



2022 celebration of the International Day of Forests: Sustaining forests for our greener future

March 21, 2022 | 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Organized by the UN Forum on Forests Secretariat, DESA and the Permanent Mission of Kyrgyzstan

Intervention by the Republic of Colombia. Guillermo Fernández de Soto. Ambassador - Permanent Representative.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

I would like to begin by commending the United Nations Forum on Forests Secretariat, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the Permanent Mission of Kyrgyzstan, for this important initiative that helps raise awareness about the key role that forests play in securing sustainable development in its three dimensions.

In this critical juncture we must halt biodiversity loss, conserve, restore and sustainably manage ecosystems, become climate neutral, and tackle pollution, for building back better and greener. For that, we require strong partnerships with the private sector, local and regional governments, and the financial sector, to build capacities and mobilize finance at a greater scale.

Forest are home to thousands of species and provide key ecosystem services. They are essential for carbon capture, climate stabilization and for enhancing adaptation and resilience to the impacts of climate change. Furthermore, the sustainable management of forests has the potential to help us transition towards a greener economy, create jobs and improve food security.

52% of Colombia's territory is covered by natural forests, that is an area almost the size of Texas. Containing deforestation is a strategic priority for the National Government. We aim to achieve zero deforestation by 2030, enlarge the area under sustainable conservation systems and increase the share of the forest economy from 0.69% to 1% of our GDP. We have partnered with the private sector to create the zero deforestation commitments for livestock, cacao, and palm oil production.

Law enforcement and the promotion of sustainable production and consumption have been key for halting deforestation by 22% from 2018-2022. We will plant 180 million trees by August 2022, and we have been working for over two years with the governments of Bolivia, Brazil, Ecuador, Guyana, Peru and Suriname, in implementing the Leticia Pact for the Amazon.



In November 2021, during COP26, President Ivan Duque signed the Glasgow Leaders' Declaration for Forests and Land Use, a commitment to work collectively to reverse forest loss and land degradation by 2030 while delivering sustainable development and promoting an inclusive rural transformation.

Madam Chair, Distinguished Delegates,

During the recent Our Common Agenda dialogues, we had the chance to listen to the voices of civil society, including youth representatives. The starting point of building solidarity between generations is the conservation and sustainable use of natural resources, recognizing that forests, biodiversity, and land use are essential for achieving the SDGs.

Thank you.