

# Forest Solutions to the Climate Emergency

*A Case for Support for the UN-REDD Programme*

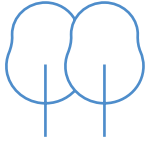


UN-REDD  
PROGRAMME

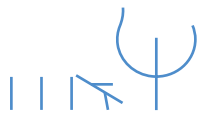




# The Challenge



Forests have a massive mitigation potential of **4.1 – 6.5 GtCO<sub>2</sub>e** by 2030.



Deforestation and forest degradation account for approximately **11% of carbon emissions**.

Accelerating and scaling up climate action, to achieve necessary and urgent carbon emission reductions by 2030, is a paramount global need to avert the climate crisis. Forests have a massive mitigation potential of 4.1 – 6.5 GtCO<sub>2</sub>e by 2030. As recognised in the ground-breaking outcomes of UNFCCC COP26, including the [Glasgow Climate Pact](#), the [Glasgow Leaders' Declaration on Forest and Land Use](#), the [IPLC Forest Tenure Joint Donor Statement](#), and the [Global Forest Finance Pledge](#), forests are a critical solution for realising the Paris Agreement and the Sustainable Development Goals. This potential can only be fully realised by reducing emissions through halting deforestation and forest degradation, as well as removing massive amounts of carbon from the atmosphere through sustainable forest management, forest conservation and forest ecosystem restoration.

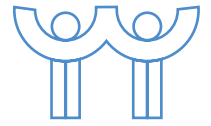
Deforestation and forest degradation account for approximately 11 per cent of carbon emissions, more than the entire global transportation sector and second only to the energy sector. It is now clear that in order to constrain the impacts of climate change within limits that society will reasonably be able to tolerate, global average temperatures must be stabilized within two degrees Celsius. This will be practically impossible to achieve without reducing emissions from the forest sector. To that end, the 'tipping point' at which economic incentives align to protect and restore forests needs to arrive well before the end of the decade. If deforestation is stopped and degraded forests are restored, they can provide approximately one-third of the carbon reduction needed to avoid the most severe impacts of climate change.

The world's forests also act as shields, keeping humans safe from zoonotic diseases, such as coronaviruses. Their destruction can have devastating consequences not only for climate change and biodiversity loss, but also for global public health.

Over 400 million people live in or near forests, including 70 million indigenous peoples, who see their forests slowly disappearing. Threats to forests come from many angles such as illegal logging, forest fires, fuelwood harvesting, agricultural expansion, unsustainable livestock ranching, infrastructure and last but not least the pressure of an ever-growing population. While cutting trees generates substantial financial profits, forest communities often see little profit in conservation.

The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has exposed an urgent need to invest in forests to build a better, greener and more resilient world. We need to find innovative solutions to environmental issues to strengthen societies and economies, not only to prevent future pandemics, but also to create sustainable, long-term growth.

What is required is an urgent, massive investment effort to drastically change the way we interact with and depend on nature, to unlock its full potential. Realising the increased ambition for the role of forests in climate change mitigation and adaptation requires moving into a decade of scaled up implementation and finance, and the UN's innovative and collaborative power must be at the core of this future.



Over **400 million people** live in or near forests.



Youth gather in Karura forest, Nairobi, in solidarity with the global climate youth marches. © UNEP



# Proposed Solution

## innovation, connection and action

Building on the solid infrastructure already in place, UN-REDD will focus in scaling up its efforts in this decade through three interrelated approaches – innovation, connection and action – to support governments, private sector and other stakeholders to reduce GHG emissions, and enhance removals, from forest and land-use sectors.



Tree nursery farm in Chipata, Zambia.  
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The Programme will advance global innovation around REDD+ implementation and climate financing for forests by operating as a 'spark hub', fostering innovative policies and partnerships to resolve global demand and supply challenges for REDD+. UN-REDD will accelerate learning and momentum for action by deploying the convening power of the UN system to create connections and bring together political leaders, private sector and civil society around forest mitigation and adaptation solutions. Lastly, the Programme will provide technical assistance and policy advice through a mix of tools and technologies, long-term commitments and targeted interventions to catalyse forest action at national and subnational scales. These approaches will be deployed throughout the implementation of the Programme's [new results framework](#): from activities, outputs, outcomes, and overall goal.

A new  
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Ms. Nyar Thy, 42 pictured with the bamboo she harvested from the forest near Kha Baung Protected Public forest, Taung-Oo, Myanmar.  
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Persistent, and legitimate, concerns around the integrity of forest carbon emission reductions and enhanced removals will be addressed by the Programme through a stepwise drive for enhanced quality of REDD+ results:

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## 1. Robustness of forest reference emission levels (FRELs).

UN-REDD will support countries in updating their FRELs as necessary, since some of the initial FREL submissions do not meet the requirements of RBP programmes (especially since several RBP programme elements are more restrictive post-2019). Updating FRELs applying technological advances and robust methodologies will increase the quality of REDD+ result submissions.

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## 2. Accuracy of results.

To meet requirements of RBPs programmes, countries will be assisted to produce unbiased estimates with quantified uncertainties. To reduce aggregate uncertainty in measuring, reporting and verifying results, UN-REDD will capitalize on technological advances made in the last decade to substantially increase accuracy of measuring REDD+ results. The Programme will renew efforts to support countries in adopting MRV protocols and technologies that remove bias and diminish uncertainty as much as possible in results.

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## 3. Strengthen the link between REDD+ strategies and results reporting.

As more and more RBP programmes add requirements around the linkage between REDD+ implementation actions and the resulting emission reductions, UN-REDD will help countries to strengthen this link as appropriate.

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## 4. Permanence of results.

An inherent challenge to the longevity of forest-based mitigation results, as exemplified by the recent spike in forest fires worldwide, reversals will be tackled by the Programme through supporting the continuous implementation of REDD+ actions and policies, while establishing robust buffers accounts.

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## 5. Good use of proceeds.

UN-REDD will commit to supporting countries that promote a virtuous cycle of reinvesting RBPs in addressing key drivers of deforestation and forest degradation, as well as the barriers to improved forest protection, restoration and sustainable forest management (SFM). Reinvestments that, in turn, yield further REDD+ results followed by corresponding payments, which are again reinvested in suppressing rates deforestation and forest degradation, enhancing forest restoration, and so on and so forth.

## Intervention Principles

To achieve this stepwise drive for enhanced quality of REDD+ results the UN-REDD Programme will secure political traction, and public transparency, in each of the target countries identified for intervention. UN-REDD will work with the high-level, and cross- sectoral divisions of government, and policy structures, that

can deliver on transformational commitments in the land-forest-commerce nexus, such as ministries of finance, development planning or economic policy. UN-REDD will also foster public-private partnerships, which are increasingly demonstrated as indispensable for Nature-based Solutions (NBS).

**Speed:** Greater speed in delivery will be based on mainstreaming a stepwise approach to delivery, a greater standardization of products that can be deployed more rapidly and a more fungible budget allocation model, whereby funds can be deployed based on emerging opportunities.

**Flexibility:** The Programme will regularly scan horizons for new opportunities for intervention in additional geographies and maintain flexibility to shift staff and resources to those new areas without compromising results and impacts from existing commitments.

**Scale:** UN-REDD will focus on forest-based solutions that are commensurate to the climate emergency. This means that technical assistance, innovation, policy advice and knowledge management will be planned and delivered in ways that are catalytic and yield impacts of scale.

**Governance Arrangements:** The Programme will build on the current decision-making structure, with possible adjustments to gain speed and flexibility in operations. Work plans, country assistance and knowledge management will place greater emphasis on attaining target outcomes, such as GtCO<sub>2</sub>e results and catalysing REDD+ finance.

**Operational Modalities:** The new operational modality will focus on attaining the indicators of success with added flexibility, making work plans, country support and stakeholder engagement much more result-oriented. UN-REDD will continue to engage in situations that require a committed presence for an extended period, but will also retain enough flexibility to be a catalyst for short-term opportunities. The Programme will gain increased political traction at country level through the UN Resident Coordinator system.

**Resource Management:** UN-REDD would have a “core budget” to maintain the Programme’s institutional capacity and technical expertise, and a separate “operational budget” to finance activities and operations. UN-REDD will establish interagency teams to deliver support services and respond to emerging opportunities. Different products or opportunities will require different team compositions.



# UN-REDD Programme's Value Proposition



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The UN-REDD Programme is uniquely positioned to support delivery at the pace and scale required towards building a better, greener, more resilient future in developing forest countries.

The UN-REDD Programme is the UN's flagship knowledge and advisory platform on forest solutions to the climate crisis. The Programme was launched in 2008 and builds on the convening role and technical expertise of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). It helps its 65 partner countries to advance the implementation of the Paris Agreement, particularly Articles 5 and 6, in order to reduce deforestation, promote sustainable land uses, advance international cooperative approaches to climate mitigation and mobilise climate finance to turn the tide on tropical deforestation.

The Programme has accompanied its partner countries in improving governance and advancing national policy and institutional systems to safeguard forests and mitigate climate change. The Programme has also helped countries take giant steps forward in modernizing their forest monitoring using new technologies, satellite data and open-source software. Measuring forest change is now easier, more cost-effective, faster and more transparent than ever before.

The Programme has **unrivalled global reach** and optimal access to countries, engaging all in-country stakeholders - from national governments to indigenous peoples and local communities (IPLCs) - at both the policy and technical levels. All of this is possible because the UN is present in every country, through its network of specialized agencies' country offices are strengthened and streamlined through the Resident Coordinator system.

The Programme is a **ready-to-roll platform** that has grown over 12 years, developing unequalled expertise and operating capacity to deliver at scale and a long-standing role as trusted partners of REDD+ countries, donors, private sector, civil society and IPLCs. The collaborative UN-REDD Programme is able to draw on the **comparative technical advantages** of the three partners and an extensive and well-qualified pool of technical, policy and economic expertise on forests, land use, climate change and sustainable development, which is recognized and greatly valued by UN member states and the UNFCCC. The Programme has also developed a **wide range of partnerships** with other multilateral development institutions, bilateral development agencies, and other initiatives contributing to the success of REDD+. The Programme offers **support to countries** in a manner which is consistent with the UN Charter as well as with international treaties and conventions, notably the UNFCCC, which has developed and agreed the "rulebook" (Warsaw Framework) for REDD+.

As far as the REDD+ related technical advisory and capacity development services provided by the three agencies are concerned, the following domains of competence are of particular importance:

- **REDD+ action** – undertaking analysis of the drivers of deforestation, forest degradation and barriers to ‘+’ activities, conducting cost-benefit analyses of REDD+ actions, and identifying and prioritizing REDD+ actions for implementation.
- **Multi-stakeholder dialogues** – based on rigorous assessments of country needs, supporting national REDD+ processes that are inclusive, transparent, equitable and gender-responsive, helping countries to shape appropriate national REDD+ strategies that contribute to national efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.
- **IPLC engagement** – promoting the rights, knowledge and participation of IPLCs in processes to identify, design, implement and monitor forest solutions to the climate emergency, including the associated financing avenues.
- **Policy reform** – influencing national policy, legal and regulatory review and revision processes for REDD+, including fiscal policy reform and natural capital economics, working across sectors, in connection to Nationally Determined Contribution reviews and implementation.
- **Governance reform** – ensuring linkages between REDD+ and ongoing national forest governance reform processes, including legal frameworks reviews, tenure reforms, integrated land-use planning, agricultural sector policies, and food security issues.
- **REDD+ financing** – support national and subnational jurisdictional access to REDD+ readiness, implementation and performance-based finance, from results-based payments to carbon markets, as well as setting domestic incentives and supporting national schemes of payments for ecosystem services.
- **Institutional capacity** – contributing to capacity development processes to implement policy reforms, inter alia through: inter-sectoral coordination; facilitating finance; specialized training facilities, collaboration with research institutions and networks, and organizing south-south knowledge exchanges.
- **Monitoring forests and land-use** – supporting national and subnational government institutions to develop or strengthen: national forest inventories; measurement, reporting and verification of REDD+ results; National Forest Monitoring Systems; and Forest/Forest Reference Emission Levels.
- **Country approaches to safeguards** – supporting national governments, and other stakeholders, addresses and respect environmental and social safeguards, together with developing and operating safeguards information systems, benefit sharing and grievance redress mechanisms, to ensure optimal multiple benefits from REDD+



Volunteer Firefighters or MPA (Masyarakat Peduli Api) take part in a training course at Nusa Tumbang Village, Kalimantan. © UN-REDD



# Resource Requirements

Looking to the 2030 horizon, the UN-REDD Programme's goal is to help scale up forest solutions to the climate emergency by avoiding carbon emissions and fostering carbon sequestration. In order to support achievement of full climate change mitigation potential of forests through substantial reduction of deforestation and degradation, conservation of existing forests, restoration and low-carbon forest management – in ways that drive enhanced quality of emissions by 2030, **the Programme will require a global envelope of USD 300 million for 2022-2030 time frame** to scale-up its existing programming to create transformational change required.



Uganda hosted Africa's first National REDD+ Academy from 11-15 July, 2016.  
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Members of the ethnic Dao minority in Chu Kan Ho village, Tong Sanh Commune, Lao Cai Province going into the forest to pick and gather medicinal herbs and plants.  
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Outcomes	Expected Results by 2030
Forest Solutions Realized: Forest-based emission reductions and enhanced removals, of increasing quality (accuracy, certainty and permanence), unlocked at a level of 1 GtCO <sub>2</sub> e per year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Countries and jurisdictions implement REDD+ investment plans/ programmes to deliver their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs)</li> <li>• Forest landscape restoration and forest carbon stock enhancement accelerated</li> <li>• Deforestation-free commodity supply chains developed</li> <li>• Countries enabled to measure high-quality and accurate activity data, emission factors, emissions and emission reductions with policy-relevant monitoring systems</li> </ul> <p>Safeguards addressed, respected, monitored and reported throughout the implementation of REDD+ actions</p>
Forest Solutions Rewarded: USD 5 bn/ year mobilized for REDD+ from result-based payments, carbon markets, Article 6 transactions and private sector investments in REDD+ implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RBPs accessed for measured, reported and verified REDD+ results</li> <li>• Market transactions for forest carbon facilitated</li> <li>• Private-sector forest carbon investments mobilised</li> </ul>
Forest Solutions Enhanced More than 15 countries enhance significantly the forest component of their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) in the 2020-2025 cycle, including quantitative targets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NDCs mitigation actions in the forest and land-use sectors assessed, accelerated and enhanced through time</li> </ul>
Connecting Actors and Knowledge for Forest Solutions: Forests and REDD+ catalyse a global, transformative Nature-based Solutions (NbS) movement to accelerate climate action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge on how to scale up REDD+ implementation is captured, managed and disseminated to accelerate climate action</li> <li>• Collective political and societal support to NbS increased</li> <li>• Digital cooperation and frontier technologies deployed to accelerate and enhance NbS</li> </ul>

**Total Resource Requirements USD 300 million**

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