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|  | **A black background with red and blue text  AI-generated content may be incorrect.** |  |
|  | **Output 3.1: Ambitious, inclusive NDCs mitigation targets in the forest and land-use sector aligned to the global 1.5oC target** |  |
|  | **UN-REDD Multiyear Programming Document 2026–2030 Illustrative Support Overview** |  |
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|  | **Prepared by UN-REDD Programme**  **June 2025** |  |
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|  | *This brief has been prepared by the UN-REDD Programme team based on preliminary analysis, internal assessments, and strategic insights from prior engagements and consultations. It is intended to provide illustrative information on potential areas of UN-REDD support for the 2026–2030 period. The content, including indicative budgets and activities, is for donor engagement purposes only and has not yet been discussed or consulted with the respective country authorities. As such, it does not represent an official position or commitment from the country concerned or from the UN-REDD Programme.* |  |

# Output 3.1: Ambitious, inclusive NDCs mitigation targets in the forest and land-use sector aligned to the global 1.5oC target

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| ***This is one of three outputs forming Outcome 3: Enhancing Climate Ambition:*** *Within the framework of the UN Climate Promise, supporting countries to enhance the climate ambition of their forest and land sector, in line with the global 1.5oC target. This comprises support along the NDC cycle, including coordination, stakeholder engagement, review, enhancement, financing and implementation (thus contributing to Outcome 1), as well as the associated Enhanced Transparency Framework. The NDC support will integrate acceleration, ambition, and inclusivity.* |

# The challenge

The Agriculture, Forests and other Land Uses (AFOLU) sector accounts for 13-21% of global anthropogenic emissions from 2010 to 2019 (IPCC, 2022). With improved conservation, restoration, and management of forests and other ecosystems, this sector can be transformed from a net source of emissions to a net carbon sink. For reduced deforestation alone, the magnitude of the mitigation potential is about one-third of total global emissions.

The critical role of forests and land use in meeting climate goals is broadly recognized. Approximately 85% of the NDCs from the 2020 cycle include the land-use, land-use change, and forestry (LULUCF) sector. Addressing emissions from forests and land-use change and enhancing removals in forests is also covered in 81% of Long-term low emission development strategies (LT-LEDS), including activities such as increasing the sustainable management of forests, addressing deforestation or restoring degraded forests.31% of LT-LEDS have also specifically underlined the long-term role of implementing REDD+ activities.

At the global level, beyond the crucial recognition in Article 5 of the Paris Agreement, the Global Stocktake (GST) decision more recently emphasizes the need to conserve, protect and restore nature and ecosystems to meet the Paris Agreement temperature goal. This important decision also, notably, includes reference to enhanced efforts towards halting and reversing deforestation and forest degradation by 2030, and other terrestrial and marine ecosystems acting as sinks and reservoirs of greenhouse gases and by conserving biodiversity, as well as ensuring social and environmental safeguards and alignment with the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. While such ambitious global and national goals are demonstrating political commitment both at the country and global levels, there is still an essential need to scale up ambition and implementation. Deforestation and forest degradation remain alarmingly high and are increasing rapidly in some countries, leaving many commitments towards the 2030 forest goals off track.   Looking at the 2020 NDCs specifically, these do not yet align with the global ambition to halt and reverse deforestation by 2030 and only eight of the top 20 countries with the highest rates of deforestation have quantified targets on forests in their NDCs. (UNEP, 2024).

The UAE Consensus, or global stocktake decision, also highlighted the urgent need to address ambition, implementation and finance gaps in the context of preparing long-term strategies, or LTS, pressing countries to update existing long-term strategies frequently. It also underscored the importance of syncing NDCs with long-term strategies to ensure that near-term actions are sufficient to achieve ambitious emissions reductions by midcentury. Both strategies should be aligned and demonstrate a clear and equitable pathway toward net-zero emissions. Thus far, 76 Parties have submitted LTS to the UNFCCC.

The year 2025 – the 10th anniversary of the Paris Agreement – marks a critical moment in the collective fight against climate change. Countries are submitting new NDCs that should reflect a ratcheting of ambition outlining sovereign commitments to climate action under the Paris Agreement. The UN Secretary-General has stated that ambitious NDCs are a key priority for the UN system, and NDCs are high on the political agendas of the G20, G7, African Union, and other major political dialogues. Countries are encouraged in this new round of NDCs to update their targets to 2035.

Implementation of bold NDCs can usher in the green transition and integrate climate with national development priorities, plans - such as the National Biodiversity Action Plans (NBSAPs) - and investments. In particular, the national ownership of NDCs gives them the power to transition an economy, with the first Global Stocktake concluding that countries should set **implementable,** **clear and measurable economy-wide targets** to meet the 1.5°C target of the Paris Agreement. In 2025, within an increasingly complex global geopolitical context, developing countries are focused on updating their NDCs with more ambitious, measurable, and implementable land use and forestry-related targets. Looking ahead to 2026–2030, this period presents a critical window for countries to implement their enhanced NDCs, ensuring alignment with the Paris Agreement, SDGs, and the global goal to halt and reverse deforestation by 2030, as reaffirmed in the Glasgow Leaders' Declaration on Forests and Land Use and the Forest and Climate Leaders’ Partnership (FCLP).

# The value proposition

Historically, UN-REDD has played a significant role in supporting countries in the integration of the forest and land use sector, including REDD+ (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation), into their NDCs under the Paris Agreement. UN-REDD has worked with partner countries to ensure that forest-related climate actions are incorporated into their climate strategies, providing technical support, capacity building, and policy advice. UN-REDD’s engagement has been pivotal in ensuring recognition of the forest sector as key in achieving countries' emission reduction targets, with an emphasis on sustainable land use practices, inclusivity, and innovative finance.

UN-REDD has continued to support countries in integrating and enhancing Land Use, Land-Use Change, and Forestry (LULUCF) sector actions in their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). In 2024 and early 2025, the Programme has contributed to both supporting the enhancement of ambition for the forest sector in new NDCs, while also assisting with the implementation of existing commitments. This work has helped countries align forest and land-use actions with broader climate targets, improve institutional coordination for NDC submissions, and secure financing for implementation. As of the end of 2024, UN-REDD has provided technical assistance to more than 15 forest countries to enhance the forest components of their NDCs. Beyond support to enhancing commitments for the 2025 NDC cycle, UN-REDD has supported several countries in implementing their forest and land-use targets as reflected in their latest NDCs. Countries such as Cambodia, Côte d’Ivoire, and Kenya, for example, have received targeted policy and technical support to translate their forest-related pledges into concrete actions.

The Climate Promise has been the framework for UNDP’s support to developing countries to achieve their NDC priorities and deliver on the Paris Agreement goals. In 2025, the UN Secretary General requested UNDP to leverage the infrastructure of the Climate Promise to lead a coordinated, UN System-wide support effort to revise and increase the ambition of the next round of NDCs (NDC 3.0) under three pillars – ambition, acceleration and inclusivity – can be used as a structure to apply for the support offered under Outcome 3.1:

1. **Ambition**: Alongside support to the implementation of ambitious 2025 NDCs, support to further NDC enhancements in the lead-up to the 2030 NDC cycle as well as support on capturing the role of forests and land use in LT-LEDS.
2. **Acceleration**: Scale-up implementation of forest-based climate action on the ground through public, private, international, and national finance towards NDCs. This also includes leveraging innovative approaches, such as high integrity carbon markets, and technical support for stronger policies, institutions, budgetary frameworks, and capacities.
3. **Inclusivity**: Meaningful and long-term engagement with underrepresented actors, including women, Indigenous Peoples, local communities, and youth – to support them to contribute and lead climate action.

The establishment of the UN-wide effort aims to recognize that the UN System, with its trusted relationships, broad expertise across critical climate sectors, and neutral position as a coordinating body, is well-placed to provide the support requested by countries to enhance and implement their NDCs in 2025, but Climate Promise 2025 also is laying a foundation that can be built upon for sustained, coordinated UN support to countries on NDCs, during the post-2025 period.

Recognizing and responding to this context, the UN-REDD Programme is considered a flagship initiative contributing to the broader UN-wide Climate Promise 2025 efforts to support countries in revising their NDCs to enhance the quality and ambition. UN-REDD will continue to focus on demonstrating and scaling up the ambition and potential of the forest and land use in accelerating NDC implementation in an inclusive manner with governments, Indigenous Peoples, women and youth groups, civil society, and the private sector. In particular, the focus will be on i) connecting large-scale transformational initiatives (i.e. REDD+ results-based payment programmes) to NDC implementation to accelerate implementation of the 2025 NDCs; ii) demonstrating and scaling up Indigenous Peoples, Afro-descendants and local communities’ initiatives and leadership for NDC ambition and implementation iii) enhancing quality, ambition and transparency in the development of the NDCs for the 2030 cycle, building upon REDD+ MRV and linkages to the ETF and BTRs.

As we move into the 2026-2030 period, UN-REDD will continue to engage within the UN system to support countries on the enhancement and implementation of their NDCs, but it will also extend beyond, aiming to engage more strategically with the network of partners within the context of the NDC Partnership, through its three partner agencies. UN-REDD, within the broader constellation of UN partners and beyond, is in a unique position to lead the technical analysis and policy support to continue to promote and enhance the role of forests within the NDCs. In 2026-2030, UN-REDD can build off of the momentum that has been driven by the UN Secretary-General, to align support within the UN system for countries' NDCs, using the Climate Promise.

As the UN’s flagship knowledge and advisory platform for REDD+, UN-REDD is uniquely positioned to support tropical forest countries in leveraging forest-sector actions into their NDCs. Through its integrated approach to forests and climate change, UN-REDD is already playing a key role in advancing forest sector targets within NDCs. With its extensive experience in Monitoring, Reporting, and Verification (MRV) for forest outcomes ensures that forest-related actions in NDCs are measurable, transparent, and effective, particularly in the context of the broader 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In a rapidly evolving unstable global geopolitical context, grounding the NDCs into transformational sectoral implementation with tangible benefits for people and local economies, is critically important.

**Landscape of players, UN-REDD comparative advantage and offer:** Partnerships across the UN system have been critical to NDC enhancement efforts to date and have been further strengthened with the roll out of Climate Promise 2025. With broad reaching expertise across critical issue areas, trusted relationships as a neutral partner, and ongoing engagement on the broader 2030 Agenda, the UN System can help ensure countries have access to what they need to deliver on more ambitious NDCs. Recognizing the number of international partners supporting countries on NDCs, there has been a concerted effort underway at the international level – driven by the United Nations Secretary General and the UNFCCC - to coordinate with key partners to ensure coordinated support for the Parties to deliver the 2025 NDCs, particularly within the UN system. When it comes to the NDC support with a focus on the forest sector, UN-REDD is already well-placed and ready to operate in alignment with this international priority and approach, and in support of the efforts of the NDC Partnership and the Climate Promise. In real terms, UN-REDD supports the delivery of the Climate Promise. As the UN’s flagship knowledge and advisory platform for REDD+, it is positioned as the ideal provider of country support on forest-sector NDC action.

# Scenarios

This output will work at two distinct levels. At country level, support will be provided through technical inputs and review of country-level products and processes, participation in technical workshops, and country-oriented analysis and assessment. Country support on enhancing forest-sector NDC ambition and implementation is delivered through technical assistance accompanied by targeted support where strategic investments are likely to catalyse advancement in NDC ambition and implementation. Key deliverables may include:

1. Building institutional and technical capacities of governments related to Forests, Land and Nature (FLN) and NDCs
2. Support to NDC implementation/investment plans, with a focus on the forest sector
3. Scaling up social mobilization for climate and nature action through capacity building, inclusive engagement at each stage of the NDC process and direct funding for Indigenous Peoples, Afro descendants, and local communities, including equitably women and youth among them.

Secondly, this output will work at global-level support through a wide-ranging set of technical advisory, convening, and knowledge management efforts. Key deliverables may include:

1. Developing guidance documents and technical assessments, to maximize the role of forests, land, and nature in NDC implementation, including linkages to livelihoods, and strengthening of local economies.
2. Support to high-level partnerships for forests and climate including the Forests and Climate Leadership partnership, as well as independent assessment of global forest goals.

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| **Deliverables** | **Types of Activities** |
| 1. By 2030, strengthen the institutional and technical capacities of **priority countries** to enhance FLN contribution toward their NDC goals and targets | 1. Delivering **knowledge exchange workshops** focused on policy integration, monitoring, and reporting for FLN-related NDC targets. 2. Developing and operationalizing **national FLN capacity development plans** with a focus on NDC implementation in alignment with other sectoral strategies, ensuring gender and social inclusion. 3. Supporting the establishment of **multi-stakeholder platforms** to foster inclusive dialogue and policy coherence across sectors, building upon REDD+ platforms. 4. Developing guidance documents and technical assessments, to maximize the role of forests, land, and nature in NDC implementation, including linkages to livelihoods, and stronger local economies |
| 1. Support countries on NDC implementation plans, with a focus on the forest sector | 1. Support countries to develop implementation plans, based on their 2025 NDCs 2. Support to consultation and validation processed for development of implementation plans 3. Support to the drafting and publication of the plans |
| 1. By 2030, increase the participation and leadership of Indigenous Peoples, Afro-descendants, and local communities in NDC implementation and enhancement | 1. Organizing **national and regional dialogues** to ensure inclusive engagement in the NDC review and implementation process. 2. Identifying and leveraging policy and financial instruments to inform and strengthen NDC implementation by **integrating Indigenous Peoples, Afro-descendant, and local community-led forest, climate, and nature initiatives** within supported countries. 3. Delivering **capacity-building programs to community members** to enhance their role in decision-making processes, advocacy, and monitoring. |
| 1. By 2030, the role of forests for climate and nature action has been recognized in high-level political fora | 1. Support global south country engagement and contributions to TFFF, as well as strategic linkages to FCLP 2. Supporting yearly civil society led **independent assessments of progress on global forests goals** (Forest Declaration Assessment reports) |
| 1. Support to ambitious NDCs and LTS | 1. Support countries on the FLN components of NDC development for the 2030 submission cycle 2. Support development of LULUCF/forest-related analysis/assessments for incorporation into LTS |