

John Hontelez, for FSC, presentation at OWG 8, Tuesday 4 February, meeting with Major Groups.

It is clear that in coming decades competition for land will only increase. And forests continue to lose out against expansion of agriculture, oilpalm, urbanisation, climate change, but also illegal logging and lack of responsible forest management.

The importance of forests is increasing too. Increasing demand for materials for traditional and new uses, including for energy efficient construction, for bio-based products and bio-energy. And for its increasing importance in climate mitigation and adaptation.

That is why in the set of SDGs that we discuss now, forests should not be absent, even if it is clear that one cannot look at forests in isolation of land-use strategies and it is essential we change consumption and production patterns to reduce dependence on natural resources.

Existing policies have not stopped deforestation and forest degradation globally. Between 1990 and 2010 alone, despite policies to protect forests, more than 7% of natural and semi-natural forests got lost.

In order to frame a land management agenda we need to have clear goals, targets and indicators in the SDGs on forests, as part of a broader approach, as the HLG of Eminent Persons pointed out, on management of our natural resources.

FSC proposes to build these on the Aichi Targets, adopted by almost all countries in the world in 2010. Our three proposals:

1. Goal or target on halting deforestation by 2020. Not literally Aichi Target 5, which aims halting “where possible”. We think it **should be made possible** with intensifying political will and international cooperation, recognising that this is of global interest.
2. Also a goal or target of 15% restoration of degraded forest lands, in line with Aichi Target 15. I refer to the Bonn Challenge, where governments and stakeholders have already committed to work to the restoration of 150 million ha in forests in 2020, which is about the 15% restoration. This objective would compensate for the forest loss of the last 20 years.
3. But we should not only focus on quantity, quality is as important. Therefore we also propose as one of the goals of targets to ensure sustainable forest management by 2020, in line with Aichi Target 7..

Whereby we propose a specific indicator in terms of the “*increased use of transparent, effective, balanced multi stakeholder governed forest and chain-of custody systems, particularly in regions where forests are under most pressure*”. We are convinced that such systems, such as FSC has developed, can be a reliable tool to promote sustainable forest managements, and governments have several tools to promote its success. The Biodiversity Indicators Partnership of the CBD and UNEP has already accepted FSC certification as an indicator for Aichi Target 7, on sustainable management.

See also the written contribution to this discussion

Thank you very much.