

Hyderabad Call for a Concerted Effort on Ecosystem Restoration

We, the Governments of India, the Republic of Korea and South Africa, the Secretariats of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), and the Society for Ecological Restoration (SER), having partnered in organizing the Ecosystem Restoration Day on 17 October 2012 at the Rio Conventions Pavilion on the margins of the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP11) to the Convention on Biological Diversity held in Hyderabad, India:

Acknowledging that ecosystems and their biodiversity underpin economic growth, sustainable development and human wellbeing; and that the loss of biodiversity results in serious and sometimes irreversible reductions in ecosystem goods and services that negatively impact economic prosperity and environmental sustainability;

Recognizing that the earth's ecosystems are fast degrading as a result of damage due to unsustainable development and ecosystem management, and a failure to invest and reinvest in their productivity, health and sustainability;

Further recognizing that the health and well-being of all species in the coming decades will, in part, depend on investing in the restoration and rehabilitation of degraded lands, ecosystems and landscapes (including seascapes);

Acknowledging that there is an emerging consensus that the restoration and rehabilitation of degraded lands, ecosystems and landscapes is increasingly important as conservation alone is no longer sufficient and the destruction of natural habitat remains the largest driver in the loss of biodiversity and ecosystem services;

Recalling that various global commitments and targets have already been adopted by the three Rio Conventions and other Multilateral Environment Agreements, fora, processes and initiatives that directly establish a policy imperative for ecosystem and landscape restoration;

Further recalling the importance given to ecosystem restoration in paragraphs 4, 40, 154, 158, 193, 201, 206 and 207 of the final outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, Rio+20, "The Future We Want";

Noting that the effective implementation of restoration projects and programmes not only helps to achieve many of the Aichi Targets under the CBD, but also ecosystem-based adaptation and climate change mitigation under the UNFCCC, striving towards land degradation neutrality and Zero Net Land Degradation under the UNCCD, the wise use of wetlands under the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, the four Global Objectives on Forests of the UNFF, the Bonn Challenge of the Global Partnership on Forest Landscape Restoration, and sustainable development and other internationally agreed development goals;

Recognizing the special roles of India as President of CBD COP 11, Republic of Korea as President of UNCCD COP 10, and South Africa as President of UNFCCC COP 17;

Acknowledging that, for the implementation of Article 8(f) of the CBD and achieving Aichi Biodiversity Targets 14 and 15 of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, there is a need for a concerted and collaborative effort to support, facilitate, finance, implement and scale up ecosystem restoration activities on the ground;

Noting that such activities would not only contribute, and are often a prerequisite, to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and ecosystems, but would also improve food and water security, provide employment and alleviate poverty, enhance economic, social and environmental benefits, promote the conservation and sustainable use of natural capital, combat land degradation and desertification, and aid in efforts to adapt and mitigate climate change;

Further noting that given the increasing pressures on terrestrial, freshwater and marine ecosystems, more coordinated and accelerated efforts are needed for restoring and rehabilitating damaged and degraded ecosystems in order to deliver multiple benefits that contribute to improved human well-being and socio-economic equity while significantly reducing environmental risks and scarcities;

Recognizing that the major enabling factors that would assist countries in achieving their ecosystem restoration commitments and targets at all levels include: political will, leadership and commitment; knowledge dissemination and capacity building to transform knowledge and experience into practical applications on the ground; governance, participation and partnerships; and financing, resource mobilization and other incentive mechanisms;

Call upon all Governments, Parties to the Rio Conventions and other Multilateral Environmental Agreements, donor agencies, including the World Bank and regional development banks, private and corporate donors, and business consortia, as well as other relevant international bodies and organizations, indigenous and local community organizations and civil society, to make concerted and coordinated long-term efforts to mobilize resources and facilitate the implementation of ecosystem restoration activities on the ground for sustaining and improving the health and well-being of humans and all other species with whom we share the planet.