



COP30 FOREST PAVILION:

A Shared Commitment to Our Planet

2025 UN Climate Change Conference (UNFCCC COP30)

10-21 November 2025, Belém, Brazil

Forests, social equity, and well-being: Health, education, urban forestry, jobs and labor, youth solutions to forest challenges

Tuesday, 11 November 2025

The Center for International Forestry Research and World Agroforestry (CIFOR-ICRAF)

Building and Wood Workers' International (BWI), One Forest Vision Initiative

International Forestry Students' Association (IFSA)

Hybrid

Concept Note

I. Background

As the world accelerates efforts to address the interconnected crises of climate change, biodiversity loss, and social inequality, it is essential to recognize that forests are not only climate regulators, but they are also lifelines for human well-being. The thematic day on Forests, Social Equity, and Well-being at the Forest Pavilion during COP30 will highlight how forest landscapes, especially in the tropics, provide critical ecosystem services such as clean water, food security, and climate resilience. Agroforestry systems and intact forest watersheds support millions of rural and Indigenous families by stabilizing local climates, protecting soil fertility, buffering watersheds, and sustaining biodiversity. functions that directly underpin health, education, and livelihoods.

This day of dialogue and collaboration will emphasize inclusive forest governance and the integration of traditional knowledge, especially from Indigenous Peoples and smallholders who manage vast forest areas through sustainable practices. Sessions will explore how nature-based solutions, agroecological approaches, forest-based employment, and watershed stewardship can drive equitable climate adaptation and just rural development. By amplifying youth voices, labor perspectives, and community-led innovations, the event aims to foster cross-sectoral alliances for forest conservation that prioritize both ecological integrity and human dignity.

II. Objectives

This thematic day aims to deepen understanding and foster collaboration around the critical role forests play in supporting both ecosystems and human well-being. Specifically, it seeks to:

- Highlight the role of forests and agroforestry systems in safeguarding water security, by stabilizing rainfall patterns, reducing erosion, and maintaining the integrity of watersheds that millions rely on for drinking water, food production, and health.
- Promote socially inclusive forest governance and rural development, ensuring that forest protection goes hand-in-hand with equitable access to education, employment, and decision-making for Indigenous Peoples, women, and youth.
- Strengthen connections between science, traditional knowledge, and diplomacy, enabling better policies and international cooperation across the tropical forest basins for climate resilience and human dignity.

III. Programme/Schedules of Events/Speakers

Time	Title & Description	Modality	Speakers (Proposed)
10:00 – 11:00	Session 1: Forests Beyond Carbon: the People-Water Nexus for a Cooler Planet How forests regulate water, protect watersheds, and sustain communities.	Eye-opener presentation Panel Discussion Short interviews + videos showcasing watershed solutions.	Prof. Meine van Noordwijk (CIFOR-ICRAF, WUR the Netherlands) Agroforestry youth leader – IFSA (Amazon) IWMI Youth reps from Amazon, Congo Basin, Jaga Semesta of Indonesia
11:10 – 12:10	Session 2: Decent Work in the Rainforest: Linking Forest Protection and Workers’ Rights Creating sustainable jobs and fair labor conditions in forest-based economies.	Panel Discussion	Building and Wood Workers’ International (BWI) PEFC, Amazonian Trade Union Network, ILO, ACTO (Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization), Brazilian Ministry of Environment
12:20 – 13:20	Session 3: Building Bridges: Science, Communities, and Diplomacy for Forests and Wetlands Cross-sector dialogue connecting knowledge systems for forest and water governance.	Panel Discussion	Ambassador for the Environment, French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs (MEAE), Director of the Gabonese National Center for Scientific and Technological Research (CENAREST), Director of the CRREBaC, co-chair of Congo Basin Science Initiative, DRC

			<p>Chief Executive Officer, Expertise France</p> <p>OFVi Co-Coordinator from National Research Institute for Agriculture, Food and the Environment (INRAe) and French National Research Institute for Sustainable Development (IRD)</p> <p>Coordinator PRODES INPE OFVi Researcher, Co-lead WG Forests, French National Research Institute for Sustainable Development (IRD)</p> <p>Director of Gabonese Agency for Space Studies and Observation (AGEOS),</p> <p>Director of the New Guinea Binatang Research Centre</p>
13:20–13:30	<p>Closing Reflections & Takeaways</p> <p>Final remarks and next steps for collaboration.</p>	Wrap-Up	Moderator

IV. Expected main messages

1. Forests are natural infrastructure for water security and climate resilience

Protecting and restoring forests, especially through agroforestry, smallholders and Indigenous land stewardship, enhances the resilience of watersheds, stabilizes rainfall patterns, and reduces vulnerability to floods, droughts, and heatwaves. Forests are not only carbon sinks; they are critical to adaptation strategies that ensure clean water, healthy soils, and resilient livelihoods for millions across the tropics.

Recommendation: Integrate forest-based water regulation and watershed buffering into national adaptation plans (NAPs) and climate finance mechanisms.

2. Equity-centered forest economies are key to a Just Transition

Climate adaptation must include social protection and fair work opportunities for those who live in and depend on forests. Agroecological livelihoods, non-timber forest products, and sustainable forest enterprises offer viable green jobs—especially for youth, women, and Indigenous Peoples. Empowering these groups is essential for resilient, inclusive adaptation.

Recommendation: Align adaptation investments with labor rights, vocational training, and youth-driven forest entrepreneurship.

3. Bridging knowledge systems strengthens adaptive governance

Building climate resilience requires co-creation of knowledge among scientists, Indigenous Peoples, and local communities. Forest and wetland governance across the Amazon, Congo, and Southeast Asia must reflect both scientific evidence and traditional ecological knowledge, enabling place-based, culturally rooted adaptation.

Recommendation: Support regional diplomacy and community science platforms across the tropical forest basins to inform adaptation policy.

V. Focal Point/Contact

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Forests Beyond Carbon: the People-Water Nexus for a Cooler Planet

11 November 2025, 60 minutes

CIFOR-ICRAF-IFSA

Hybrid

Concept Note

I. Background

As the global community gathers in Belém for COP30, the urgency to center forest-based solutions for climate adaptation has never been greater. While much attention has focused on forests as carbon sinks, this session invites a deeper look into the less visible but equally vital hydrological functions of forests. Forests play a key role in regulating the water cycle, influencing climate resilience at local, regional, and global levels. This session explores the complex and critical links between forests, water, and people, moving beyond carbon-centric views of forest value. Drawing from diverse ecological scales, scientists will unpack how tree cover affects water flows from the plot to the watershed level and how forest structure, from roots to canopy, interacts with topography, geology, and land use to regulate infiltration, runoff, and ecosystem stability. Understanding these hydrological functions is essential for integrated forest and water governance under changing climate conditions.

Building on this scientific foundation, the session will also explore how different communities experience and interact with forest and water systems. A civil society organization working closely with Indigenous Peoples and local communities (IPLCs) will reflect on how the benefits and burdens of forest and water interactions vary across social, economic, and cultural lines. People's relationships with forests and water are shaped by their roles in the landscape—whether as farmers, forest stewards, or downstream communities—as well as by access to power, land, and traditional ecological knowledge.

Looking ahead, youth voices will offer fresh, action-oriented perspectives rooted in local innovation and global urgency. From rainmakers to restoration leaders, young environmentalists are advancing full-cycle water thinking, where green, blue, and even rainbow

water are recognized and valued in forest and climate policies. As climate extremes intensify, this session calls for stronger integration of hydrology, equity, and ecological complexity into sustainable forest management, making forests true allies in delivering water security, local well-being, and a cooler planet.

II. Objectives

To elevate the forest–water–people nexus as a critical framework for climate resilience, and to foster collaboration between scientists, youth leaders, and community-based organizations in designing just, water-smart forest policies and practices.

III. Programme/Schedules of Events/Speakers

Moderator: Andrew Miccolis – Country Director of Brazil, CIFOR-ICRAF

List of Speakers:

Time [minutes]	Title/Topic of Presentation	Full name, Title	Institution
10:00–10:05	Welcoming and opening remark	Andrew Micholis	CIFOR-ICRAF
10:05 – 10:15	Forest, Water, and the Diversity of People: Why This Nexus Matters	Prof. Meine van Noordwijk, Distinguish Principal Scientist	CIFOR–ICRAF, Wageningen University
10:15–10:20	The future of forest-water governance from the lens of youth action and innovation	Youth representative	IFSA
10:20 – 10:25	Tools and approaches for integrated forest-water management in climate change adaptation planning	Nishadi Eriyagama, Deputy Country Manager and Regional Researcher	IWMI
10:30 – 10:40	Guardians of the Spring: Civil Society in Forest-Water Restoration Short video + reflections from a community-led initiative working closely with IPLCs	Fainta Negoro, Founder	Jaga Semesta

10:40 – 10:55	Interactive discussion		
10:55 – 11:00	Closing Reflections and Key Messages	Andrew Miccolis	CIFOR-ICRAF

IV. Expected main messages

1. Forests are hydrological infrastructure critical to climate adaptation

Beyond carbon storage, forests play a central role in regulating the full water cycle—controlling infiltration, evapotranspiration, groundwater recharge, and surface water flows. These functions are essential for building resilience to climate extremes such as floods, droughts, and water scarcity. Forest and land-use planning must account for these hydrological services at multiple scales—from tree root zones to whole watersheds.

2. Integrated watershed-based planning must align with human and ecological complexity

Forest-water governance must reflect the reality that water connects people across landscapes. Topography, forest structure, and land use determine water availability and quality, while social diversity, gender, livelihood, upstream-downstream location—influences how communities benefit or are burdened by forest and water dynamics. Policies must embed this complexity through inclusive planning, equitable benefit-sharing, and rights-based approaches.

3. Climate finance and NDCs must fully account for green, blue, and atmospheric water flows

Current climate finance and NDCs often prioritize carbon metrics while neglecting water-related ecosystem services. Adaptation strategies should explicitly include hydrological functions in MRV systems, project design, and performance indicators. This requires integration of scientific, Indigenous, and community-based knowledge, and the development of enabling policy environments that value and incentivize full water cycle management—from green to blue to “rainbow” (atmospheric) water.

V. Focal Point/Contact

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Decent Work in the Amazon Rainforest

Linking Forest Protection and Workers' Rights

Tuesday, 11 November 2025

11:10 – 12:10

Building and Wood Workers' International (BWI)

Hybrid

Lead Organizer:

Building and Wood Workers' International (BWI)

Co-Organizer:

PEFC - Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification

Concept Note

I. Background

The Amazon Rainforest — the world's largest tropical forest and one of Earth's key climate regulators — is also home to nearly 48 million people whose work sustains its economy. However, this vast region faces a severe **deficit of decent and safe forest labour**. Deforestation, illegal logging, and extractive industries have generated environmental devastation without improving livelihoods. Most Amazonian forest workers endure **informality, poverty wages, unsafe conditions, and rights violations**, while their communities face growing insecurity and exclusion from decision-making.

This side event will present the **Decent Work Program for the Amazon Rainforest**, an integrated agenda that connects **forest protection, climate justice, and workers' rights**. Grounded in the **ILO Decent Work Agenda** and **Sustainable Development Goal 8**, it calls for policies to formalize

forest employment, strengthen labour inspection, eradicate forced and child labour, and promote fair participation in sustainable forest and bioeconomy initiatives.

By gathering governments, unions, forestry certification mechanisms, and international agencies, the session will demonstrate that **protecting the rainforest begins with protecting the workers who depend on and care for it**—placing human dignity, environmental integrity, and social dialogue at the core of climate action.

II. Objectives

- Present the Amazonian Decent Work Program as a framework for a just transition in tropical forests.
- Promote decent work and social protection as core principles of sustainable forest governance and climate adaptation.
- Advocate for stronger worker and community participation in restoration, certification, and bioeconomy initiatives.
- Highlight the links between forest degradation, precarious labour, and inequality, underscoring the need for integrated socio-environmental solutions.
- Strengthen coordination among the trade union movement, PEFC, ILO, and ACTO for coherent forest–labour policies.

III. Expected Outcomes

- Recommendations to integrate **decent work** and **social protection indicators** into NDCs, NAPs, and Amazon regional cooperation mechanisms.
- Policy proposals for **formalizing employment** and creating **green and forest-based jobs** through sustainable management, reforestation, and restoration.
- Commitments to **reinforce occupational health and safety** and **labour inspection systems** in forest and extractive sectors.
- Recognition of **workers' and Indigenous communities' roles** in carbon-credit governance, forest certification, and just transition strategies.

IV. Invited speakers

- **Carolina Dantas**, Climate and Forestry Officer, Building and Wood Workers' International (BWI)/ Amazonian Trade Union Network (ATUN)
- **Thorsten Arndt**, Head of Advocacy, PEFC
- **Moustapha Kamal Gueye**, Global Coordinator of Green Jobs Programme - International Labour Organization (ILO)
- **Rathna Kewal**, Climate Change Coordinator - Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization

- **Thiago Belote Silva**, Forestry Director, Ministry of Environment and Climate Change – Brazil

V. Target Audience

- Government delegates and policymakers from Amazonian and partner countries
- Labour, environment, and forest ministries
- UN agencies (ILO, FAO, UNEP, UNDP)
- Development banks and climate finance institutions
- Trade unions, forest workers’ organizations, and civil society networks
- Indigenous, Afro-descendant, and traditional forest communities

VI. Relevance to COP 30 and UNFCCC Processes

COP 30 in Belém — in the heart of the Amazon Rainforest — offers a historic moment to affirm that **forest protection and decent work are inseparable**. This event supports **Decision 3/CMA.5 on the UAE Just Transition Work Programme** and the **Global Goal on Adaptation (GGA)**, while aligning with the **Declaration of Belém (ACTO 2023)** on inclusive and sustainable development.

It strengthens the **social dimension of climate policy**, linking labour rights to environmental governance, biodiversity conservation, and poverty reduction. By centering **forest workers and communities** in adaptation and mitigation strategies, the event advances **SDGs 3 (Health), 8 (Decent Work), 10 (Reduced Inequalities), 13 (Climate Action), and 15 (Life on Land)**—ensuring that the legacy of COP 30 is one where the **rainforest and its people thrive together**.

RUNDOWN

Time (BRT)	Agenda Item	Speaker / Institution	Content / Focus
11:10 – 11:15	Opening Remarks and Framing	Carolina Dantas Climate & Forestry Officer, Building and Wood Workers’ International (BWI)	Welcome and introduction of the event and objectives. Present the <i>Decent Work in the Amazon Rainforest</i> initiative and acknowledge partners: PEFC, ILO, ACTO, and Brazilian Ministry of Environment and Climate Change.
11:15 – 11:23	Presentation of the Amazonian Decent Work Program	Carolina Dantas – BWI	Presentation of the <i>Decent Work Program for the Amazon Rainforest</i> : integrating forest protection, climate justice, and workers’ rights; formalizing forest labour, strengthening labour inspection, eradicating forced and child labour, and ensuring fair participation in sustainable forest and bioeconomy initiatives.

11:23 – 11:31	Certification Systems and Decent Work	Thorsten Arndt Head of Advocacy, Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How PEFC criteria and audits can better incorporate measurable decent-work indicators in rainforest areas. • Practical next steps to strengthen labour safeguards and increase Forestry Certification in Rainforest areas. • What can we do to increase forestry certification in tropical and subtropical regions?
11:31 – 11:39	Labour Inspection and OHS as Climate Adaptation	Dr. Moustapha Kamal Gueye Director, Just Transition and Green Jobs Programme, International Labour Organization (ILO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthening labour inspection and OHS in forest/extractive sectors as climate adaptation, based on the ILO Code of Practice on OHS for Forestry Work. • Opportunities to, based on the ILO Decent Work Agenda, advance a specific Decent Work agenda for the Amazon region.
11:39 – 11:47	Regional Cooperation and Social Safeguards	Rathna Kewal Climate Change Coordinator, Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization (ACTO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How ACTO can help embed decent work/social protection across regional mechanisms. • Practical coordination between ACTO and trade union organizations in the implementation of the Belém and Bogotá Declarations. • Near-term milestones to operationalize social safeguards in Amazon initiatives.
11:47 – 11:55	National Perspective: Brazil's Policy Pathways	Thiago Belote Silva Forestry Director, Ministry of Environment and Climate Change, Brazil	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pathways to integrate decent work indicators in NDCs, the National Climate Plan (PLANclima), and sectoral forest policies, as well as in financing mechanisms such as the Climate Fund and the Tropical Forest Forever Facility.
11:55 – 12:05	Final reflections from panelists	All panelists	<p>2 min reaction per speaker</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What can we do to promote Decent Work in the Amazon region?
12:05 – 12:10	Closing Remarks and Key Takeaways	Carolina Dantas – BWI	Summary of key points. Thank co-organizers, speakers, and participants.

Focal Point/Contact

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Building bridges between science, politics, communities and diplomacy for the forests and wetlands of the three tropical basins

11th November, 12:20 PM, PV-E161, tent T53 in the Blue Zone

Lead: One Forest Vision Initiative – Laurent Durieux, co-coordinator

Co-lead: Expertise France and Ministère de l'Europe et des Affaires Étrangères

Format: Hybrid

Concept Note

I. Background

The main tropical forests and wetlands are spread across three regions of the globe with very different ecological, social, economic and diplomatic realities. While the role of these forests is becoming increasingly important in international climate and biodiversity agendas, effective coordination between scientific, political and diplomatic experts, as well as indigenous peoples and local communities, remains a challenge in maximizing the impact of sustainable management in these regions.

Innovative co-construction methods and the implementation of governance structures that meet strong and shared ethical requirements contribute to such coordination.

This event will provide an opportunity to share experiences in setting up such coordination structures and to discuss the expectations of each community in the context of the three basins. Finally, this event will lay the foundations for solid bridges for future collaboration across the three basins.

II. Objectives

Promote potential synergies, whether existing or yet to be explored, between tropical basins and discuss experiences of cooperative governance models. The ultimate goal will be to foster better coordination of programs promoting concrete solutions for the preservation and regeneration of tropical forests and wetlands.

III. Programme/Schedules of Events/Speakers

Thematic session opening with presentations by political, diplomatic and scientific representatives, followed by an interactive round table discussion with the audience.

Building on these exchanges, the session will explore how strengthened scientific diplomacy can contribute to the preservation of tropical basins — moving from Partnerships for Forests, Nature and Climate towards the implementation of an inter-basin vision through a dedicated scientific initiative fostering inter-tropical synergies.

To illustrate this approach, five speakers representing countries from the three tropical basins will share their perspectives on the crucial link between science and policy, and discuss how to promote a common inter-basin vision. Together, they will reflect on how to jointly shape the future of conservation, regeneration, and sustainable management of tropical forests and wetlands, while advancing the post-COP scientific diplomacy dialogue.

Schedule of the event

Thematic session: Building Bridges Between Science, Policy, Communities and Diplomacy for the Forests and Wetlands of the Three Tropical Basins

I. PRESENTATION

- **Donor Synergy Effort: Partnerships for Forests, Nature and Climate – 5 min**
Speaker: Barbara Pompili, Ambassador for the Environment, French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs (MEAE)
- **Feedback from Signatory Countries (Country Package’s signatories) in the Congo Basin - 7 min**
Speakers: Alfred Ngomanda, Director, National Center for Scientific and Technological Research (CENAREST), Raphaël Tshimanga, Director of CRREBaC and co-chair of Congo Basin Science Initiative (CBSI), Democratic Republic of Congo
- **One Forest Vision: A Scientific Initiative for the Three Tropical Basins - 10 min**
Speakers: Thierry Caquet, OFVi Co-Coordinator, National Research Institute for Agriculture, Food and the Environment (INRAe), Nicolas Barbier, OFVi Researcher, Co-lead WG Forests, French National Research Institute for Sustainable Development (IRD)

II. ROUNDTABLE

Roundtable Discussion: Co-constructing the Scientific Diplomacy of Tomorrow — Shared Scientific Solutions for the Three Tropical Basins – 31 min

Moderator: Laurent Durieux, OFVi Co-Coordinator, IRD

Panellists: Aboubakar Mambimba Ndjoungui, Director, Gabonese Agency for Space Studies and Observation (AGEOS), Raphaël Tshimanga, Director of CRREBaC and co-chair of Congo Basin Science Initiative (CBSI), Claudio Almeida, Coordinator PRODES INPE, Pagi Toko, Director of the New Guinea Binatang Research Centre

III. CONCLUSION – 7 min

- **Sustainably Strengthening Public Policies: Supporting the Establishment of Sustainable, Inclusive and Responsible Governance of the Forest Sector - 7 min**

Speaker: Jérémie Pellet, Chief Executive Officer, Expertise France

IV. Expected main messages

Creating synergies between tropical basins to strengthen knowledge exchange, scientific collaboration, and methodological innovation across the Congo, Amazon, and Southeast Asian regions. The session highlights the dialogue between science and policy in co-designing transformational projects that drive sustainable management of forests and wetlands.

V. Focal Point/Contact

One Forest Vision Initiative

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Expertise France

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