while the REDD+ National Action Plan (2016-2025) defines policies and measures to reduce deforestation and forest degradation. The REDD+ Action Plan requires several national and international efforts for its implementation. As such, the Government of Ecuador is implementing enabling policies and instruments to ensure REDD+ implementation is successful and sustainable over time. PROAmazonia is one of the initiatives that directly contributes to national requirements identified in the REDD+ Action Plan.

PROAmazonia is an ambitious, five-year collaborative initiative to transform the agriculture and forestry sectors in the Amazon region to more sustainable management and production practices. It is an inclusive, cross-sectoral and multi-stakeholder initiative seeking a just transition to sustainable land-use practices to significantly reduce deforestation and restore degraded ecosystems, improve the livelihoods of some of the most impoverished communities in Ecuador, and establish viable economic markets for sustainably produced, deforestation-free products.



### Subnational REDD+: Tabasco, Mexico and Cross River State, Nigeria

Subnational jurisdictions are accelerating implementation to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD+). After the approval of Mexico's National REDD+ Strategy, at the sub-national level and along with six other States, Tabasco joined the Governors Climate and Forests Taskforce (GCF Task Force) in 2014. In 2015, the State of Tabasco established a group for Technical Monitoring and Reporting Monitoring Group for the REDD+ mechanism, and since 2018 is developing the State REDD+ Strategy for Tabasco with resources from Window A from Norway's contribution channeled through UNDP, with the purpose of strengthening actions for a low-carbon rural development.

Cross River State in Nigeria is as a pioneer state REDD+ project and an example used by others. In addition to housing 50 percent of the remaining tropical forest in Nigeria, the state expresses high concern for climate and environmental issues. They are the only state in the nation with a ministry of Climate Change and Forestry with a robust plan and mandate to tackle these issues. The State REDD+ strategy was used as an example for the national strategy as well as other state-level REDD+ strategies in Nigeria. Because of the Cross River State strategy and its successes, two other states in Nigeria have started REDD+ activities catalyzing and informing national level policies and seven other states are currently being scoped for participation in REDD+. The example of Cross River provides useful lessons learned for other governments and the REDD+ community. Some of these include, a strong element of community engagement and protection of community forests, involvement of local partners and NGOs who provided expert knowledge and advice, and a strong technical working group to create an implement the strategy. Cross River is implementing a state-level investment phase supported also by the GCF Task Force. The success of this state REDD+ strategy has implications for how Nigeria's national strategy is being framed and also how other subnational states will plan for REDD+ implementation.

### Payment for Environmental Services as a Tool for Reducing Deforestation and Conserving Forests: Costa Rica

Since 1987, and through a fossil fuel tax, Costa Rica has been a pioneer in schemes that paid landowners to protect forests in exchange for the benefits they provide, such as wildlife conservation, regulation of river flows, scenic beauty and carbon storage. Since that year, more than one million hectares of forest in Costa Rica have been included in these "payments for ecosystem services" (PES) schemes at one time or another. Forest cover has once again occupied more than 50 percent of the land area in the country, from a minimum of just over 20 percent in the 1980s. At the same time, in this same period, the country's gross domestic product (GDP) has doubled, illustrating that it is possible to grow economically while also protecting the environment and forests. In addition, the Government Payment for Environmental Services program has ensured the transfer of resources from the central government to rural communities with low socio-economic development and to indigenous peoples.



### Sustainable Agriculture and Demand for Forest Products: Belgium and France

Unsustainable agriculture is the leading driver of global deforestation and countries that are major consumers of forest products such as palm oil, soy, timber, and beef have a role to play in supporting sustainable agricultural production and shifting demand. Belgium and France are two countries that are leading these efforts. In Belgium, the government launched the Beyond Chocolate Initiative, which addresses deforestation from imported cocoa and has fostered a multi-stakeholder partnership among governments, NGOs, and companies to end deforestation from the supply of cocoa.

In France, the government enhanced the National Strategy on Imported Deforestation to focus on timber, palm oil, cacao, beef, soy, and rubber with the ambition to end importation and commercialization of the commodities that are driving deforestation by 2030. The multi-stakeholder partnership is identifying the key sources of imported deforestation, and working with key countries and companies, in particular on palm oil, soy, timber and cocoa. France's National Strategy on Imported Deforestation was initiated one year ago as a way to increase action towards the Amsterdam Declarations, that were signed in 2015. A multi-stakeholder Steering Committee has been established to follow up the strategy and cooperation projects with main producing countries (i.e. smallholders, reforestation, afforestation, agroforestry, etc.) will be financed by the French public aid.

## BENEFITS OF GOVERNMENT ACTIONS TO ADVANCE THE NYDF GOALS

National and sub-national government endorsers discussed the benefits of their forest action, which focused on four main areas: 1) benefits related to forests and biodiversity; 2) benefits related to sustainable development for jobs and livelihoods; 3) increased awareness and forest community rights, tenure, partnerships, and empowerment; and 3) improved capacity related to policies and finance. See the examples below of leading actions from governments that exemplify the many benefits of advancing the NYDF Goals.

### Policy Framework for Forest Protection and Biodiversity: Misiones, Argentina

The province of Misiones, Argentina has protected one million hectares of forest and has created a complementary package of environmental laws for forests and environmental conservation: Law XVI includes more than 120 provincial laws that regulate land use change and environmental protection; Law XVI N° 37 addresses soil conservation and prohibits advancement of the agricultural frontier; and a Law on zoning of land indicates three types of zones with 'Red zones' capturing intangible land that cannot be converted, 'yellow zones' as possible to convert with planning, and 'green zones' that are available for conversion.

“A primary benefit of this package of forests laws is biodiversity conservation and sustainable use of forests; we understand that we have a responsibility to protect and maintain the specificities and particularities of the remaining Parana region ecosystem of the Atlantic Forest for the benefit of our people and the population overall.”

– Misiones, Argentina

### Capacity Building: Canada

Capacity building and support for science-based action are critically important for addressing deforestation. The Canadian government is pursuing activities such as sharing forest fire expertise through their wildland fire training in Indonesia with the Indonesian Meteorological, Climatological, and Geophysical Agency, as well as their collaboration with multiple countries on sustainable, integrated natural resource management through the International Model Forest Network (IMFN) and utilization of Carbon Modeling and Accounting for forests.

### Restoration for Livelihoods: Dominican Republic

Quisqueya Verde is a successful large-scale reforestation program, funded by public funds since 1997. Through this initiative, 160,000 hectares have been reforested (12,000 ha/year), maintaining a rate of 7,000 ha / year which has risen to 12,000 ha / year in the last 5 years, with a species survival rate of 87 percent. The program relies on reforestation brigades formed by people living in rural communities where a deforested area is identified, working directly with the owners. The members of reforestation brigades receive 200 US dollars per month which supports local livelihoods through reforestation activities. In total, 3,000-4,000 people are involved in the brigades working for reforestation and landscape restoration at the national level. As a result, the smallholders that often rely on slash-and-burn agriculture for subsistence farming can now participate to the brigades, thus reducing illegal cuttings.

In 2017, at the initiative of the President of the Dominican Republic, the Dominican government launched the Agroforestry Development Projects initiative, under the coordination of the Ministry of the Presidency and with the participation of the Ministries of Agriculture and Environment and Natural Resources. To date, seven agroforestry projects are being executed in the southern region of the country, close to the border with Haiti, in an area that is the most deforested in the country and has the highest poverty rate, and whose area of action is delimited by river basins.

## COMPANY ACTIONS TO ADVANCE THE NYDF GOALS

The NYDF Platform Secretariat interviewed 20 company endorsers, representing a third of all company NYDF endorsers, who shared 36 examples of progress towards the NYDF goals. Most of these companies are downstream agricultural commodity companies but others include a large bank and two consulting companies, which support other companies and governments on sustainability strategies. This is representative of the NYDF company endorser base, which are mainly downstream agricultural supply companies. These companies focused primarily on deforestation-free supply chains with actions related to agriculture and commodities including supply chain transparency, agricultural certification, and smallholder engagement. In addition, some companies noted actions related to project-level REDD+ and native forest restoration. Companies mainly spoke about actions at the global level though they also noted a few national and subnational or jurisdictional actions.

These companies expressed progress towards the NYDF goals by aiming for global sustainable agriculture and deforestation-free supply chains, often in the form of a corporate commitment to zero deforestation from the major forest-risk commodities used in their products, such as palm oil, soy, pulp and paper, and beef. Of the twenty companies that participated in the consultation, 80 percent have a corporate action plan related to eliminating deforestation from their supply chains, 75 percent responded that these action plans have been adopted at the highest corporate level and 70 percent claim that those plans are measurable. Adoption at the highest level of the company and measurability could indicate progress to move from commitment to action, yet a lag in implementation for company commitments remains. See the examples below of leading actions from companies to advance NYDF Goals.

### Certification: Essity

Many retail companies mentioned the value of certification as a method to interact with suppliers, citing the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO), Round Table Responsible Soy (RTRS), ProTerra and Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) as the main certification organizations they are working with. Company supply chain commitments often include a commitment to 100 percent certification of specific forest-risk commodities. Companies rely on certification, particularly for providing guidelines for suppliers, however, they also noted that certification alone is not sufficient. Certification must be combined with strong government policy, landscape approaches, direct partnerships with suppliers, and other key conditions for sustainable agricultural supply in order to be effective.

Essity believes that global forest certification is one important tool to achieve the reduction of forest loss, recognizing international certification schemes such as the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) as a driver and a leader for addressing deforestation. Essity has a Global Fiber Sourcing Policy, this was recently updated with a new target to purchase only certified pulp. If the pulp is not FSC certified it must still be FSC Chain of Custody in addition to the certification of the scheme. The company has a monitoring scheme so it can identify at a global level what is being purchased as well as a Global Supplier Standard to increase traceability and transparency in their supply chain. Essity is committed to the circular economy and that fiber should be reused where practicable. Around 40 percent of all fibers used in their tissue products come from recycled paper and Essity reduced waste generation from produced tissue by three percent in 2018.

### Jurisdictional or Landscape-level Programs and Policies: Unilever

Companies also noted the importance of expanding outside their individual supply chain and focusing on jurisdictional or landscape-level programs and policies. Unilever recently launched a jurisdictional program in Central Kalimantan, Indonesia to address agricultural deforestation in the region, through a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the provincial government, producers, and local NGOs. Unilever has set an ambitious target for 100 percent physically certified and traceable palm oil in their supply chain by this year, 2019. They have outlined their commitment to working with suppliers to create sustainable supply chains and are demanding certified sources. In addition to RSPO standards, Unilever uses five standard principles for suppliers, including: 1) no deforestation, 2) no development on peat, 3) no exploitation of people or communities, 4) driving positive social and economic impact for smallholders, and 5) creating transparency. If suppliers do not meet Unilever's requirements, they will cease business with them. Beyond these extensive sustainability policies and targets, outlined in their Responsible Sourcing Policy, Sustainable Palm Oil Sourcing Policy and Sustainable Living Plan, Unilever is working with governments in Indonesia and Malaysia on a new approach, which matches their commitment to focus on suppliers and create transparency.

In 2015, Unilever announced it would begin collaborating on jurisdictional approaches to sustainable sourcing in regions that show a strong climate and forest policy commitment. In support of this announcement, Unilever stopped using GreenPalm certificates in 2016, in order to repurpose \$50 million USD over five years that would have been spent on certificates and instead invest it in direct place-based partnerships. Unilever aims to increase the availability of certified sustainable palm oil (CSPO) and scale direct sourcing from smallholder farmers. The model, called "Produce and Protect," is an attempt to transform agricultural supply sourcing. The approach taps into government resources and local support structures to implement training and certification, support local plantations, and create provincial and district level monitoring systems. Jurisdictional approaches will certify palm oil across entire villages, prioritizing smallholders and collaborating with governments and producers to certify palm oil production and safeguard communities and forests.

## BENEFITS OF COMPANY ACTIONS TO ADVANCE THE NYDF GOALS

Company endorsers presented a diverse array of benefits from their forest action. Actions related to business and supply chains resulted in several benefits including improved reputation and reputational risk management, supply chain engagement and accountability. In addition, companies presented broader benefits related to forests and biodiversity that concurrently support business, including recognition that sourcing sustainable supply of commodities hinges on sustainable use of land and forests; benefits related to sustainable development, specifically for improved quality of life; benefits for rights, tenure, partnerships, awareness and empowerment, including increased collaboration and partnerships, improved participation and increased awareness; and benefits for policies, finance and capacity focusing on improved policies and sharing of best practices. See below examples of leading actions from companies that exemplify the many benefits of advancing the NYDF Goals.

### Forest Restoration and Reforestation: Sime Darby

Companies are exploring activities related to reforestation and restoration projects. Only a few companies mentioned restoration projects but these are worth noting as examples of areas where companies are making extra effort to offset the impacts of their supply chains and engage local actors. Sime Darby Plantation started their Plant A Tree Program in 2008 funded by Yayasan Sime Darby. They identified a designated area of 136 hectares on their plantation with high carbon stock value and planted 136,000 trees. Since this plantation was close to the forest, eventually, the company will use this area to produce seedlings of endangered species and it will serve as a research area for Malaysian authorities. Sime Darby Plantation also supported a restoration and rehabilitation of orangutan habitats project in Sabah State, Malaysia, which was once degraded due to fire and poor logging practices. The 10-year project has been completed and was just handed back to the Sabah Forestry Department. Sime Darby Plantation noted that the population of orangutans has stabilized in the area and they started to make use of the trees planted for food and shelter.

### Multi-stakeholder Participation and the Cocoa Forest Initiative: Multiple NYDF Endorsers

Multiple company endorsers mentioned support and involvement in multi-stakeholder jurisdictional commitments, like the Cerrado Manifesto as well as the Cocoa Forest Initiative (CFI). Shifting focus outside of the direct supply chain and into the jurisdictions where companies operate helps the companies to partner with local organizations, governments, and other companies as well as addresses issues like leakage. A number of endorsers mentioned the Cocoa Forest Initiative<sup>11</sup> highlighting it as a notable partnership and one that should be replicated for other commodities as this Initiative has brought together a majority of cocoa and chocolate companies and the governments of the Ivory Coast and Ghana and Colombia, which together produce over 60 percent of the world's cocoa. A further necessary step is to have joint monitoring mechanisms for each signatory company. Multiple NYDF endorsers are members of CFI, including Cote d'Ivoire, NYDF companies, and The Sustainable Trade Initiative- IDH, an NGO that supports this initiative.

## NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS ACTIONS TO ADVANCE THE NYDF GOALS

29 non-governmental organization (NGO) endorsers, representing 45 percent of all NGO NYDF endorsers, joined the NYDF Endorser Consultation and presented 49 actions in total. NGOs presented various projects and programs focused on restoration and reforestation, in some cases extending beyond native forest restoration to further include peatland restoration, forest plantations, agroforestry and silvo-pasture. Actions related to conservation and land management were also captured, especially education and outreach activities and wildlife conservation as well as actions related to rights and enforcement for Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) and general rights advocacy and outreach on forests. Finally, NGOs had a multitude of activities focused on carbon and climate, including project-level REDD+ and low-carbon development as well as actions related to agriculture and commodities focused on alternative livelihoods and supply chain transparency. Both international and local NGOs identified a range of actions being implemented in line with the NYDF goals, primarily through programs, projects, research, or knowledge production activities. The level of NGO actions often occurred at the global or jurisdictional/subnational level. See the examples below of leading actions from NGOs to advance NYDF Goals.

### Sustainable Agriculture and Supply Chains: Conservation International

Sustainable, deforestation-free agricultural production and commodity-supply projects were the leading examples featured by the NGO endorsers and included actions across various regions and commodity supply chains. In North Sumatra, Indonesia, Conservation International is part of the Coalition for Sustainable Livelihoods to address palm oil deforestation. This coalition of Sustainable Livelihoods brings together partner corporations such as Pepsi, Unilever, Mars, and also the subnational and national governments and local NGOs to agree across stakeholders on an action plan for the prioritized protection of 1 million hectares in North Sumatra focused on areas most under threat for protection in coming years. Through an agreed action plan that includes the government and all the stakeholders the aim is to bring together the leading stakeholders to have a concrete action plan that is directly tied to Indonesian law.



11 <https://www.worldcocoafoundation.org/initiative/cocoa-forests-initiative/>

**Forest Restoration: Reforestamos Mexico**

Reforestamos, an NGO created in 2002, has developed multiple initiatives to stop deforestation, to increase sustainable forest management, and to restore the landscape and increase forest canopy in cities. Reforestamos generates information and promotes transparency to improve public and private decision making, builds multi-sector collaboration platforms to manage landscapes in an integrated way, and articulates the forest entrepreneurial ecosystem to develop nature based solutions. Among other achievements, the organization and its volunteers have planted more than 3 million trees with the support of 214 private sector companies in Mexico.

**BENEFITS OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION ACTIONS TO ADVANCE THE NYDF GOALS**

NGO endorsers presented several benefits of their forest action that focused on four main areas: 1) benefits related to forests and biodiversity; 2) benefits related to sustainable development for jobs and livelihoods; 3) increased awareness and community empowerment supporting rights, tenure, partnerships, and empowerment; and 4) improved capacity related to policies and finance. See the examples below of leading actions from NGOs that exemplify the many benefits of advancing the NYDF Goals.

**Sustainable Agriculture for Forest Conservation: IDESAM**

In Brazil, the Apui Agroforestry Coffee project was initiated by the Institute for Conservation and Sustainable Development of the Amazon (IDESAM) in 2012. This project is proving to be an effective solution to reviving sustainable coffee production while conserving and reviving the Amazon forest. The project promotes agroecology and agroforestry with the intercropping of native trees in coffee plantations as a means to regenerating soil fertility, increasing coffee production and reforesting the land. IDESAM also provides technical support and capacity building to increase the market value of the Apui agroforestry coffee and bring financial benefits to the coffee producers, as an alternative means of livelihood to cattle production. Within just a few years the project has increased the productivity of coffee by 66 percent, tripled producers' annual income of 59 for family farmers and reforested 33 hectares of land.



**Collaboration between Indigenous Peoples and Subnational Governments: GCF Task Force and Earth Innovation Institute**

The Governors' Climate and Forests Task Force (GCF), with support from the Earth Innovation Institute, have been strengthening engagement between subnational governments and indigenous peoples and local communities (IPLCs) on the Rio Branco Declaration commitments through the creation of the GCF Global Committee for indigenous peoples and Local Communities. The Committee is a platform for governments and IPLCs to collaborate and advance their shared commitment to reducing deforestation and supporting rural low emissions development. Through this platform GCF Task Force members unanimously voted in 2018 to support the Guiding Principles for Collaboration and Partnership Between Subnational Governments, indigenous peoples and Local Communities, which provides universal tenets on how governments and IPLCs can work together to address deforestation, climate change and respect the rights of indigenous peoples and forest communities. The Principles were also endorsed by 18 organizations representing IPLCs from across the tropics.

**INDIGENOUS AND LOCAL COMMUNITY ACTIONS TO ADVANCE THE NYDF GOALS**

The NYDF Platform Secretariat spoke with 11 indigenous peoples' organizations, representing half of all endorsers representing indigenous peoples' associations, noting 18 examples of actions to achieve the NYDF goals. Indigenous peoples and local communities are at the center of forest protection and restoration efforts and call for a general shift in resource allocation to ensure that resources go to the people doing the work on the ground to protect forests. In order to gain this recognition and rights, indigenous peoples - in addition to their immense efforts on the ground to conserve the forest, through community-managed forest initiatives, restoration projects, and utilizing traditional practices - spend a large amount of time and effort to advocate for their rights and the protection of their land and to provide capacity-building support for fellow indigenous peoples. Additionally, they are advocating for the implementation of participatory processes to give indigenous peoples the mandate to protect their forests. Indigenous peoples have also paid close attention and have been heavily involved in climate change initiatives and REDD+ processes, both through advocacy for FPIC and for capacity-building for indigenous peoples' inclusion in the implementation of REDD+. See below examples of leading actions from indigenous peoples and local communities to advance the NYDF Goals.

**Cuencas Sagradas - Sacred Headwaters Initiative: COICA**

Indigenous peoples and local communities have demonstrated the ability to collaborate on regional initiatives to protect large areas of forest, including the Cuencas Sagradas - Sacred Headwaters Initiative. The Initiative is led by three Amazonian indigenous federations; CONFENIAE (Ecuador), AIDSEP (Peru) and COICA (Coordinator of Indigenous Organizations from the Amazon Basin) and their partner national and international organizations, and aims to advance bioregional and indigenous-led governance and stewardship of this vast region. The Amazon Sacred Headwaters Initiative is building a shared vision among indigenous peoples, NGOs, the philanthropic community, social entrepreneurs and governments towards establishing a bi-national protected region – off-limits to industrial scale resource extraction, and governed in accordance with traditional indigenous principles of cooperation and harmony that foster a mutually enhancing Human-Earth relationship.

### Indigenous-managed Land in Kenya: Yiaku Laikipiak Trust

One notable example of an indigenous community gaining access to land rights is the Yiaku tribe in the Mukogodo forest in Kenya. They have managed to keep the Mukogodo forest intact despite a trend of diminishing forests in Kenya due to their efforts in forest stewardship, conservation management strategies, and use of traditional knowledge, governance and cultures. The Yiaku forest management provides a model that can be replicate with other communities.

### REDD+ Indígena Amazonico: COICA

Indigenous peoples in the Amazon Basin proposed the concept of REDD+ Indígena Amazonico (RIA) across the 9 Amazon countries starting with Suriname, Guyana, Brazil, Peru, Colombia, Ecuador. The concept was proposed as a contribution to conventional REDD+ frameworks, considering the low deforestation rates in IP territories. RIA proposes that REDD+ is implemented in indigenous territories by integrating indigenous peoples' life plans and allowing forest guardians to be participate effectively. This work is progressing in different countries. In Peru the REDD+ Indígena Program in Madre de Dios is being implemented with FENAMAD, AIDSESEP, which can be replicated across the Amazon, depends on the governments and the political support. The REDD+ Indígena is also working with the Communal Reserve Amaraeri. The next phase of the REDD Indígena is linking to COICA's work on the overarching local communities and indigenous peoples Platform as part of the UNFCCC.

### The Indigenous Peoples Foundation for Education and Environment (IPF)

The indigenous peoples Foundation for Education and Environment (IPF) works to address the conflict over land and natural resource use between park authorities and community members, focusing in areas that are drastically reduced such as in Obluang National Park and Inthanon National Park in Chang Mai, Thailand. In addition, processes are being pursued for a land use survey and to retrace a new protected area boundary to ensure it does not overlap with community lands. An essential component of this work is to increase collaboration among stakeholders such as those in the Mae Tia Mae Tae watershed area to continue monitoring the forest situation and land use practices in and manage competing interests through improved communication and participation.

“Indigenous peoples and community networks have continued taking care of forest through their traditional practices and different activities such as forest patrolling, fire break line construction and maintenance, knowledge transmission from elders to the youth.”

– IPF

## BENEFITS OF INDIGENOUS AND LOCAL COMMUNITY ACTIONS TO ADVANCE THE NYDF GOALS

Indigenous peoples and local community endorsers presented a multitude of benefits of their forest action, in particular focusing on benefits related to sustainable development including jobs and livelihoods, improved quality of life, food security, water security and poverty alleviation - benefits often overlooked by other endorser groups. Additional benefits highlighted included for biodiversity; reduced deforestation; improved policies; finance and capacity, primarily for access to funding or finance; and shared best practices. This group also noted benefits related to rights; tenure; partnerships; awareness and empowerment, recognizing that more needs to be done to increase collaboration and partnerships and improve participation of indigenous peoples and local communities. See the examples below of leading actions from indigenous peoples and local communities that exemplify the many benefits of advancing the NYDF Goals.

### Village Common Forests and Collective Ownership: Maleya Foundation

Village Common Forest initiative in Chittagong Hill Tracts, supports collective ownership over land and forests and the use of traditional systems for community land, providing a structure for collective ownership where everyone in the participating villages has access to collect forest resources for subsistence. This village common forest model supports the needs and consumption of all the villages with the aim to support local food, fuel, medicine, and water needs.

### Mapping Indigenous Peoples' Territories and ICCAs: REPALEAC and FIYA

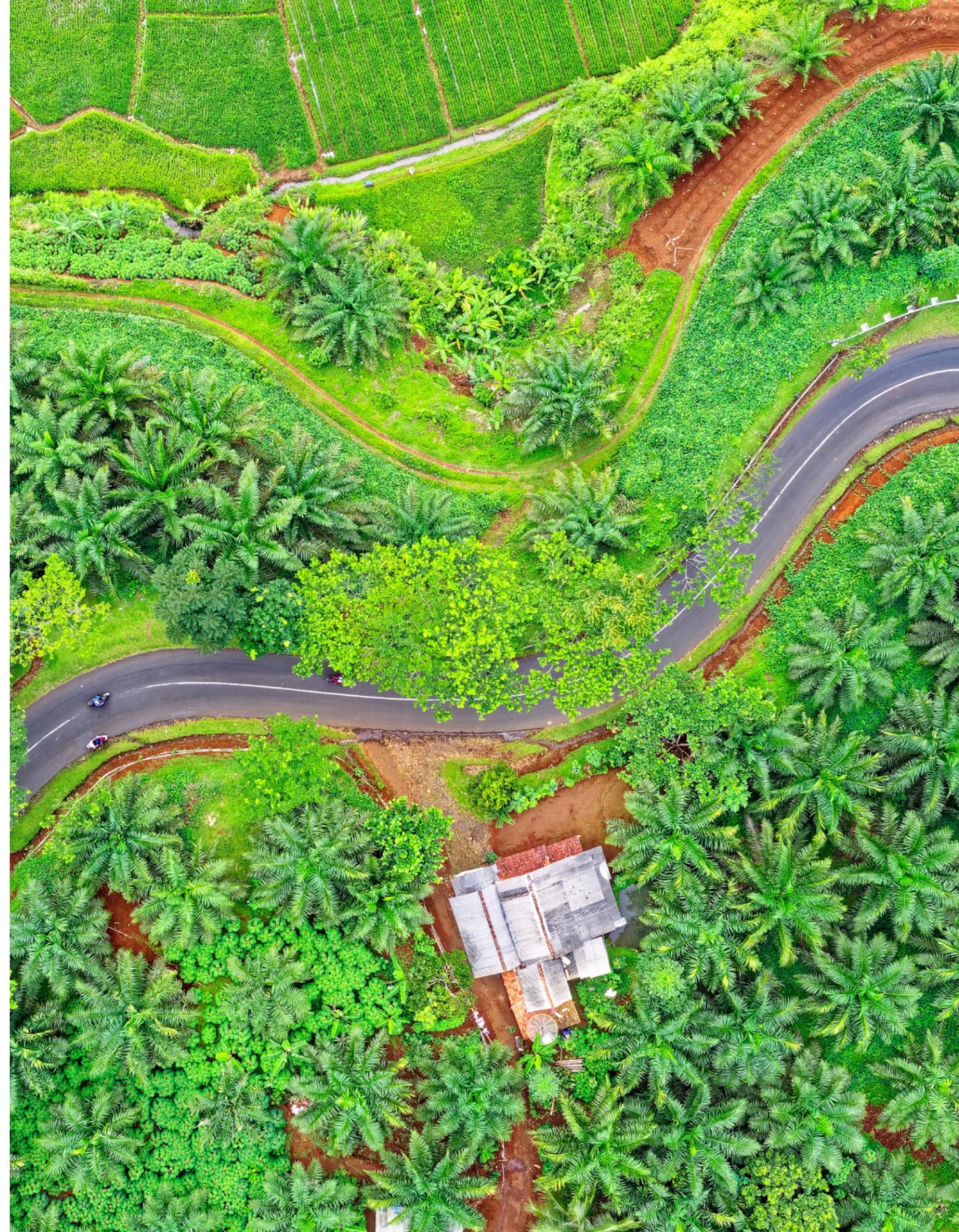
The Network of Indigenous and Local Communities for the Sustainable Management of Forest Ecosystems in Central Africa (REPALEAC) is supporting mapping the conservation of the indigenous community conserved areas (ICCAs), which yields multiple benefits including forest protection, strengthened livelihoods and strengthened rights of communities and indigenous peoples over their territories. Similarly, Foro Indígena de Abya Yala (FIYA) is working in Central America in La Moskitia, Honduras where they are fighting to protect their forests. This is a good example of government processes for mapping indigenous territories with the goal of titling. As a result of these efforts the government has designated the land as community land. In the process, communities used community protocols to engage with governments and other stakeholders that can be captured and tailored for replication elsewhere to support community land titling.

### Local Livelihoods and Forest Protection: RECOFTC

RECOFTC is a non-profit organization specializing in capacity development for community forestry. They believe in a future where people live equitably and sustainably in and beside healthy, resilient forest landscapes. The organization takes a long-term, landscape-based and inclusive approach to helping local communities secure their land and resource rights, stop deforestation, find alternative livelihoods and foster gender equity. RECOFTC focuses on strengthening both livelihoods and forest management. In all of its focal countries, RECOFTC has established multi-stakeholder mechanisms that provide a stronger legal environment, strengthened institutions, and better governance to support community forests and people-centered forestry.

“At RECOFTC, we believe that local people are the key to sustainable management of forests, stopping deforestation and climate change and achieving the SDGs. We aim to ensure that 5.9 million indigenous and local people have the skills and influence they need to protect themselves from injustice and land degradation. We are working with local communities, as well as governments and the private sector, to shift the power dynamics in the Asia-Pacific region to empower local people and improve forest governance. Countries in the region are making significant progress. They increasingly recognize that they can achieve the SDGs by empowering local communities and they are starting to commit to handing over the management of large tracts of land to local people. These important changes won't happen overnight, of course. But Indonesia, Laos and others are making significant commitments now.”

– RECOFTC





**ACHIEVING THE NYDF  
GOALS: CHALLENGES  
AND ENABLING  
CONDITIONS**



## CHALLENGES AND ENABLING CONDITIONS FOR ACHIEVING THE NYDF GOALS

Endorsers who participated in the consultation reported over 280 challenges and 220 enabling conditions for reducing deforestation and expanding forest protection, forest restoration and sustainable land use. The main challenges endorsers discussed fell into four main categories: weak policy and governance; lack of technical capacity and knowledge; insufficient funding and finance; and systemic constraints related to the global demand for forest products, multi-stakeholder responsibility, and legal systems (Figure 4), which is in line with the findings from the global NYDF Assessment towards progress on achievement of the NYDF goals.<sup>12</sup> Similarly, half of the enabling conditions cited by endorsers focused on policy and governance support while the other half focused on both financial and technical enabling conditions (Figure 5).

**Policy and governance challenges and enabling conditions:** Over 40 percent of the challenges that endorsers mentioned were related to policy and governance. These include lack of political will, weak rule of law, lack of transparency and local participation, challenges in adopting and aligning policies, and lack of collaboration between sectors and stakeholders. It is notable that while policy and governance are inextricably linked, most endorsers mentioned being challenged by governance in particular. This focus on governance, above and beyond policy, highlights the importance of decision-makers who have the authority to support and enforce policies and their critical role in endorser progress. Similarly, policy and governance were also cited as the leading enabling conditions, in particular political will, for supporting endorser progress.

**Technical challenges and enabling conditions:** Lack of technical capacity constituted nearly a quarter of the challenges identified, specifically, the lack of technical capacity related to knowledge and capacity building, monitoring and evaluation, and planning and implementation. Knowledge and capacity building challenges included a frequent mention of the need for more standardization of tools, measures, and

<sup>12</sup> NYDF Assessment Partners. (2019). Protecting and Restoring Forests: A Story of Large Commitments Yet Limited Progress – Five Years After the New York Declaration on Forests. Climate Focus (coordinator and editor). Accessible at [www.forestdeclaration.org](http://www.forestdeclaration.org).

definitions and alignment of methodologies, data sources and statistics. It also included a need for more training and knowledge sharing, and increased research and evidence or expertise to make decisions. For indigenous peoples this knowledge sharing included more platforms to share their traditional ecological knowledge as key to tropical forest conservation. Monitoring, tracing and reporting challenges included difficulties in tracing supply chains, challenges in reporting progress, and challenges in engaging with and ensuring transparency with smallholder suppliers upstream. Planning and implementation challenges included time and resource constraints for planning, a lack of implementation support, a lack of partnerships, and insufficient technology. Endorsers featured knowledge, capacity building, and planning and implementation as current essential enabling conditions for their progress as well as monitoring and tracing to a slightly lesser extent.

**Finance challenges and enabling conditions:** Public funding and private sector funding challenges were highlighted equally by endorsers, although across all challenges financial ones were mentioned the least. Endorsers also recognized it is not just about mobilizing new finance for forests and forest restoration but also about moving finance and subsidies that are driving deforestation towards conservation goals and practices.

**Systemic challenges:** Multiple endorsers described a systemic challenge of competing social, economic, and environmental demands, such as economic development, as being at odds with protecting or valuing nature. Endorsers described the need to internalize and mainstream the value of nature and cited an insufficient understanding of the value of forests across multiple sectors. Indigenous peoples endorsers value forests as necessary for life but feel others value forests for profit. Endorsers mentioned a need to “curb industry,” resist the “short-term revenue and profit” development model, develop “conservation economies,” and “green accounting” and move from “grey to green finance.” Endorsers cited supply chain complexity and market leakage as a systemic challenge, such as when suppliers move to jurisdictions with less strict rules in order to continue practices or when companies import deforestation unknowingly. Endorsers are also challenged by systemic environmental systems issues such as climate change inducing increases in natural disasters and wildfires, and social issues such as overwhelming population growth, war, and conflict.

An interesting duality emerged in comparing the challenges and enabling conditions cited by the endorsers. Endorsers noted that these governance, policy, technical and financial categories had the potential to both hinder progress when they were limited and support progress when they were plentiful.



Figure 4: Challenges to achieving the NYDF Goals



Figure 5: Enabling conditions for achieving the NYDF Goals



## CHALLENGES TO GOVERNMENTS IN ACHIEVING THE NYDF GOALS

Governments spoke most about policy and governance challenges, in particular they frequently cited rule of law, including a need for more patrol and enforcement, and transparency, including challenges in creating local models and alternative livelihoods, as well as the full participation of indigenous and local communities as key challenges. Governments were the most likely amongst endorser groups to mention economic systemic challenges and in particular spoke about the systemic challenges of competing social, financial, and environmental demands. Increased pressure on land use by competing users as well as the challenge of needing more effective economic valuation of forests to provide incentives for protection. Governments also mentioned public funding as a major challenge, as well as the issues of policy adoption, policy alignment, and accountability. Capacity challenges across forest monitoring, knowledge on specific issues surrounding sustainability, training and planning and implementing forest action were highlighted. Changing government administrations was a key challenge highlighted by all endorser groups. The constant change in administration makes it difficult for forest protection to sustain across changing political priorities. See the examples below of leading actions from governments tackling these challenges and advancing the NYDF Goals.

### Aligning Forests and Climate Change: Kenya and California

The scientific relationship between forests and climate change, as part of the carbon cycle, has been known for decades. In recent years, recognition of the importance of forests and the range and scale of actions needed to achieve the Paris Agreement goals has been growing<sup>13</sup>. However, in many countries, the accountability and mandate or authority to respond are too often separated in siloes of administration. To ensure that the linkages between climate and forests are being made in Kenya the government has developed a package of national climate policies to strengthen the capacities of institutions in Kenya, including the National Climate Change Action Plan aligning institutions working on climate change and forests. The Forest Policy and the Act are also being reviewed to ensure they are fully responsive to national forest aspirations, and particularly supportive of effective measures for addressing drivers of deforestation and forest degradation while promoting rehabilitation of degraded areas and increased tree and forest cover in the country.

“These policies share a common goal, driven by the constitution and national development plan, to increase and maintain forest cover above 10 percent.”

– Kenya

At the sub-national level in California, USA, the State is assessing actions needed across California's landscapes to help meet the State's carbon neutrality and resilience goals. This effort is part of a comprehensive strategy developed by resource management and environmental agencies for consideration by the Governor that includes contributions of landscape emissions and sequestration alongside continued greenhouse gas emission reductions from industrial sources.

<sup>13</sup> IPCC (2019). IPCC Special Report on Climate Change and Land. <https://www.ipcc.ch/site/assets/uploads/2019/08/SRCCCL-leaflet.pdf>

### Standards and Forest Monitoring: Guyana

Reliable, consistent and transparent forest monitoring is essential for governments to assess forest change and loss, identify standards compliance, and to determine drivers of deforestation and the priority geographic areas for action. In Guyana, EU Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) is a core component for the forestry governance program, which as of November 2018 includes an agreement with the EU for implementation of legality standards. Guyana further requires Monitoring Reporting and Verification System (MRVS) to monitor forest loss and the drivers of forest loss, supported by the Guyana Norway Agreement.

## ENABLING CONDITIONS FOR GOVERNMENT ACTIONS TO ADVANCE THE NYDF GOALS

National and sub-national government endorser groups noted multiple enabling conditions with a particular focus on political will, public finance, the role of policy adoption and alignment, and the essential governance components of political will, collaboration and transparency. See the examples below of leading actions from governments harnessing several of these enabling conditions to advance the NYDF Goals.

### REDD+ Jurisdictional Approaches: Amapá Brazil

In Brazil, through the Governors' Climate and Forests Task Force in partnership with the UNDP and Conservation International and with support by the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD), the state of Amapá is creating a jurisdictional system of environmental services to strengthen its forest programs and to incentivize forest conservation. This has been reinforced by an enabling political environment that has supported progress with nine states aligning to build a consortium of Amazonian states governors and a focus on social and environmental safeguards, though challenges remain for knowledge systems, monitoring and access to resources and technical capacity.



### Donor Support: Germany and Norway

Multiple donor countries featured actions that provide financial support to forest countries as essential activities to reduce deforestation. One example is Germany's support for the New York Declaration on Forests Global Platform and funding for Forest Landscape Restoration, which is further complemented by financial support for deforestation-free supply chains, REDD+ readiness and performance-based payments. In 2008, the Norwegian Ministry of Climate and Environment launched their International Climate and Forest Initiative (NICFI), promising up to 3 billion Norwegian kroner NOK per year to help save tropical rainforests and the people that live in and near them. Norway's strategy to tackle global deforestation and degradation and meet climate goals involves engaging national and subnational governments, civil society, and corporate sectors. NICFI's funding mechanism as well as broad political support in parliament towards forests and climate has contributed to Norway's leadership in global forest conservation.

Norway's aim with the private sector is to secure deforestation-free supply chains and encourage low-carbon development, including within agriculture, the number one driver of tropical deforestation<sup>14</sup>. In 2014, after endorsing the New York Declaration on Forests, they held a special meeting with Norwegian corporations to encourage them to endorse the declaration and to affirm their movement toward deforestation-free supply chains. A number of Norwegian feed companies noted in the informal consultations with the NYDF Secretariat that this meeting with the government provided the motivation to endorse NYDF. Similarly, indigenous peoples organizations endorsing NYDF cited that NICFI initiatives, in particular, was a key enabling condition for action towards the NYDF goals.

Norway is engaging companies to change their supply chains; but they're also taking action on their own impacts on deforestation associated to products consumed in Norway, stating that deforestation risk should be considered in public procurement.

## CHALLENGES TO COMPANIES IN ACHIEVING THE NYDF GOALS

Companies cited policy and governance challenges most frequently, followed by technical and then systemic challenges. The political will of upper management was mentioned by several companies as a key challenge, reflecting a need for CEOs and managers to administer and enforce company supply chain commitments and policies across all departments and throughout the entire supply chain. Company endorsers also expressed a need for more patrol, enforcement and upholding of forest laws and policies in order to ensure that upstream extraction and production is traceable, transparent, and compliant with their sustainability commitments. Feedback demonstrated a need for policies and enforcement from both producer and consumer countries in order to regulate both the supply and demand of forest products to ensure they are sustainable and deforestation-free.

Companies noted the lack of technical knowledge and capacity as a challenge more than any other endorser group, as many companies are finding it difficult to accurately and fully trace and report on their often-complicated supply chains. They also mentioned challenges in engaging with smallholder suppliers upstream. Relatedly, companies reported a systemic issue of supply chain complexity and market leakage as barriers. Lastly, companies mentioned financial challenges the least, less than all other endorser groups. See the below examples of leading actions from companies tackling these challenges and advancing the NYDF Goals.

14 Norad, "Driving Companies towards Deforestation-Free Supply Chains."

### Farmer Livelihoods and Compensation: Felleskjøpet Agri

Deforestation linked to basic needs is often a result of poverty and the lack of livelihood opportunities. One company, Felleskjøpet Agri, shared that farmers need more support during shifts in policies; for example, "In Brazil, farmers were given land to develop and now they are being told they cannot produce anymore- they are not being compensated. It is important to compensate farmers who will probably have to stop producing in some areas." This company now includes distribution of small-holder certificates through RSPO as part of their sustainable palm oil initiative in order to address the need for alternative livelihood support.

### Land Claims: PT. Rimba Makmur Utama

Another company, PT. Rimba Makmur Utama, mentioned that the "challenge in Indonesia and likely everywhere around the world, is overlapping land claims. To prevent that to happen, we already had [a] participatory map [from the communities] before the company was granted license." In other words, if a government provides concessions to a company for productive land use but the local communities who occupy the land do not have legal recognition of land tenure then the community lacks the power to protect their land and the company faces reputational and financial risk from land grabs and operating with unsustainable practices. A strong process of FPIC, a main challenge faced by indigenous peoples and local communities, would go a long way to alleviate this issue and create less risk for communities and companies.



### Governance and Law Enforcement and the Private Sector: Kellogg's

Legal frameworks and enforcement of established legislation are particularly challenging in some forest countries. Several NYDF company endorsers, including Kellogg's, spoke about the need for national and local forest laws to be upheld and for violations and forest crimes to be prosecuted, noting that companies have a role here but can only hold groups accountable to a certain extent.

## ENABLING CONDITIONS FOR COMPANY ACTIONS TO ADVANCE THE NYDF GOALS

Companies noted that effective policies and governance, specifically, strong policies, collaboration, and governance in the countries where they operate and strong political will from governments as well as senior management within the company were an important condition for success for implementing their forest commitments. Company endorsers were the leading group to feature accountability as an enabling condition and also recognized the role of finance, particularly private finance, to achieve the NYDF Goals. In addition, companies emphasized the importance of enabling conditions like access to knowledge and capacity-building, support for planning and implementation, and consistent monitoring and tracing. See the examples below of leading actions from companies harnessing these enabling conditions to advance the NYDF Goals

### CEO Participation and Political Will: Denofa

Denofa is one of those Norwegian companies that joined the NYDF consultation and the only company to have participation from the CEO in the consultation. The company noted the importance of CEO-level support as well as government support. They cited the importance of Norway's support for forest conservation and that when the government holds multi-stakeholder meetings and dialogues they are much more effective because companies are more willing to show up. Denofa mentioned their interaction with the Norwegian Commitment on Soy and Forests as a key action that has helped catalyze achievement of the NYDF goals.



### Political Will and Legacy: Grupo Bimbo

Grupo Bimbo is the largest baking company in the world and a relevant participant in snacks. Daniel Servitje, Grupo Bimbo's CEO, has a deep interest in sustainability and this can be seen in all the actions that the company promotes across their supply chain. Daniel took on the leadership of the company in 1997, continuing his father's legacy and further deepening corporate social responsibility actions. In fact, he is one of the founding members of the Latin American Conservation Council, a group of 32 representatives from the business sectors formed in 2011, under the auspices of The Nature Conservancy, to protect the health of ecosystems in the region. Under the leadership of Daniel Servitje, Grupo Bimbo has developed specific plans, programmes, and policies in addition to this objective. In 2002, the company implemented an environmental management system throughout its production plants in Mexico and created the NGO Reforestamos México. In 2007, it launched its global programme 'Committed to the Environment', with a permanent road map focus on carbon footprint reduction, water footprint, waste management and natural capital. In addition to ensuring that its plants operate responsibly with the environment, in 2014 the company also began to focus its efforts on understanding its impacts on ecosystems through the commodities supply chain. Since then, Grupo Bimbo developed two key policies: The Global Palm Oil Policy (2015) and the Global Sustainable Agriculture Policy (2017).

## CHALLENGES TO NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS IN ACHIEVING THE NYDF GOALS

NGO endorsers concentrated on policy and governance challenges, in particular the challenge of collaboration and political will, and highlighted equally technical challenges such as limited knowledge sharing and capacity and barriers to planning implementations as well as financial challenges citing limited public, private and general funding for forests. See the examples below of leading actions from NGOs tackling these challenges and advancing the NYDF Goals.

### Transparency for Law Enforcement from NGO Perspective: Global Canopy

Law enforcement is a critical challenge cited by endorsers and necessary in both producer and consumer countries to protect forests and address deforestation on the ground. A global NGO, Global Canopy, stated "there is a need for more companies to make commitments and for these to be implemented throughout supply chains, including in producing countries/areas. We would also like to see stricter regulations on what consumer country allow to be imported - stronger due diligence should be required." Without law enforcement and with continued corruption, the policies and methods for sustainable land and forest management cannot be implemented nor can the benefits be realized. NGOs are coordinating to provide evidence of forest crimes and to highlight the indigenous and local community forest defenders, recognizing this is an important early step for addressing forest crime, with the long-term goal being improved forest governance, enforcement and rule of law. The continued challenge is that progress on law enforcement has been slow in tropical forest countries at

a time when urgent action is needed to address the climate crisis and the role of deforestation.

### Access to Finance: GCF Task Force

Financial challenges involved a general need for funding as well as specific mention of the challenge of working with governments, communities or other local stakeholders to build capacity, provide technical assistance, conduct analyses and develop policy guidance when the funding that supports those activities is limited or inefficiently allocated or managed; leading to temporary or sub-optimal results. The Governors' Climate and Forests Task Force (GCF Task Force) highlighted as a foremost challenge the lack of finance for governments and the difficulty this presents for countries to have access to the tools they need to enforce meaningful environmental protection laws as well as develop spatial plans and monitoring systems. Finance for subnational governments is particularly scarce and the finance that is flowing usually comes with preconditions and provisions that make efficient disbursement difficult.

### Political Will: Earth Innovation Institute

Regarding political will, all endorsers noted that changing government administrations is a key challenge, making it difficult for the private sector, NGOs, civil society, and local communities to navigate changing priorities. One NGO, Earth Innovation Institute, which works closely with subnational governments, explained that often a new government's priorities may shift substantially from those of the previous administration, due to changing political views or other factors including changes in market conditions, external economic or political conditions, and even individual political personalities. Government transitions, regardless of what the old vs. new administrations' priorities are, can delay progress because transitions are often not seamless. When shifting priorities harm efforts to protect and restore forests and community land rights, endorsers and other partners have



## ENABLING CONDITIONS FOR NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS ACTIONS TO ADVANCE THE NYDF GOALS

NGOs emphasized the power of private finance to help catalyze key forest activities as well as the importance of strong governance including, collaboration and engagement with other stakeholders, the presence of political will, and transparency. Finally, NGOs cited technical conditions including, the implementation of monitoring and tracing, the value of their role in knowledge sharing and building capacity and strong planning and implementation conditions as underpinning their activities. See the examples below of leading actions from NGOs harnessing these enabling conditions to advance the NYDF Goals.

### Multi-stakeholder Engagement and Support: Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS)

Engagement and support across multiple stakeholder groups is essential for forest action which is a long-term commitment that requires working with multiple stakeholders to build trust based on permanence, continuity, follow through on commitments, showing results, and respect. WCS spoke about the necessity of a combination of government support for actions being implemented, underpinned by a supportive legal frameworks at the national level; local community support and especially active local participation and consent; proactive engagement with local civil society partners with strong on-the-ground knowledge; and the willingness of the private sector to engage. Comprehensive outreach and engagement across these stakeholder groups strengthen the capacity of any forest action. WCS also highlighted the insufficient climate and biodiversity finance and the gap in the way Climate finance is delivered, noting that forests with highest ecological integrity often are not prioritized.

“ **Successful forest activities require a commitment of resources to field-based conservation projects, which enable us to understand the capacity needs and to build political relationships and provide long-standing technical support over decades. Every landscape is different and projects need a tailored approach to fit local stakeholder needs.** ”

– WCS

### Aligning Forests to Climate and Landscape Approaches: WWF

The evolution of the forest-climate agenda has been a major enabling condition for progress on forest protection and restoration and source of support over the last ten years. WWF spoke about the ability to align forest messaging with broader climate and development priorities. Momentum for climate change and the role of forests continues to increase under the UNFCCC, which has created space to connect the forest agenda with the climate opportunity and promote different approaches to climate solutions including in REDD+ negotiations and recognition in the Paris Agreement.

WWF further spoke about the ability to work more in the land sector and expand forest messaging and activities to be integrated and address deforestation with landscape approach thinking, recognizing that there are different forces that interact in a place and you need to invest in different sectors to create change as well as implement at the scale where decisions are made. Interventions need to be more complex, which takes more time, but also creates more sustained change in the long-run. All relevant actors need to be engaged in order to bring coherence to forest activities on the ground.

## CHALLENGES FOR INDIGENOUS AND LOCAL COMMUNITY IN ACHIEVING THE NYDF GOALS

Indigenous peoples and local community associations spoke more about policy and governance issues than other endorser groups. At least 50 percent of all challenges highlighted by indigenous peoples' associations fell into this category, including challenges in securing land tenure and rights of access to land, insufficient law enforcement, increased forest crimes, and increased agricultural encroachment, illegal logging, extractive industry concessions, which cross or overlap their lands, threatening their livelihoods and the forests where they reside. Insecure land tenure and undetermined rights to their land are barriers to indigenous peoples to effectively govern over and protect their forested territories. This also hinders indigenous peoples' right to seek assistance and protection as forest defenders. In some cases, discriminatory laws and policies are leading to the criminalization of and violence towards indigenous peoples and forest defenders. While indigenous peoples are experiencing violence and criminalization in addition to deforestation and destruction of forests, the urgency to address this is not reflected by the actions of the international community or in the policies that govern the land. For example, a representative from an indigenous peoples' endorser organization mentioned an increasing number of local communities defending rivers and forests in their territories and increasing criminalization and murder of these defenders, both women and men.

Another governance challenge noted by indigenous peoples is a general need for countries to recognize indigenous peoples' rights and a lack of consent and participation, including Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC), participation in policy processes, and access to legal and policy information. In terms of policy, indigenous peoples' endorser organizations recognized the need to support alternative livelihoods for farmers and local communities and develop markets for alternative, forest-friendly products.

Many of the technical challenges that indigenous peoples mentioned had to do with knowledge and capacity building needs; yet this was not only a need for more training and support but also a desire to impart their traditional ecological knowledge to stakeholders. Many endorser organizations spoke about needing to document, translate, and gain access to platforms for sharing their knowledge. See the examples below of leading actions from indigenous peoples and local communities tackling these challenges and advancing the NYDF Goals.



### Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC): CERDA and NGOCE

Community based organizations and other endorser organizations working with forest dependent communities cited the lack of Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) and participation in policy processes as well as support to communities related to political strategy and legal support as a key challenge. One NGO (CERDA) who works with and for the ethnic minorities and forest dependent communities stated, "Ethnic minorities and forest dependent communities are facing a serious lack of knowledge related to rights, laws, and policies in all aspects" and another (NGOCE) stated that there is "poor synergy between us [forest dependent communities] and governments." Put simply, there is a need to scale up involvement of indigenous peoples and local communities to ensure their effective participation in global, national, and local policies for forest conservation and to recognize the local models and solutions that are driving change.

### Knowledge and Capacity Building Challenges: CORDS, Tanzania

Multiple endorser responses from indigenous peoples' associations cited knowledge and capacity building challenges. These challenges included a frequent mention of the need for more standardization of tools, measures, and definitions and alignment of statistics. It also included a need for more training and knowledge sharing, and increased research and evidence or expertise to make decisions. Indigenous peoples not only need more training and support on their legal rights but they also want to share their traditional ecological knowledge with the world and to have the opportunity to build the capacity of other stakeholder groups to interface with indigenous peoples and understand their issues. In order to do this, their practices need to be documented, translated, and backed. Lilian Loolitai from Community Research and Development (CORDS) in Tanzania underlined that capacity building is a critical issue for indigenous peoples, a sentiment echoed by most indigenous peoples endorser organizations who participated in the endorser consultations.

### Access to Finance: COICA

Regarding finance, indigenous peoples noted that it is difficult for them to get direct access to climate and forest finance and further, that the finance is not going to where the forests are disappearing the fastest. Juan Carlos Jintiach from COICA shared that although indigenous peoples protect forests on behalf of the globe, there's hardly any dedicated funding to support their efforts.

## ENABLING CONDITIONS FOR INDIGENOUS AND LOCAL COMMUNITY ACTIONS TO ADVANCE THE NYDF GOALS

Indigenous peoples endorser organizations featured governance as a leading enabling condition with a strong focus on government administration support, the rule of law as well as transparency and political will as enabling their actions. Finance, including general and private sector finance were also cited in addition to technical conditions across knowledge and capacity development, successful planning and implementation, and the use of monitoring and tracing technologies to capture their contributions to forests and showcase their territories. See the examples below of leading actions from indigenous peoples and local communities harnessing these enabling conditions to advance the NYDF Goals.

**Mapping Land Demarcation: CORDS**

Community Research and Development (CORDS) has been promoting conservation and building resilience for 20 years including through land-use planning and land management including rangelands and land rights activities. At the center of this work is a people-oriented approach, using land demarcation to ensure that rights to the land are recognized in land-use planning activities. Community support to capture local knowledge is essential as these communities know the land very well and they know when the best time to use the land for production and when to conserve it. The organization is taking this work a step further to ensure proper management by providing thorough resource mapping and have mapped potential challenges in addition to generating land demarcation and capturing local knowledge.

**REDD+ Recognition of the Role of Indigenous Peoples: NEFIN**

Nepal Federation of Indigenous Nationalities (NEFIN) is working with the REDD+ national strategy in Nepal on the recognition of indigenous peoples participation in forest management and protection. The organization is advocating for the engagement of indigenous peoples in the policy formulation process, highlighting the benefit of indigenous peoples involvement and participation in the REDD+ mechanism, citing examples of successful participation and the contribution of indigenous peoples to the process.

**“We must change the narrative and recognize the role of indigenous peoples in forest protection - they are contributors to protection and need to be recognized as such but because of criminalization they are scared to contribute - which leads to overall forest degradation.”**

**– NEFIN**



A lush green forest with sunlight filtering through the trees. The scene is filled with tall, slender tree trunks and dense foliage, creating a vibrant and natural atmosphere. Sunlight beams through the canopy, casting dappled light on the forest floor.

**REFLECTIONS AND  
BUILDING ON SUCCESS:  
LESSONS FROM THE  
NYDF ENDORSERS**



## REFLECTIONS AND BUILDING ON SUCCESS: LESSONS FROM NYDF ENDORSERS

The 84 NYDF endorsers that participated in the NYDF Endorser Consultation provided in-depth insights into the specific activities they are leading to address deforestation and to protect, restore and sustainably manage forests and lands. The endorsers featured the critical multi-stakeholder partnerships and various enabling conditions that have supported their progress, as well as the challenges and barriers hindering greater impact at scale. Eight lessons emerged from these discussions, reiterated by multiple endorsers, and recognized as warranting further consideration. These lessons reflect on the situation that certain critical conditions can accelerate action across stakeholder groups when present but can become barriers that stall progress when absent. These lessons include: (1) commitments alone do not suffice and must be action-oriented and lead to real implementation; (2) governance and policy can be both an enabling condition and a challenge; (3), harnessing the power of forest champions can catalyze action; (4), multi-stakeholder collaboration facilitates effective implementation; (5), accountability and transparency will accelerate action; (6), land tenure and rights of indigenous peoples and local forest communities is a precondition for sustainable forest management; (7) lack of sufficient finance for forests is limiting progress and is needed to accelerate implementation; and (8) nature-based solutions should be scaled up and their value should be more fully internalized.

### EIGHT LESSONS FROM NYDF ENDORSERS

#### 1. Implementation of deforestation-free commitments by companies and governments is slow due to barriers that require multi-level and multi-sectoral solutions.

Endorsement and commitments to address deforestation and protect and restore forests and land rights are a vital initial step but are not sufficient or necessarily indicative of action. There are many barriers to implementation that were featured by endorsers including a i) distorted valuation for forests with short-term revenue and profit models for forests, limited investment in forests; ii) continued subsidies driving

deforestation, and insufficient incentives to keep forest standing; iii) weak governance structure including lack of political will, transparency and law enforcement; iv) the need for systematic tools, measures and definitions and improved knowledge sharing; and v) an increasing demand for agricultural commodities that drive deforestation including beef, soy, palm oil and paper.

The abovementioned challenges require multi-level and multi-sectoral solutions whose level of effort, finance, and timelines was not fully considered when endorsers made their initial commitments. Experience on implementing commitments showed that most of the barriers require long-term systemic changes and non-traditional collaboration and incentive schemes to be addressed. Further, commitments and pledges to reduce deforestation and protect, restore and sustainably manage forests and lands are often made at one level – often a high-level which can support broad buy-in – yet the policy, institutional and operational frameworks to implement these commitments are at another level, demanding greater institutional alignment and support to shift from commitment to implementation.

There is no silver bullet to shifting from commitments to implementation; various actions and follow through are necessary that depend on tailoring for the stakeholder group and local context. Some basic activities and conditions highlighted by endorsers as essential for their progress to act on their commitments include, renewing political will at a high level; addressing the demand side of deforestation-free products; developing incentive schemes and finance sufficient to incentivize scaled-up implementations, as well as the investing in knowledge and capacity building. For operationalizing commitments, endorsers highlighted that clear, measurable and time-bound targets for action with a plan of action and strategy for monitoring and accountability, especially through an independent third-party vendor; and dedicated and consistent finance to implement, especially integrating a blend of public and private finance, are needed.

#### 2. Strong governance and policy are essential enabling conditions for endorser action but also a barrier to implementation when absent

Endorsers identified more than 280 challenges and more than 220 enabling conditions and governance and policy were featured both as the leading enabling conditions and the leading challenges. Supportive governance and policy conditions were identified as crucial conditions and drivers for successful implementation of endorser actions to address the drivers of deforestation and protect and restore forests. These enabling conditions were described as catalyzing the implementation of forest-related policies, projects, and initiatives. Half of the enabling conditions cited by endorsers related to having robust governance and policy, these included collaboration, adoption of policies, broad stakeholder participation and policy alignment.

When viewed in the converse, the major challenges cited by endorsers for progress on action also focused on weak governance and policy, in alignment with the NYDF Assessment findings that commercial agriculture is driving forest loss, much of the tropical deforestation is illegal, that countries with high levels of corruption often experience the highest loss of forests, and that forest laws are often not fully upheld and enforced.<sup>15</sup> Endorsers featured a variety of governance and policy-related barriers including i) lack of political will, ii) discontinuity of policies during changing administrations, iii) fragile rule of law, iv) rampant corruption, v) increasing forest crimes, vi) challenges in patrol and upholding law enforcement due to a lack of leadership support, vii) lack of transparency, viii) lack of clarity or conflicts over land tenure and access to rights to land and resources, ix) limited local participation, x) insufficient development and adoption of local models and support for alternative livelihoods at a local level, and xi) a lack of multi-stakeholder collaboration including the need for innovative partnership investments.

<sup>15</sup> NYDF Assessment Partners. (2018). Improving Governance to Protect Forests: Empowering People and Communities, Strengthening Laws and Institutions – New York Declaration on Forests Goal 10 Assessment Report. Coordinated by Climate Focus with support from the Climate and Land Use Alliance. [https://www.climatefocus.com/sites/default/files/NYDF%20report%202018\\_0.pdf](https://www.climatefocus.com/sites/default/files/NYDF%20report%202018_0.pdf)

It is clear that the abovementioned challenges go beyond the forest and environment sector, and require to be addressed across sectors, in particular agriculture, law-enforcement, forestry, trade and finance, and environment. The value of conserving forests and biodiversity and improved land management must be better understood and internalized across all relevant ministries and business units of governments and companies. While there has been progress on developing environmental and social safeguards frameworks, further work is needed to ensure that forests and communities are protected despite political changes, including through capacity-building and legal recognition of land and forest-resources rights for local communities.

**There is still a perception by many stakeholders that the environment is an add-on or optional, and a limited understanding of why it is essential to socio-economic development - for example, to maintain short- and long-term productivity in the agricultural sector. Unless we internalize what the environment delivers and see it as a core component, it will be very hard to change that. We need to embed the environment in business plans, as underpinning growth itself.**

– Rare

This points to a broader issue of a lack of incentive for governments and companies to protect forests if they are not seen as equally valuable as other productive activities such as the sale of agricultural commodities and extractives like oil and minerals, and the development of infrastructure. Many endorsers spoke about this as a systemic issue, which is outside of their direct control and which requires multi-stakeholder action and an “all-in” approach in order to succeed.

Strong, consistent policy and governance conditions can either make or break action to address deforestation and protect, restore and sustainably manage forests and lands. Endorsers that had access to strong governance and policy structures supporting their implementation of forests commitments reported success in their activities while other endorsers struggling to access this essential policy and governance conditions reported this as a leading barrier to progress limiting their potential for action and impact.

### 3. Individual leadership and forest champions can shape action across an organization and an industry

Political will was cited as a leading challenge with fairly equal prioritization across companies, NGOs and indigenous peoples organizations with a focus on the political will of government administrations, civil society, and private sector managers. Endorsers continually reiterated that political will is an essential component of implementation and further highlighted how individual leadership in particular at a high level is critical for the adoption of commitments across institutions and implementation on the ground. For example, an individual can share an entire company’s ethos and some companies can shape an industry such as the CEO of Grupo Bimbo, who has personally committed for the company to reduce its carbon footprint and reduce deforestation from their supply chain. Another example is the leadership in Unilever that has promoted strong commitments to eliminate deforestation from soy, paper, board and tea.

At the government level, the potential of individual leadership is negatively influenced by turn-over associated to government turns. Nevertheless, there are exceptions in countries and jurisdictions with stronger institutional frameworks and meritocratic systems in place, such is the case of Costa Rica’s National Forest Fund (FONAFIFO), that has had stability in key technical personnel leading to maintaining the institutional memory and progress beyond government terms, as well as the subnational governments

of Quintana Roo in Mexico and Cross River State in Nigeria, that have been working for more than 10 years on forest conservation and deforestation issues.

In response to the climate emergency and recent spikes on deforestation in tropical forests, indigenous peoples have strengthened global alliances including organizations from the Amazon, Africa and the Asia Pacific region, together they have organized to cover and influence the international agenda, including the UNFCCC process, that at COP 24 approved the creation of a dedicated platform for indigenous peoples and local communities to serve as an official channel to inform the negotiations with IPLC proposals. Individual leadership between the participating indigenous peoples’ organizations (including COICA, APIB, AMPB, AMAN, and REPALEAC) was key to achieve this important milestone.

### 4. Implementation of forest commitments often hinges on multi-stakeholder engagement and partnerships

The priority actions that endorsers showcased as leading examples of progress to halt deforestation were often dependent on broad multi-stakeholder engagement and partnerships. These partnerships and multi-stakeholder collaboration activities proved essential because they facilitate cross-sector trust, especially valuable for progress in an often-contested area.

Endorsers reported actively involving governments and NGOs in their current actions, followed by indigenous peoples or local communities and corporations and some endorsers also reported working with universities. Endorsers noted the value of both connecting to their stakeholder counterparts for learning exchanges as well as engaging with other stakeholder groups doing work that is different but complimentary.

#### Palm Oil, Local Wildlife and Livelihoods: Palm Oil and NGO Alliance

Multiple company endorsers explained that they are working closely with NGOs and other partners to help with their supply chain commitments and that NGOs are an essential resource for facilitating multi-stakeholder partnerships, understanding the local context and connecting companies with local partners, and providing technical expertise. In support of sustainable palm oil, the Palm Oil and NGO Alliance ([pongoalliance.org](http://pongoalliance.org)) was formed as a partnership between palm oil companies and NGOs to help save ecosystems for wildlife and support local livelihoods. This alliance is building a landscape that can provide habitat for wildlife while working to improve the management of palm oil estates. NYDF endorsers that participate in the Palm Oil and NGO Alliance include Wilmar, Sime Darby, and Musim Mas.

At the industry level, company endorsers recognized the importance of addressing deforestation to mitigate business and reputational risk, to enhance local relationships with communities where they work, and to ensure long-term supply of the materials they depend on. However, these companies also expressed the need for greater alliance across their industry, in particular to secure market position, especially at the jurisdictional level. The need to provide a united voice across the industry when making supplier demands was also featured by multiple company endorsers in order to show industry alignment, manage competition, and improve stability and trust across their industry.

When there is an absence of partnerships and collaboration across stakeholder groups or within an industry this can lead to a competitive and adversarial context that limits progress due to the lack of trust, limited knowledge exchange and protective approach to action.

It is evident from endorser inputs that broad engagement across stakeholder groups has been essential for the majority of actions highlighted by endorsers as examples of progress to achieve the NYDF goals. It is also noteworthy that about a third of the endorsers consulted are partnering with another NYDF endorser, indicating there are strong collaboration amongst NYDF endorsers and opportunities to expand this further.

**“Since our beginnings, in Grupo Bimbo we have embraced and sponsored actions with the purpose of building a sustainable, highly productive and deeply humane company. We promote initiatives to combat climate change and contribute to the achievement of zero deforestation on agricultural chains linked to our procurement processes, among other actions. In 2014 we signed the New York Declaration on Forests (NYDF) and incorporated concrete actions as part of this commitment. We created our Global Palm Oil Policy, and today we have reached 95 percent traceability of our main suppliers. In 2017 we launched our Global Sustainable Agriculture Policy and signed a collaboration agreement in Mexico with the International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center (CIMMYT), which aims to stimulate sustainable agricultural practices. The commitment and support of our CEO and alliances with NGOs, such as Reforestamos México and Earth Form Foundation, have been crucial to addressing these challenges and achieving important, positive changes.”**

– Grupo Bimbo, Mexico

The NYDF endorsers recognize the importance of multi-stakeholder collaboration to achieve the collective forest and climate ambition with 90 percent of the endorsers expressing an interest in establishing or strengthening links with other endorsers and stakeholder groups. Some of the most commonly requested NYDF Platform services by endorsers were those related to convening and facilitating multi-stakeholder dialogue; capturing & sharing multi-stakeholder knowledge on forest action, challenges, barriers, and best practices; and developing partnerships and collaboration amongst endorsers. Endorser feedback on multi-stakeholder collaboration focused on three recurrent themes: about one third of responses requested support for developing links with financial or implementing partners; more than a quarter mentioned connecting to other endorsers in the same geographic area or commodity; and the remainder spoke about sharing lessons and challenges through learning exchanges and other specific linkages.

### **5. Accountability and transparency technology has accelerated in recent years but access to open and transparent data remains a challenge**

Accountability and transparency for forests are primarily focused on supply chains and associated financial transparency, as well as accountability of all stakeholders along the supply chain including land use managers, producers, regulators, sellers, traders, buyers, consumers, investors, and lenders. Current conditions reflect a lack of transparency and limited traceability along agricultural commodity supply chains, which can pose a challenge to monitor corporate commitments to address deforestation<sup>16</sup>. Multiple company NYDF endorsers recognized the challenge across their industries to have open data, citing a reluctance for transparency, often due to either limited or incomplete information or concerns about competitiveness and reputation.

16 NYDF Assessment Partners. (2018). Improving Governance to Protect Forests: Empowering People and Communities, Strengthening Laws and Institutions – New York Declaration on Forests Goal 10 Assessment Report. Coordinated by Climate Focus with support from the Climate and Land Use Alliance. [https://www.climatefocus.com/sites/default/files/NYDF%20report%202018\\_0.pdf](https://www.climatefocus.com/sites/default/files/NYDF%20report%202018_0.pdf)

While the international community has seen remarkable improvements globally in monitoring forests and other lands, and in mapping supply chains, and technological and spatial developments continue to improve public access to high-quality and timely data, full accountability for deforestation is still lacking. There are promising developments in tracking the money (from investors and lenders) associated with companies linked to deforestation, and there is optimism that as this route for tracking funds advances it will significantly affect the behavior driving deforestation, thereby complimenting and strengthening public policies and programs designed to prevent deforestation.

**“CDP provides actionable data on supply chain action to the marketplace and a platform for operating guidelines for engagement, allowing investors and financial institutions to assess the progress of companies in their portfolios, as well as the broader landscape of actors, and to make informed decisions on their practices, sourcing and investments.”**

– CDP

Joint industry action and joint monitoring across industries is necessary, especially for beef, palm oil, soy, paper, coffee, cocoa, and rubber to prevent continued deforestation and leakage, to reduce the access to markets for companies that continue to contribute to deforestation, and to ensure and to ensure cost sharing that can lower all the companies' costs whilst also improving sustainable forest and land management results.

### **6. Land Tenure is a precondition to eliminate conflict and sustainably conserve and manage forests**

Indigenous peoples and local communities are the leading stewards of the land and forests; research shows that when these communities have recognized and secure rights to their forests, that those forests are less likely to be degraded or destroyed, and that the communities provide even better forest protection than legally protected areas.<sup>17</sup>

The role of indigenous peoples and forest communities in protecting forests and improve land management is driven by the value of and recognition for forests as a critical life-support system. Forests support the livelihoods, health, food security, and cultural heritage of the communities that reside there and indigenous peoples' associations are calling for a shift to more sustainable forest management, where forests are managed as a life-support system rather than as a profit-generating landscape.

**“The Declaration should include a preamble which explains that, for indigenous peoples, it's 'forests for life' as opposed to 'forests for profit'.”**

– AMAN, Indonesia

Indigenous and local communities are stewards to a quarter of the world's natural carbon stock<sup>18</sup> and collectively hold more than 50 percent of the world's land, but much of this land is not formally recognized and titled with national laws recognizing just 10 percent of this land as belonging to communities.<sup>19</sup> In some cases legally recognized land and rights to the land and forests may be ignored or removed without consent.

17 Ibid

18 <https://www.wri.org/blog/2017/12/5-maps-show-how-important-indigenous-peoples-and-local-communities-are-environment>

19 Notess, L. et al. (2018). THE SCRAMBLE FOR LAND RIGHTS Reducing Inequity between Communities and Companies <https://wriorg.s3.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/scramble-land-rights.pdf>

The leading source of conflict around forests, in particular conflicts with indigenous peoples and local communities, is due to ambiguity of land tenure. Land tenure is a precondition for eliminating conflict and improving sustainable forest management but currently the issue of land tenure is not being fully addressed; land tenure is often viewed as an externality. While land tenure remains a contested issue it is one that is fixable with the right conditions, including generating agreements on the process for clarifying and consolidating land rights and securing financial support implement such processes. For example, in Peru, indigenous peoples in agreement with the national Government are progressing on clarifying land-rights for community owned-lands in the Peruvian Amazon, using funds from the Joint Declaration of Intent between Peru, Norway and Germany.

While there has been some progress on clarifying land rights in a few countries, in general indigenous peoples and local communities reported facing increased discrimination, encroachment, destruction of their land, and violence. Violence against indigenous and environmental defenders is at a record high with murders of forest and land defenders increasing each year since 2014.<sup>20</sup> In response, in 2019 large protests calling governments to ensure the right of existence and the lands of indigenous peoples have been held in Colombia (*Minga*) and Brazil (*Acampamento Terra Livre*). Indigenous peoples and local communities call for the international community's support for ensuring the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities, and for renewed efforts from governments and the private sector to address the collective responsibilities, including from the consumer and demand side, in addressing the current situation.

Not only are indigenous peoples and local communities essential to progress on the NYDF goals, they will suffer the most if the goals fail to be met. Indigenous peoples and local communities call for the recognition of their contribution to the goals and request the action of governments and companies to see them as equal partners in achieving the goals.

**“In some cases, indigenous peoples are criminalized for accessing their forests due to the absence of safeguards for their rights. Because of those threats, indigenous peoples are afraid to contribute in forest protection. This is indeed a loss for everyone and also a violation of the rights of indigenous peoples. If the contributions and the rights of indigenous peoples are respected and the fact that they hold distinct knowledge attached to forests recognized then they can bring that knowledge into the broader discussion, and the world can harness major benefits.”**

– Nepal Federation of Indigenous Nationalities (NEFIN)

While the representation of indigenous peoples and forest communities in forest management and decision making is limited, multiple NYDF endorsers highlighted actions involving some aspect of working with or providing benefits to indigenous peoples and local communities, something that all endorser groups identified as an essential factor for achieving the goals, recognizing that indigenous peoples and local communities are key partners for progress on addressing deforestation and protecting and restoring forests. The NYDF endorsers called for greater representation and participation of indigenous peoples and local communities across international and multi-stakeholder platforms.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid

**“Indigenous peoples groups’ are traditionally underrepresented, and their voices are not heard in a lot of these industry groups to date. Being able to give groups like that, especially ones that are working on the ground and are directly affected, more of a platform and voice and helping to amplify their opinions and interests would be very helpful.”**

– Kellogg

Recognizing indigenous peoples at the center of efforts to protect forests and ensuring that resources go directly to the people doing the work on the ground, implementing participatory processes to recognize indigenous peoples role in protecting their forests and co-administration of natural resources, consolidating multi-stakeholder national-level platforms that facilitate dialogue, promoting dialogues among responsible companies and indigenous peoples, continuing capacity building process and documenting traditional knowledge, and improving mechanisms for endorser’s monitoring and accountability, are all enabling factors that could lead to improve indigenous peoples’ and land rights.

## **7. Although negative financial investments work against forests, and positive financial investments are insufficient to achieve forest goals, new models for forest finance hold promise**

Just as the value of nature is often invisible in the marketplace, with the cost of goods rarely reflecting the environmental costs of production, the financial investment and expenditure flows that affect nature are also largely invisible. Yet finance is the engine behind the leading drivers of forest loss and degradation.

Financial investment in the drivers of deforestation far outpace investments in forest protection, restoration and sustainable management. According to the New York Declaration on Forests Assessment, the world has spent USD 777 billion on the drivers of forest loss since 2010, and only 20 billion on for forest protection, restoration and sustainable development.<sup>21</sup> Similarly, a recent report on food and land use found that the world spends USD 1 million every minute on global farming subsidies.<sup>22</sup>

At the same time, the world grossly underestimates the value of nature, and therefore underinvests in safeguarding nature. Although nature provides as much as USD 125 trillion in economic value,<sup>23</sup> the world spends just USD 52 billion on biodiversity funding.<sup>24</sup> Just one percent of global subsidies on agriculture are invested in safeguarding environmental services.<sup>25</sup> And when it comes to climate mitigation spending, we invest just two percent of climate mitigation finance on forest protection and conservation measures,<sup>26</sup> even though forests could provide as much as a third of our climate mitigation solution.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>21</sup> Climate Focus. (2017). Progress on the New York Declaration on Forests: Finance for Forests - Goals 8 and 9 Assessment Report. Prepared by Climate Focus in cooperation with the New York Declaration on Forest Assessment Partners with support from the Climate and Land Use Alliance.

<sup>22</sup> Food and Land Use Coalition. (2019). Growing Better: Ten Critical Transitions to Transform Food and Land Use. Available at [www.foodandlandusecoalition.org](http://www.foodandlandusecoalition.org).

<sup>23</sup> WWF. 2018. Living Planet Index. Gland, Switzerland: WWF.

<sup>24</sup> The BIOFIN Workbook (2018). Finance for Nature. The Biodiversity Finance Initiative. United Nations Development Programme: New York.

<sup>25</sup> Food and Land Use Coalition. 2019. Growing Better: Ten Critical Transitions to Transform Food and Land Use. Available at [www.foodandlandusecoalition.org](http://www.foodandlandusecoalition.org).

<sup>26</sup> Climate Focus. (2017). Progress on the New York Declaration on Forests: Finance for Forests - Goals 8 and 9 Assessment Report. Prepared by Climate Focus in cooperation with the New York Declaration on Forest Assessment Partners with support from the Climate and Land Use Alliance.

<sup>27</sup> Griscom et al. (2017). Natural Climate Solutions. Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America. <https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.1710465114>

**“There is a gap in the way climate finance is delivered often with forests with highest ecological integrity falling through the cracks. The insufficient climate and biodiversity finance is exacerbated by the fact that there is insignificant biodiversity protection”**

**– World Conservation Society**

To address the overinvestment in the financial drivers of deforestation, and the underinvestment in forests as a climate solution, we need a paradigm shift – by governments, by corporations and by investors. We need a new economy that values forests, and that invests in forests, commensurate with their immense social and economic contributions to climate and sustainable development.

One aspect of this paradigm shift is in new models for commodity supply chains. In place of mercurial pricing, which is driven by fluctuating demand, a longer-term sustainable supply chain agreement with local communities can provide financial incentives for long-term sustainable management.

### **Long-term Supply Chains and Sustainable Resource Management in the Fragrance Trade**

Trade in liquidambar, an essential ingredient in the fragrance industry, is often characterized by high price fluctuations that lead to unsustainable practices in forest management. L’Oreal, an NYDF endorser, has worked with MANE, a fragrance and flavor manufacturer, to ensure long-term supply agreements with the communities that supply liquidambar. One such community is the Tribal Federation of the Pech Community in Honduras, which was awarded the prestigious United Nations Equator Prize award in 2017.<sup>28</sup> To reverse trends in commodity markets, the federation has founded a cooperative to avoid price wars, set production standards to ensure sustainability, has secured legal rights to co-manage their land with the government of Honduras, and has signed long-term access and benefits sharing agreements with L’Oreal’s suppliers, putting the communities – and the forests – on a more socially and economically sustainable footing.

A second aspect of this paradigm shift is in new models of governance and land tenure. Globally, but particularly in the tropics, only a fraction of lands claimed by indigenous communities is legally recognized. Insecure and conflicting land tenure is the leading driver of land use conflicts. Resolving these conflicts, and creating new models of governance that respect the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities, is an essential step toward sustainable commodity supply chains.

28 See [www.equatorinitiative.org/2017/06/28/federacion-tribus-pech-de-honduras-fetriph/](http://www.equatorinitiative.org/2017/06/28/federacion-tribus-pech-de-honduras-fetriph/)

### **Co-management of Forest Lands in Peru**

Peru, an NYDF endorser since 2014, has established an innovative governance model with local communities. In the Amazonas region of the country, Peru has created a powerful collaboration between the National Service of Protected Areas and the community organization ECA Tuntanain, to co-manage 94,967 hectares of forest. Bringing together 23 indigenous communities within the Tuntanain Communal Reserve, the group’s primary aim is to reduce vulnerability to climate change through forest protection and sustainable management. The partnership has not only secured a large area of intact forest, but also increased local community annual incomes by 160 percent.<sup>29</sup>

A third aspect of this paradigm shift is in new financial instruments that are required for investment. Because of asymmetries in investment flows between institutional investors, who deal in large investments in the tens and hundreds of millions, and community-scale producers, who require small volumes of debt and capital, there is a ‘missing middle’ in finance for scaling up forest protection, restoration and sustainable management. However, groups such as Rabobank are pioneering new financial models and investments to accelerate sustainable forest management, such as providing de-risking capital for investments.<sup>30</sup>

A fourth aspect of this paradigm shift is a redirection of existing financial flows and investments. Even modest changes to the current economic paradigm could have major positive outcomes for forests. For example, the world invests USD 5.7 trillion annually in fossil fuel subsidies. Diverting even a tiny portion of those investments to forest protection, restoration, sustainable management, land titling and sustainable commodity supply chains would yield a huge dividend. However, such a change would require a complete shift in thinking by governments, corporations and investors. There are signals that these changes are starting to occur. For example, 45 investors, controlling USD 6.8 trillion in assets, recently endorsed a statement calling on companies sourcing beef and related cattle products to mitigate and eliminate deforestation risks from their supply chains.<sup>31</sup>

**“We need new financial flows for Costa Rica’s PES, which is partially funded by a national fossil fuel tax that is projected to decrease with the decarbonization process.”**

**– FONAFIFO, Costa Rica**

While these are promising signs, and some progress is being made globally by various actors, progress by endorsers on these four aspects is highly variable, and much more action is required if we are to see a paradigm shift in the economic models that drive deforestation.

### **8. Nature-based solutions yield societal benefits but those values are not fully recognized**

Climate change and biodiversity loss result in profound societal risks that together create two compounding drivers. These drivers have cascading impacts across the world, including exacerbating food and water crises, natural disasters, social instability, interstate conflict and involuntary migration. If warming is to be

29 See <https://www.equatorinitiative.org/2019/07/30/ejecutor-de-contrato-de-administracion-tuntanain-eca-tuntanain/>

30 See for example <https://www.rabobank.com/en/about-rabobank/in-society/rabo-partnerships/articles/2019/partnership-for-forest-protection-and-sustainable-agriculture.html>

31 See <https://www.ceres.org/news-center/press-releases/leading-global-investors-managing-64-trillion-call-companies-eliminate>

held to well below 2 degrees Celsius, we must accelerate action on reversing deforestation, and accelerating the protection, restoration and sustainable management of forests as a key part climate action.

Land-related responses,<sup>32</sup> also known as nature-based solutions, contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation, as well as combat desertification, reverse land degradation and enhance food security. They also contribute to SDGs and other societal goals, and provide multiple co-benefits including biodiversity, and improved water and air quality.

The broad set of nature-based solutions include, but are not limited to, scaling up the protection and restoration of forests, land, wetland and marine ecosystems; climate-resilient infrastructure and connectivity; ecological corridors and species protection measures; climate-smart agriculture and food systems; and regenerative agriculture, among others. Countries' enhanced Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) should include the full mitigation and adaptation potential of nature-based solutions as a short- and medium-term action to increase ambition.

### Dominican Republic's Agroforestry Development Program

One endorser example of nature-based solution with multiple benefits is the Dominican Republic's Agroforestry Development Program, which complements the country's Quisqueya Verde. This program aims at reforesting taking into account the species diversity under agroforestry system with coffee, cacao, agricultural products. Such an integration of agroforestry and agroecology where possible - such as for cocoa, coffee, beef, nuts, and in certain conditions for rubber and palm – can further strengthen forest restoration and biodiversity goals. Much of the world's cocoa and coffee industry already embraces agroforestry, highlighting the potential to shift an entire industry to more sustainable and often productive and profitable production that can guarantee long-term dependable supply chains.

Despite forests providing a monumental return for societal, environmental and economic benefits, those values are often not recognized by the governments or corporations that drive systemic forest loss and degradation. This is due to market, governance and perception failures, and results in a distorted valuation of forests, as well as a missed opportunity to capitalize on forests to support achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

**“National and international policies are critical for maximizing the role of nature (e.g. revised NDCs reflecting the full mitigation potential in those countries; carbon pricing systems that include funding for natural climate solutions; and removing perverse incentives for the destruction of nature). Part of our efforts moving forward should also include a recognition for the need to stop all loss of high-carbon ecosystems, whose carbon, when lost, IS likely irrecoverable in our lifetimes.”**

– Conservation International

In Thailand, there is a high awareness of the linkages between forests and water. Thailand's 20-year National Strategy has a National Forest Target for 55 percent forest cover, and identifies linkages between forest and their national water strategy – the government is very concerned with water usage in agriculture and is promoting the role of forests to support this priority.

In Ecuador, the PROAmazonia Program is supporting the implementation of the National REDD+ Action Plan as an ambitious, five-year collaborative initiative to transform the agriculture and forestry sectors in Ecuador's Amazon region toward more sustainable management and production practices, capturing the multiple-benefits of nature-based solutions. In 2018, PROAmazonia achieved the following milestones:

- **Ecosystem Protection:** 157,000 hectares of native forest protected under long-term conservation agreements;
- **Watershed Protection:** Established four new Municipal Hydrological Protected Areas covering 136,000 hectares for long-term watershed conservation;
- **Forest Restoration:** Restoration of 2,447 hectares in the southern dry forest, including active replanting and fencing from stock as well as allowing for natural regeneration processes;
- **Sustainable Land Management Practices:** 5,022 small producers signed agreements to implement sustainable land management practices. To date, the total of hectares under agreements is 15,066;
- **Capacity Development:** 830 people (55 percent men, 45 percent women) from Amazon communities received training to strengthen their capacities and knowledge of conservation, restoration and climate change, and;

The variety of NYDF endorser actions to reduce deforestation and protect, restore and sustainably manage forests and lands, provides multiple benefits for the Sustainable Development Goals, including enhanced jobs and livelihoods, improved food and water security, biodiversity protections and climate mitigation and adaptation benefits, among others. However, broad awareness across the NYDF endorsers of the important contribution of their work to support achievement of the SDGs was limited, with most focusing on support for livelihoods, and in a few cases, climate mitigation and adaptation benefits.



**THE POST-2020 VISION**



## NYDF ENDORSER POST-2020 PRIORITIES

In addition to the NYDF endorsers sharing their leading actions and associated benefits, the enabling conditions supporting those actions, and any challenges and barriers faced, endorsers also shared their post-2020 priorities and where they will focus their future efforts on forests. Two-thirds of the NYDF endorsers consulted responded 'yes' to having either a plan for the post-2020 framework for global climate action or a company action plan with specific post-2020 objectives, while 20 percent did not yet have a plan and 15 percent have plans currently under development.

Certain priorities emerged across the post-2020 plans of various endorser groups for critical actions they would be pursuing in 2020 and beyond, including: a) implementing safeguards and policies to reduce forest risks, b) support for livelihoods and capacity building, c) nature-based solutions and conservation, d) agricultural markets, including demand and consumption, e) transparency and accountability, f) harmonizing the development, biodiversity and climate agendas, and g) governance.

For most of the endorser forest countries and jurisdictions the post-2020 vision is unclear due to the overwhelming challenge of reverting current deforestation trends, and uncertainties of achieving future emission reductions from the forest and land use sector. While some countries mentioned interest of post-2020 schemes for international cooperation under the Paris Agreement, many expressed concerns regarding: a) meeting existing NDC targets, and the need of enhancing ambition; b) current difficulties to harmonize the different requirements of pilot mechanisms for REDD+ result-based payments that are not always in line with UNFCCC requirements; c) the likelihood of reaching agreement on Article 6 at the UNFCCC's COP25; d) insufficient price for emission reductions; and e) lack of ambition of big emitters and resulting implications for meeting the Paris Agreement goals. Nevertheless, they welcome some signals of improving incentives for post-2020 action including capitalization of the green climate fund, and signals from the private sector to implement new financial models for forest and land-use.

For indigenous peoples, the post-2020 vision is conditioned by the extent to which the international community and national government would respond to the current emergency that indigenous peoples and their territories are facing. 2020 must become a critical year to reverse the trends of increased violence and encroachment of indigenous peoples' territories, and only if this happens, would they be in a position to engage in post-2020 collaborative forest actions. Indigenous peoples and local communities did express their will to continue engaging in the UNFCCC's platform for indigenous peoples and local communities, and informing the climate negotiations through that channel.

For companies, 2020 is the target year for which many countries have made specific commitments related to deforestation that are unlikely to be met. The post-2020 priorities emphasized by company endorsers include: a) supporting an increase in the volume of products that are produced sustainably in forest countries and go to national and international markets; b) strengthening government engagement and support on the demand-side; c) strengthening their commitment to monitoring, reporting and transparency of data; d) improving communication of progress; and e) linking progress to broader international commitments, including the Paris Agreement and the SDGs.

For NGOs, 2020 is a critical year, linking forests, climate, biodiversity and sustainable development. NGO endorsers identified the need to: a) shift consumption of unsustainable agricultural commodities through improved education and awareness campaigns aimed at the general public to support the reduction of carbon footprint and changes in consumption habits; b) scale landscape approaches and collaboration, including development of territorial platforms to strengthen the sustainable management of the landscape; c) develop new or reoriented financial mechanisms to finance forest actions at various levels and aligned with programs and public policies that support their sustainability; d) ensure the proactive transparency of public information including utilization of spatial data; and e) ensuring a focus on exploring the engagement of the private sector on support for natural climate solutions.

### Post-2020 Framework with New and Additional Incentives: Costa Rica

Costa Rica's National Forestry Financing Fund (FONAFIFO) has led the implementation of a payment for environmental services (PES) for over 20 years. Currently the mechanism is only implemented in areas larger than 50 hectares. The PES scheme is funded by the national tax for fossil fuels, but Costa Rica is progressing on their decarbonization strategy, and funding for the PES scheme is expected to decrease and additional funding would be needed to secure the continued implementation of the PES scheme. In addition, the PES is only for areas over 50 hectares, and should be expanded to include smallholders with productive areas under 50 hectares. Alternative mechanisms are needed for these smallholders, especially for women, who only represent 12 percent of total farms in the country that have property titles, and who have no access to finance or technical assistance.

The environmental agenda in Costa Rica is also increasingly linked to the development agenda. Recently the country's Ministry of Energy and Environment signed an agreement with the Ministry of Agriculture to develop activities together. There is an NDC with mitigation actions that is called the Economy Decarbonization Plan, with a thematic axis on land use. A major factor to achieve it is the theme of forests and REDD. The National Development Plan provides a solid basis, and provides continuity for the future, where forest cover preservation and emission reduction are priority objectives.

Across the various NYDF endorser groups, a common theme looking ahead to 2020 and beyond was the need to harmonize the Rio Conventions - the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), and The United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) - aligning these agendas and linking to the Sustainable Development agenda.

There has been a call for a New Deal for People and Nature, as well as a movement to protect 30 percent of the planet by 2030. The specific contribution from the forest community is broken down into three ways: 1) create globally recognized and utilized tool for imperiled rainforests, not just identifying key biodiversity areas but also areas under extreme human pressure; 2) create a portfolio of sustainable and well-managed protected areas with partners to inform global conservation practice; and 3) continue to provide networking and capacity building opportunities for our partners. This proposal could be further expanded by inter-convention dialogues and coordination.

While there is localized progress in multiple places, much more action is needed to have impact and achieve the NYDF Goals. Globally the 2020 goals of the NYDF are not on track to be met, making increased multi-stakeholder endorser action all the more urgent. The case studies captured within this report provide hope and examples of things that are showing progress to achieve the goals, but mainstreamed action for forests, and scaling up of activities is necessary to have broad impact to reduce deforestation, protect restore and sustainably manage forests and lands, and to hold warming to below 1.5 degrees Celsius. Notably, the endorser consultation process documented important qualitative milestones and progress towards the NYDF goals that perhaps were not yet reflected in quantitative global analyses. The lessons emerging from these milestones must be taken in account in planning the implementation of the NYDF past 2020.

Looking ahead to 2020 and beyond, the NYDF warrants an update to bring the goals and targets up to date. Several endorsers highlighted that there are additional elements that could further strengthen the Declaration, including removing the goals that have already been met, adding a goal regarding the role of consumption and demand, and adjusting the 2020 targets.

It is clear that ambitious targets are insufficient and do not guarantee action, and that there are certain conditions that can support the transition from commitment to implementation. Lessons from the endorsers demonstrate that there are enabling conditions that are critical for action that can be considered and when taking forest action. These include developing projects and programs that can survive government changes; developing and consolidating multi-stakeholder platform and mechanisms for improved collaboration across sectors, actors, and levels (national, subnational and local); learning from pioneer countries, jurisdictions and companies that have successfully implemented policies and actions that have resulted in reducing deforestation and improving forest and land management; putting in place innovative financial mechanisms that accelerate transition of gray finance to green finance; accelerating the deployment of finance both from implementation and result-based payments, to the local level and indigenous peoples; and developing revised measurable targets and accountability structures.

The NYDF Global Platform is incorporating the recommendations and feedback from the NYDF endorsers into the Platform's workplan, including strategies for addressing accountability, maximizing synergies with converging initiatives and coalitions, developing strategic communications, and supporting knowledge sharing.

As 2020 approaches, the linkages between forests and broader commitments and ambition for climate, biodiversity, land degradation and the SDGs are becoming clearer, yet a shift in the perspective of forests remains necessary to fully capture the potential of forests and improved land management at the center of responding to multiple climate, biodiversity, and desertification conventions and associated processes.

The 2019 fires in the Amazon, Chiquitania, and the Congo Basin that took place while this report was written have been a painful wake-up call to the urgency of the crisis faced by the world's tropical forests. Scientists have long ago warned that the Amazon may be approaching an ecological tipping point<sup>33</sup> that could lead to a rapid savannization process with drastic consequences for the hydrological cycle and food productivity patterns, biodiversity, and livelihoods of indigenous peoples. The only sensible course is to put in place transformational governance changes and new measures to protect existing primary forests, as well as strictly curb further deforestation.

The time for further commitments without action and accountability has long passed. The urgency of action is upon us, with approximately 10 years to prevent further irreparable damage from climate change. Forests can be a critical part of the solution. This report has captured some of the leading examples of endorser progress. However, these standalone examples are not sufficient to shift the dangerous status

of climate change and biodiversity – bold, collective action across all stakeholders is essential. NYDF endorsers, and the broader global community, have the opportunity to be champions of change through actions to halt deforestation, and to protect, restore and sustainably manage forests and lands. We must take action now in order to have any hope of keeping global warming below 1.5 degrees Celsius, avoid extinctions, strengthen food and water security, secure human rights, and accelerate achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.



## APPENDIX I: METHODS AND CONSULTATION FRAMEWORK

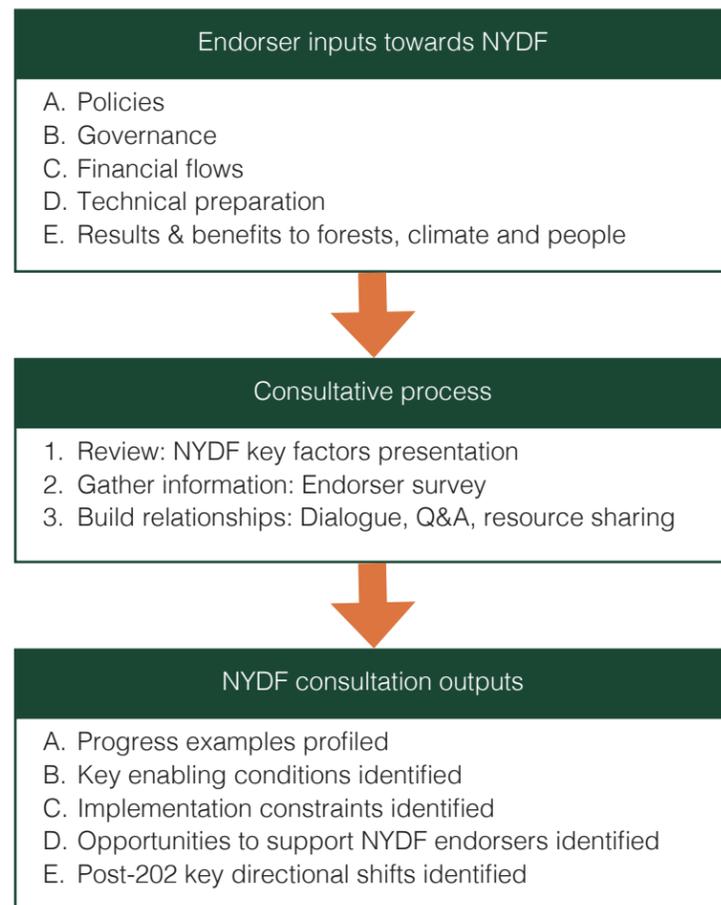
The informal global NYDF Endorser Consultation was designed to uncover the primary challenges, barriers and constraints inhibiting endorser progress to achieve the NYDF goals and to identify lighthouse examples of action and impact across NYDF endorser groups as well as how those actions have been successful, the benefits, and the stakeholder groups engaged. The endorser responses were collated and analyzed using key codes, which can be made available upon request.

Objectives of the NYDF informal consultation:

1. Identify the challenges preventing endorser progress
2. Showcase examples of endorser action and progress and identify key enabling conditions
3. Identify endorser needs and opportunities to support progress
4. Provide insights into endorser's perspectives on forest and climate goals post-2020

The NYDF Secretariat conducted global informal consultations with over 80 NYDF endorsers from March 2019 through June 2019. These consultations were conducted mainly through voice calls or in-person meetings, written questionnaire responses and, in-person group consultations. During these consultations, the endorsers received an overview presentation on the NYDF and Global Platform and were asked a series of survey questions to examine endorser actions, challenges, needs and priorities.

**Figure 6: Framework for consultative process**



The framework for the global informal consultation (Figure 6) was adapted from the Bonn Challenge Barometer framework.<sup>34</sup> This framework shows the inputs, process, and outputs of the consultative process.

Inputs include steps taken by endorsers to: A) develop, revise or implement existing policies, B) put in place or strengthen institutional arrangements and governance, C) direct financial flows and mechanisms and D) provide the necessary technical foundations for planning, implementing and monitoring forest actions. Inputs also include the results and benefits of endorsers making steps towards NYDF goals. These are benefits to forests, people, and climate, such as biodiversity increased, employment generated, and carbon sequestered.

The NYDF secretariat will use information gathered to A) profile progress examples B) identify critical enabling conditions for forest actions C) identify constraints to action D) identify the areas of opportunity to increase support for endorsers in their actions towards the NYDF goals and E) increase understanding of the post-2020 aims for endorsers.



<sup>34</sup> IUCN developed the Bonn Challenge Barometer as a progress tracking protocol to support pledgers to report on and track progress on forest and landscape restoration (FLR) actions and steps taken to realize their Bonn Challenge commitments. Further information on the Barometer and the countries of application can be found here.

## APPENDIX II: THE NYDF ENDORSER PERSPECTIVES SURVEY QUESTIONS

1. What was the main motivating factor for your [government, company, CSO, NGO, financial institution or indigenous peoples' organization] to support the NYDF?
2. Prior to this consultation, were you aware of the work of the NYDF Progress Assessment? YES or NO?
3. Which policy, initiative, or forest project, completed or implemented by your [government/org/company/institution], most supports progress on NYDF Goal 1, to "at least halve the rate of loss of natural forests globally by 2020 and strive to end natural forest loss by 2030"?
  - a. What is the name of the policy, initiative, or forest project?
  - b. What are the three main benefits to your [country/state/org/company/institution] as a result of this action?
  - c. What made it possible to implement this action?
  - d. Does this action actively involve other: companies, financial institutions, NGO/CSOs, government ministries, and/or indigenous peoples and communities? If so, which ones?
4. What does your [government/org/company/institution] perceive as the top 3 main challenges to reducing deforestation, and expanding forest protection, restoration and sustainable use?
5. What are the top 3 NYDF Global Platform services, current or potential, that would help your [government/org/company/institution] the most now?
6. Are you interested in establishing links with other NYDF endorsers?
  - a. If YES, which groups would you be interested in connecting with?"

### ***[Governments & organizations only]***

7. Does your [government/org] have a vision / plan developed for the implementation of the post-2020 framework for global climate action? If so, what are your main priorities?
8. Is there a critical element missing from the declaration and/or goals? If so, what is it?

### ***[Questions for companies only]***

7. Does your company have a specific action plan to reduce or eliminate deforestation along your supply chain?
  - a. If yes, what is the start and end-date (MM/YY)?
  - b. Is it measurable?
  - c. Is it adopted as corporate policy at highest level?
8. Does your company's action plan include specific objectives for post-2020 to address deforestation? If so, what are your main priorities post-2020?
9. Is there a critical element missing from the declaration and/or goals? If so, what is it?

### ***[Questions for financial institutions only]***

7. Does your institution have a specific action plan to reduce or eliminate deforestation from your portfolio?
  - a. If yes, what is the start and end-date (MM/YY)?
  - b. Is it measurable?
  - c. Is it adopted as corporate policy at highest level?
8. Does your institution's action plan include specific objectives for post-2020 to address deforestation? If so, what are your main priorities post-2020?
9. Is there a critical element missing from the declaration and/or goals? If so, what is it?





**New York Declaration on Forests**  
**GLOBAL PLATFORM**

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