

Thank you Chair and thank you to the UNFF Secretariat for the excellent note for the High Level Roundtable discussion.

- On behalf of the Indian delegation, I would like to put on record our appreciation for the steps the UNFF is taking towards achieving the goals of the United Nations Strategic Plan for Forests (UNSPF). I would like to highlight that India's efforts and actions in regard to its forestry sector are in harmony with the Global Forest Goals. Increasing the country's forest and tree cover is high on the country's agenda and we have over the years increased our forest and tree cover, trees outside forests and carbon stocks. Our protected area network has also increased and covers about 173 thousand sq km, which is more than 5 percent of the country's area, with a total of 987 protected areas in the country.
- We would like to point out that India has not endorsed the Glasgow Leaders Declaration on Forests and Land Use due to certain language used in the declaration. Several other member states of UNFF have also not endorsed the Declaration. We, therefore, believe that the omnibus resolution, if it is to be inclusive, should not refer to the Glasgow Declaration. However, India is in agreement with the part of the declaration which focuses on halting deforestation and reversing the loss of forest degradation. We would also like to emphasise that India is fully committed to the implementation of UNSPF, Global Forest Goals and their targets adopted by Member States of UNFF for the period 2017-2030.
- India supports the International Arrangement of Forest, global forest goals and targets to ensure sustainable management of all types of forests, their conservation, and reducing forest cover loss, halting of forest degradation restoration of forest and multiple roles of forest for improving the livelihoods of forest dependent people. However, India does not support adopting a legally binding instrument on forests. India supports the strengthening and continuation of the current arrangement and a wide range of financial options to mobilize resources in support of sustainable management of all type of forest.

- India has rich biodiversity and diverse forest ecosystems. We have a long tradition of scientific forestry in the country and manage our forest resources in accordance with silvicultural prescriptions. The objectives of our forest management are in consonance with the goals of UNSPF 2017-30.
- Extraction and trade of timber and other forest products is an important component of sustainable forest management. Sustainable trade of forest products also contributes to poverty alleviation and economic growth of developing countries which are rich in forest resources.
- We believe that legality verification, traceability of forest products and market based tools are important thematic areas where action is required. However, it is necessary to build the capacity of developing countries to put in place appropriate mechanisms in this regard. Besides, we are of the view that countries that manage and harvest their forest resources in accordance with working plans or management plans based on silvicultural principles should be able to trade their forest products without undue restrictions.
- We believe that special consideration and technical assistance should be given to the challenges faced by developing countries in gaining access to funds and needs mobilizing of financial opportunities for capacity building and sustainable forest management.

Thank you Chair.