



## A CALL FOR COLLABORATION FROM THE PRIVATE SECTOR ON BEHALF OF TROPICAL FOREST GOVERNMENT LEADERS

May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2019  
Florencia, Caquetá, Colombia

*We need partnerships to build secure, productive, and resilient agricultural, silvopastoral and forestry systems across our jurisdictions that improve rural livelihoods while slowing the loss and speeding the recovery of tropical forests*

### Why this call?

- **We, the Governors of tropical forest regions, are issuing this call for collaboration with companies** to improve our agricultural, silvopastoral and forest production systems, providing better livelihoods for rural communities and indigenous groups, while slowing the loss and speeding the recovery of tropical forests. Rapid progress towards these goals is urgently needed to slow climate change. However, progress has been slow.
- **We are committed:** Through our 2014 “Rio Branco Declaration”, the member governments of the Governors’ Climate and Forests Task Force (GCF TF), which cover one third of the tropical forests of the world, called upon the private sector to partner with us in our efforts to reduce deforestation 80% by 2020.
- **We are critical to solve deforestation:** We are positioned to create and enforce many of the public policies and programs that will be essential to slow the loss and speed the recovery of tropical forests at scale; many GCF TF governments have already taken bold steps towards building low-emission development strategies and are getting results. All GCF Task Force governments are currently developing and refining strategies and investment plans to reduce tropical deforestation and promote low emissions development.
- **We need collaborations to fulfill our potential:** We need collaborations with companies to buy our sustainably produced products, to invest in infrastructure and processing plants, to tell our stories, to provide technical assistance and rural extension to smallholders and communities, and to support low emission development in our jurisdictions.
- **These collaborations are happening too slowly:** Hundreds of companies have pledged to help eliminate deforestation caused by the production of raw materials that are produced in our regions such as palm oil, soybeans, beef, timber, coffee and cocoa. These pledges have not translated into meaningful partnership, dialogue, or collaboration with many of our governments. Only five of the 35 tropical forest governments of the Governors’ Climate and Forest Task Force (GCF TF) have contracted partnerships with committed companies.
- **In addition to commodities grown for export, we seek collaboration to improve agricultural production systems for subsistence needs and local markets:** corporate sustainability pledges do not generally address these production systems, even though they are a major contributor to land-use change and livelihoods in most tropical forest regions, and a top priority for alleviating poverty and securing food supplies.
- We need companies to **provide a critical link with their consumers**, whose decisions often drive deforestation but can also contribute to forest conservation and sustainable development in our regions through more responsible consumption patterns.



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### Defining Successful Jurisdictions

- **Jurisdiction-wide metrics:** As formally expressed in the Rio Branco Declaration, we define progress in slowing the loss and speeding the recovery of tropical forests incrementally and across our entire states and provinces. Companies tend to define success at the level of their supply chain, committing to achieve “zero deforestation” supplies of commodities. We believe jurisdictional and supply chain definitions are both important and complementary.
- **Zero net deforestation:** At the scale of entire jurisdictions, “zero net deforestation” is an ambitious and appropriate target, bringing together the twin goals of slowing the loss and speeding the recovery of tropical forests. Some of our jurisdictions have already committed to achieve zero net deforestation; others are discussing it.
- **An incremental approach:** Large-scale changes in land use systems take time. It is therefore imperative that all jurisdictions that are taking meaningful steps to address deforestation and forest recovery should be recognized and rewarded.
- Three types of meaningful steps are:
  - **Commitment:** the formal expression of political commitment;
  - **Actions:** the creation and implementation of relevant public policies, programs, strategies and plans, collaboration and coordination among stakeholders, robust and transparent monitoring systems;
  - **Results:** measurable declines in deforestation rates, increases in recovery rates, increases in agricultural and forest productivity, and improving social inclusion and livelihoods for farmers and forest-dependent communities
- **Participation of tropical forest regional societies:** Goals and targets that are not understood or supported by the farmers, rural communities, indigenous people, civil society, and governments of tropical forest regions will not succeed. Definitions of successful jurisdictions must include the processes of multi-stakeholder dialogue that are essential to achieving broadly-shared visions of sustainable development in tropical forest regions that integrate economic, societal and environmental concerns at different scales.

### Guiding principles for effective partnerships

- Effective partnerships are **mutually beneficial:** both producer regions and companies must be better off through the collaboration.
- **They must recognize and incentivize jurisdictions in all stages of the transition to sustainable development,** including the steps that are necessary precursors to achieving measurable results.
- They must align **with, respect, and support** the Guiding Principles for Collaboration and Partnership between Subnational Governments, Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities
- They must **empower producers**—small and large, and those aimed at local, regional and global markets—with the tools and capacity to improve their livelihoods and produce sustainable products and commodities
- They must **enable and support** local governments to implement and enforce effective public policies, plans, and programs to achieve the aspirations of the producer region
- They must **encourage equitable multi-stakeholder dialogue** in the producer region to build a shared vision for the future
- They must **promote rural development models** which balance the need for economic and agricultural development with ecosystem services and environmental conservation
- They must **respect and support** existing national and state-level policy and legal frameworks in producer regions



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**Advantages of partnering for companies**

- **Lower costs, higher impacts:** Partnerships provide a pathway to lower the cost and increase the impact of sustainable sourcing commitments through the power of governmental regulations, law enforcement, fiscal policies, convening power, and infrastructure investments
- **Publicity, visibility:** Partnerships can provide a clear, publicly-visible platform for companies to demonstrate their commitment to sustainability in the supply region
- **Systemic solutions:** Partnership's and enhanced collaboration can improve governance in order to solve systematic risks across entire supply regions and provide opportunities to establish long-term, stable, and sustainable sourcing opportunities at scale
- **Optimizing interventions:** Partnerships provide an opportunity to address individual needs and priorities that each government has identified, such as better market access, investment, or technical assistance for smallholders.

Endorsed by:

