

Global Forest Coalition Statement

Thank You Madam Chair

We are witness to and suffering the rampaging impact of the Covid 19 pandemic. The UNEP report, the IPBES report and the Global Biodiversity Outlook 5 are eye openers to the cause and effect of such a pandemic and the relationship between biodiversity loss, intensive livestock farming, zoonoses like the Covid-19 pandemic, the health of our planet and human well being.

Unfortunately, this awareness is not yet reflected enough in the critical conversations around halting biodiversity loss, the recent draft of the Global Biodiversity Framework and the current model of food production.

Most of the AICHI targets are not achieved as we are still “swamped with investments and perverse incentives that harm biodiversity” (GLO 5). Investments that lead to deforestation, and promote agro business and an industrial livestock sector which are inimical to conservation of forests and biodiversity, result in loss of livelihood and territories of indigenous peoples and local communities, violation of their rights with serious impact on health of communities, especially women and children. The pandemic and zoonotic diseases have also pointed out the need for actions to improve animal welfare.

This week, the Global Forest Coalition is launching a new report analyzing the impacts of perverse incentives and the obstacles to incentive reform. Based on case studies from more than ten countries we found that corporate capture of policy making, including

through the promotion of public-private partnerships and other forms of blended finance, is by far the main obstacle to redirecting perverse incentives, and public and private investments, to the rights-based, community-driven and gender-responsive biodiversity conservation and restoration initiatives that have proven to work.

Without a realistic and responsible global framework with binding commitments, time bound targets and a participatory implementing and monitoring mechanism that particularly addresses perverse incentives, indiscriminate harmful investments, and the corporate capture of policy-making that blocks the post pandemic economic recovery from becoming the great “Reset”.

Recovering from the current pandemic through the window of biodiversity and one health requires the strengthening of true multilateralism and CBD as a truly representative multilateral institution addressing the issues of inequality and inequity that the vulnerable peoples and communities suffer from.

Global policies to address the relationship between biodiversity loss and health cannot be developed when undue influence of the corporates tend to weaken the voice and concern of the vulnerables – the rightholders, IPLCs and women.