

Statement by CITES Secretary General, Ms. Ivonne Higuero

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High Level Round table: 9 May 2022

UNFF RESPONSE TO, ROLE IN, AND EXPECTATIONS FROM FOREST RELATED MULTILATERAL DEVELOPMENTS

Thank you, Madame Chair. I have enjoyed the panel interventions. I liked hearing about leadership, partnerships, and cooperation.

In this context, I would like to underline that CITES and the UNFF have common objectives to preserve forest ecosystems and the livelihoods that they sustain. Ensuring the conservation and sustainable use of several hundred forest species are central to the mandate of CITES.

The Convention's main contribution to the long-term conservation and sustainable of forests and their genetic resources comes through ensuring its implementation for the more than 30,000 plant species listed in its Appendices, including trees.

In their Vision, CITES Parties have recognized the importance of their contributions to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development – and I believe we can confidently say that good implementation of CITES contributes to the achievement of the Global Forest Goals.

The Collaborative Partnership on Forests or CPF can be a key driver for coordinated and effective action on forests. The collaboration with the ITTO and with FAO has been broadened and streamlined through the Secretariat's engagement with the CPF.

Also, through initiatives such as the EU CITES Tree Species Programme in partnership with the ITTO and the UN-REDD-FAO-CITES project in the Lower Mekong Region, national authorities are building expertise. For example, the African Cherry is now better managed across Burundi, Cameroon, Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Madagascar, and Lao is undertaking new research on its Rosewoods to ensure they are sustainably managed and conserved.

As more forest-dependent species are included in the CITES Appendices, the convention will continue to gain visibility as a key instrument in contributing to the global governance framework and international efforts to achieve sustainable development.

And finally, I wish to share with you that at the 19th meeting of the Conference of the Parties in Panama in November, CITES Parties will discuss how to streamline and catalyze their contributions to the global governance framework on forests, possibly including new mandates, and we hope the UNFF and the entire CPF will play an important supportive role.