

THE COP30 PRESIDENCY ROADMAP ON HALTING AND REVERSING DEFORESTATION AND FOREST DEGRADATION BY 2030

SUBMISSION BY THE LOCAL GOVERNMENTS AND MUNICIPAL AUTHORITIES (LGMA) CONSTITUENCY

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INTRODUCTION

The Local Governments and Municipal Authorities (LGMA) Constituency welcomes the opportunity to contribute to the COP30 Presidency Roadmaps on the transition away from fossil fuels in a just, orderly and equitable manner, and halting and reversing deforestation and forest degradation by 2030. These are among the most critical priorities for limiting global warming to the 1.5°C goal, as required by the best available science.

We commend the COP30 Presidency for its leadership in advancing these Roadmaps and sustaining multilateral momentum on two of the most urgent challenges of our time. Turning ambition into implementation will require mobilizing all available levers of action. Central to this is ensuring that global commitments are grounded in local realities - without this connection, progress risks remaining theoretical rather than transformative.

Local and subnational governments are indispensable actors in delivering climate action. They are uniquely positioned to translate international goals into tangible outcomes on the ground, working closely with communities and stakeholders.

LGMA's central message is that the most effective pathway to both transitioning away from fossil fuels and halting and reversing deforestation is inherently polycentric, collaborative, and multilevel. It must connect local communities, subnational governments, and national authorities in a coherent and mutually reinforcing framework. The final Roadmaps should explicitly recognize and operationalize this [approach](#). In addition, cities, states and regions must also develop their own roadmaps or phase out plans for fossil fuel, which are recognized within the second Global Stocktake and NDC reviews.

Coordinated action across all levels of governance can significantly accelerate implementation. To achieve the scale and speed required, responsibilities must be shared, and each level of government must be equipped with the authority, capacity, and resources necessary to act decisively.

Forests are central to climate mitigation and adaptation, biodiversity conservation, and sustainable development. Despite growing global commitments, progress toward halting and reversing deforestation and forest degradation remains uneven due to persistent structural barriers.



Alongside national policies, bottom-up approaches are essential complements to traditional top-down strategies. The Paris Agreement recognizes the growing role of subnational governments—including regions, states, and municipalities—as key actors in delivering climate action. The core challenge lies in establishing institutional frameworks and the right supporting mechanisms that effectively incentivize, coordinate, and scale these efforts.

At the same time, innovative policy tools, financial mechanisms, and governance approaches—particularly at the subnational level—are demonstrating scalable solutions.

This submission synthesizes key barriers, enabling levers, best practices, and guiding principles for inclusive and context-sensitive forest governance, with a particular emphasis on the critical role of Indigenous Peoples.

It also supports the contributions from the joint GCF Task Force - Regions4 submission on this roadmap.

(A) CRITICAL BARRIERS

Efforts to address deforestation are constrained by interconnected financial, institutional, technological, environmental, and social challenges.

Financial constraints remain a primary obstacle, especially in developing regions, limiting forest monitoring, restoration, and enforcement. These are compounded by strong economic drivers of deforestation, such as agricultural expansion and competing land uses.

Institutional weaknesses—including unclear mandates, fragmented governance, and poor inter-agency coordination—continue to hinder effective implementation. Administrative delays have further slowed conservation efforts.

Capacity gaps are widespread. Many subnational governments lack trained personnel and access to tools such as GIS and remote sensing, undermining monitoring and enforcement.

Environmental pressures, including wildfires, pests, and climate-induced extreme events, are intensifying. At the same time, weak law enforcement and the insufficient inclusion of Indigenous Peoples and local communities reduce both the effectiveness and legitimacy of governance systems.

A critical and often underrecognized barrier is the lack of secure land tenure for Indigenous Peoples, despite clear evidence that forests under Indigenous management experience significantly lower deforestation rates. In regions such as the Amazon, illegal logging, land grabbing, and violence against Indigenous communities further exacerbate forest loss.

(B) POTENTIAL LEVERS FOR ACCELERATED ACTION

A range of economic, institutional, technological, and social levers are emerging to accelerate forest conservation and restoration.

FINANCIAL AND MARKET-BASED MECHANISMS

Payments for Environmental Services (PES), ecological fiscal transfers, and carbon markets are helping align economic incentives with conservation goals. Certification schemes are also driving demand for deforestation-free products.





For example, the **Conexão Mata Atlântica** project in Brazil uses PES to incentivize farmers to conserve and restore forest areas while promoting agroforestry, demonstrating how integrating environmental and agricultural policy can overcome economic barriers. For more information, consult [here](#).

INSTITUTIONAL AND GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORKS

Strong legal frameworks, protected areas, and **multi-level governance systems** are foundational. Landscape-scale approaches are increasingly recognized as essential.

For instance, the **Alliance for Scotland's Rainforest** brings together 24 organizations in a landscape-scale effort to restore 30,000 hectares of fragmented temperate rainforest by 2045, primarily by removing invasive species, managing deer populations, and restoring plantations on ancient woodland sites. The project establishes that restoration must operate at geographical scale to be ecologically effective, as isolated interventions are quickly re-invaded by invasive species. Securing early political commitment, including government pledges at COP26, proved a critical lever for channeling public funding and legitimizing the broader restoration agenda. For more information consult [here](#).

The **Shared Management of the Metropolitan State Forest of Paraná** is a co-management agreement between the state and an Indigenous Kaingang-led community that embeds reforestation with native species as a core activity, while Indigenous presence also deters poaching and illegal encroachment that threaten forest integrity. Traditional ecological knowledge is formally recognized as a pillar of conservation, combining ancestral land stewardship with state technical support. This model shows that within the Paraná context, granting Indigenous communities territorial rights within protected areas can directly strengthen forest protection outcomes.[i]

Košice Self-Governing Region (Slovakia), an innovative project restores forest ecosystems by improving soil water retention through targeted land interventions. Implemented across 2,500 hectares, the measures increased rainwater infiltration from 40% to nearly 100%, reducing flood risks and enhancing biodiversity. By addressing soil compaction caused by forestry practices, the initiative supports ecosystem resilience and demonstrates how subnational governments can integrate climate adaptation with forest restoration. (Newsletter Adaptácia na zmenu klímy 2025)

The Western Provincial Council of Sri Lanka has allocated a grant to implement a native species reforestation program within ecologically sensitive areas of the Bulathsinhala Local Authority. The Local Authority area extends over 212.2 km². This landslide- and flood-prone landscape necessitates ecosystem-based interventions to enhance slope stabilization and watershed protection. Project execution is led by the Local Authority with participatory community engagement, while long-term maintenance and stewardship are entrusted to community-based organizations.

TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATION

Satellite monitoring, real-time deforestation alerts, and digitalized administrative systems are significantly improving transparency, detection, and enforcement.

Remote sensing and related technologies are strengthening subnational forest governance by improving monitoring, detecting illegal deforestation in near real time, and enhancing administrative efficiency through digitalized systems. Their effectiveness depends on alignment with local strategies and capacity-building efforts that connect technology providers with governments and community actors to support informed decision-making.





SOCIAL AND PARTICIPATORY APPROACHES

Inclusive governance models that engage local communities and integrate Indigenous knowledge systems are critical. These approaches enhance both effectiveness and equity.

For instance, co-management models in Brazil demonstrate how recognizing Indigenous territorial rights and knowledge can directly strengthen forest protection while deterring illegal activities.

INDIGENOUS PEOPLES AS A CORE LEVER

Indigenous Peoples are among the most effective stewards of forests globally. Their contributions include:

- **Traditional ecological knowledge (TEK)** for sustainable land management
- **Holistic approaches** linking ecosystems, culture, and livelihoods
- **Low-impact practices** such as agroforestry and rotational agriculture
- **Active monitoring and protection** against illegal activities

Securing Indigenous land rights is therefore one of the most effective strategies for reducing deforestation and maintaining carbon sinks.

For example, the **Provincial Decentralized Autonomous Government of Azuay-Ecuador**, leads the ecological and participatory restoration of strategic wetlands, strengthening local governance and community ownership. This program integrates cultural and environmental values into the conservation and sustainable use of these ecosystems. Additionally, it promotes community resilience to extreme climate events and boosts the local economy through community-based tourism and handicraft production.

The climate partnership between **Munich and the indigenous Asháninka people of the Peruvian rainforest** has been in place for over 25 years and is a cornerstone of the city's municipal development cooperation. It focuses on protecting the Amazon rainforest, preserving the livelihoods of the indigenous population and global climate protection. The Munich partnership with the Asháninka people is one of the most established examples and part of the Climate Alliance commitments.

(C) BEST PRACTICES

ROLE OF STATES, REGIONS, CITIES AND MUNICIPALITIES AND TRANSNATIONAL NETWORKS

States, Regions, Provinces, Cities and Municipalities —particularly in Europe—play a key supporting role by linking local action to global forest protection. Through networks such as Climate Alliance and others such as ICLEI, Regions4, and other LGMA partners, they contribute via:

- Sustainable procurement policies
- Climate finance and project support
- Public awareness and education
- Partnerships with Indigenous communities

These collaborations create a powerful bridge between local consumption patterns and global environmental outcomes.





CONCLUSION AND KEY LESSONS LEARNED

Subnational governments are central to implementing forest and climate policies and must be supported through enabling institutional frameworks and sustained financing.

- **Strong legal and governance frameworks**—such as Scotland’s presumption against woodland removal and Parana’s shared Management of the Metropolitan State Forest —demonstrate the effectiveness of combining regulatory clarity with inclusive approaches. At the same time, technological advancements, including satellite-based monitoring, are transforming enforcement by improving the detection and sanctioning of illegal deforestation.
- **Climate adaptation strategies** are evolving, particularly in wildfire-prone regions like California, where proactive measures such as prescribed burning and fuel management are replacing reactive fire suppression.
- In parallel, **market-based mechanisms**—ranging from certification schemes for deforestation-free commodities to carbon markets and jurisdictional REDD+ programs—are helping address underlying economic drivers while mobilizing finance for forest protection across multiple regions.
- **Integrated approaches that combine conservation, restoration, and sustainable production**—such as PES-linked agroforestry and multi-state coordination in Brazil—consistently outperform isolated interventions. More broadly, financial innovation, technological tools.
- **Inclusive governance systems that recognize the rights and knowledge of Indigenous Peoples** and local communities are all critical to improving effectiveness, legitimacy, and long-term outcomes.
- Ultimately, progress will depend on flexible, context-specific strategies, **stronger coordination across governance levels, enhanced international cooperation, and sustained investment in scalable and equitable solutions.**