

# Ministerial Meeting on Forest Landscape Restoration and the ECCA30/Bonn Challenge in Eastern and South-East Europe

12 October 2021

## DECLARATION

We the participants of the Ministerial Meeting on Forest Landscape Restoration and the ECCA 30/Bonn Challenge in Eastern and South-East Europe (Ministerial Meeting) organized by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, with the support of the International Union for Conservation of Nature and the Government of Germany,

*Welcoming* the ongoing efforts of governments and national forest authorities to increase forest cover and improve degraded forests, where appropriate, in the countries in the region and halt the processes of desertification and land degradation,

*Being aware* that countries in the region face many similar challenges and common problems related to land and ecosystem degradation, biodiversity loss, the planning and implementation of forest landscape restoration, and that regional cooperation and strong partnerships are key to identifying best solutions and actions to support forests, their ecosystems, and the people depending on them,

*Recognizing* the major contribution of forest landscape restoration for the achievement of global commitments made by countries in the region within the framework of the Rio Conventions, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF),

*Noting* that achieving the Bonn Challenge's 350 million-hectare restoration global goal by 2030 could generate USD 9 trillion in ecosystem services and remove an additional 13 to 26 gigatonnes of GHG from the atmosphere,<sup>1</sup>

*Emphasizing* the importance of the Bonn Challenge, an international initiative intended to align national commitments on forest landscape restoration, and the ECCA30, regional initiative intended to scale up forest landscape restoration activities and strengthen cooperation in the region,

*Noting* the ECCA30 regional target to restore 30 million hectares by 2030, in accordance with national pledges from the region,

agree to:

1. *Strengthen efforts to identify* degraded lands/ecosystems within our respective countries;
2. *Work to restore* and afforest degraded lands/ecosystems by 2030 through inter alia, but not limited to, sustainable forest management taking into account existing national efforts as well as initiatives already outlined in the relevant policy documents;
3. *Assess* the national potential for forest ecosystem and forest landscape restoration in order to enhance the voluntary regional target(s);

<sup>1</sup> IUCN, 2020: Bonn Challenge 2020 Report

4. *Take efforts to identify and decide on measurable forest landscape restoration voluntary commitments to the Bonn Challenge, to be submitted to the Secretariat preferably by the end of 2022;*
5. *Reinforce regional cooperation on forest ecosystem and forest landscape restoration, in particular through policy dialogues, forest policy development and joint initiatives;*
6. *Call on development partners, in particular the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the International Union for Conservation of Nature, as well as international finance institutions and the private sector, to support forest landscape restoration initiatives at the national and regional levels and to facilitate access to investment opportunities;*
7. *Cooperate to develop a strategy for the financing of forest landscape restoration initiatives and reinforce national capacities in order to better mobilize existing financial instruments;*
8. *Periodically assess the implementation of commitments through the Restoration Barometer in order to report on progress towards achieving forest landscape restoration targets in the countries of the region.*