

The fight against imported deforestation

RECALLING that, according to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the total global forest area declined by 129 million hectares over the period 1990-2015, in other words a total area almost equivalent in size to South Africa;

DEFINING imported deforestation as the importation of goods whose production has contributed, directly or indirectly, to the deforestation or conversion of natural forest ecosystems;

RECALLING the responsibility of companies that import agricultural products, first and foremost soya, palm oil, cacao, beef and its by-products, rubber, timber and derived products that do not come from sustainably managed forests, as well as others such as coffee, tea or even cane sugar, which have an impact on the deforestation and conversion of natural ecosystems;

RECALLING the European regulations on agrofuels, including the revision of the 2018 Renewable Energies Directive and the Delegated Act on Indirect Land-Use Change (ILUC), which incorporates a better framework for the impacts of biofuels, notably in terms of deforestation;

RECALLING the New York Declaration on Forests of 2014, the Amsterdam Declarations of 2015 and the G7 Environment Declaration of 2019 on halting deforestation, notably thanks to sustainable supply chains for agricultural commodities, and in particular their commitments to supporting the efforts of the private sector to eliminate deforestation from their supply chains;

WELCOMING the initiatives of States committed to the fight against imported deforestation, such as France, which has a national strategy aimed at ending this by 2030, and Norway; and

RECALLING the Zero-deforestation commitments made by representatives of the financial sector and by companies, from all sectors, as well as the call of the Contracting Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity to extend their commitments to all the private sector stakeholders involved;

The IUCN World Conservation Congress 2020, at its session in Marseille, France:

1. RECOMMENDS that States that import products responsible for deforestation:

a. adopt ambitious regulations and strategies to fight against imported deforestation, aimed at halting deforestation as quickly as possible;

b. implement differentiated taxation, increasing the taxes on the importation of agricultural products involved in deforestation, which do not respect the certification standards including a “zero deforestation” criterion, based on the High Carbon Stock (HCS) and High Conservation Value (HCV) approaches;

c. consider financial support, in particular through the allocation of the revenue generated by this tax, for sustainable agricultural practices for small producers in the products’ countries of origin;

d. eliminate tax regimes that favour first-generation agrofuels and limit their use in general; and

e. take specific measures to encourage the consumption of agricultural and non-agricultural products that do not contribute to deforestation;

2. RECOMMENDS that States promote agro-ecological production processes, and that agricultural producers use HCS approaches or the equivalent to identify the production areas or forest zones that need to be protected;

3. RECOMMENDS that companies guarantee supply chains that do not involve deforestation; and

4. ENCOURAGES States, local authorities and companies to support initiatives aimed at preventing the conversion of land in areas particularly rich in biodiversity, as in the Cerrado Manifesto and the Amazonian Soy Moratorium.