Forests of the World CLIMATE POSITION

Forests are important for the climate and vice versa. Forests of the World believes that forests should be one of the solutions to the climate challenge, and that a solution with the forest as a basis should include an integrated approach to forest conservation: Preservation, of especially old forests, the protection and rebuilding of biodiversity ecosystems, and the integration of indigenous and other forest-dependent peoples and their rights in this effort of conservation. We believe that subsidies for activities that increase deforestation should be phased out and oppose the trading of CO_2 quotas from forest conservation. Finally, the focus should not only be on the South. Forests of the World believes that in Denmark we should focus on how our own consumption patterns are contributing to the causes of forest loss and thus to climate change, which makes distant events relevant in Denmark.

FORESTS OF THE WORLD RECOMMEND

➢ Increase focus on the forest as an important element in the fight against global climate change.
➢ Foster and respect forests and ecosystems in implementing climate adaptation and development measures.
➢ Integrate forest conservation, biodiversity conservation and safeguarding indigenous and other local communities' rights and involvement in climate projects.
➢ Stop felling and degradation of old forest.
➢ Preserve and restore natural ecosystems.
➢ Establish forest-farming systems to reduce the effects of climate change.
➢ Maintain forest law as an authority and protect the rights of weaker groups.
➢ Phasing out subsidies, investments and tax relief for activities that threaten nature / biodiversity.
➢ Invest in sustainable alternatives; renewable energy, forestry, sustainable forest management, etc.
➢ Recognize our responsibility and need to change consumption patterns in Denmark and other rich countries.

FORESTS OF THE WORLD

FORESTS OF THE WORLD REJECTS

➢ Establishment of monocultures and biomass plantations.
➢ Protections which, without informed consent, may result in the restriction or direct violation of indigenous peoples and the rights of local people.
➢ Trade with forest quotas.
➢ Projects that cause extensive Indirect land use change (ILUC).
➢ Subsidies, investments and tax relief for activities that harm forest and nature.

INTRODUCTION: WHY ARE THE FORESTS IMPORTANT?

Especially large forests are important for the climate. They help regulate rainfall patterns and temperatures, and especially old woods contain and absorb large amounts of CO_2. Forest clearing is a major part of man-made CO_2 emissions. Thus, when dealing with deforestation, you deal with the climate problem at the same time.

Forests of the World are working to bring forests even more on the political climate agenda, both nationally and internationally, and fortunately there is increasing responsiveness to arguments about the importance of forest conservation, especially in relation to CO_2 emissions. This does not mean that our task is solved. It is now time for us to start with our bid on how best to preserve forest.

Forests of the World works with forest conservation in countries in the global South and in Denmark. At home, we work to make our forests a little wilder, among other things, by preserving old and biodiversity forest, as well as with sharing information and campaigns on social media. In Latin America, Africa and Asia, as in most places in the world, people live in the forests and depend on these as the basis of life. Sustainable forest conservation solutions must therefore secure the rights of these peoples, both because these rights are covered by international conventions and because their presence in the forest helps to preserve it and make it more diverse.

This position paper is an internal clarification of Forests of the World overall position in the climate debate, our practical approach to the area, as well as our position on a number of specific climate-related issues. We look at how concepts should be interpreted and understood in

practice and translated into projects and activities and give examples of how Forests of the World work in an integrated manner with forest, climate, biodiversity and indigenous peoples. The text also provides with references to those who want to know more about the individual topics.
The position paper is a living working document that will be constantly updated with new knowledge of the climate volunteer group and professionals at Forests of the World. It is based on our experience from practice and research results in the field. The draft position has circulated, and staff and volunteers have provided their comments, to finally be approved. After presenting our overall position, important facts are reviewed on the key issues that, together with Forests of the World practical approach to forest conservation work, underpin our position.

Forests of the World general approach to working for forest conservation

A sustainable solution to the part of the global climate challenge caused by deforestation should not only aim to reduce CO_2 emissions, it should equally embrace environmental, social and cultural aspects. Preserving old forest, safeguarding biodiversity, rights and improving living conditions for indigenous and local communities whose livelihoods depend on the forest, as well as their involvement in forest and climate projects, are essential.
Furthermore, Forests of the World believes that reducing deforestation and ecosystems destruction is a global responsibility. It is not just local people or countries with a lot of forests in the South that need to change behavior; it is just as much us in the industrially developed countries that continue to be responsible for the greatest emissions when counting their consumption through import of goods[1]. Forests in developing countries are part of the solution to the global climate challenge, as well as a change in our consumption patterns, which are currently contributing to destruction and injustices, in addition to greenhouse gas emissions. However, there are limits to what each consumer can do. That is why we work for politicians to take greater responsibility for the necessary decisions needed to curb climate change.
The international and national work on the forest is framed by international climate policies, which prescribe the whole world action towards the climate and thus the possibilities and constraints in the forest. We therefore work to ensure that international climate policy benefits the forest and the people living in and around it.

Sustainability is when the use of the earth's resources does not strain an area's ecosystem, local economy or culture to an extent that it cannot sustain. A sustainable project must provide a return to stakeholders and ensure the same resources for the next generations. This is a balance that does not overload anyone.

BACKGROUND FOR FORESTS OF THE WORLD POSITIONS

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FORESTS AND CLIMATE

Forests, as mentioned, help to regulate rainfall patterns and temperatures, and especially old woods contain and absorb large amounts of CO_2[2]. Ca. 12% of man-made CO_2 emissions are from the forest sector, primarily from forest clearing[3]. Reduced deforestation and reforestation are necessary to combat climate change effectively and also to mitigate climate-induced disasters[4]. Between 2000 and 2012, the globe lost 2,300,000 km2 of forest, predominantly ancient tropical forest[5]. During the same period, 800,000 km2 new forest was established, but newly planted forest has far from the same climate-regulating properties as old forest, nor the same biodiversity, specially when this forest is planted as plantations, which are usually monocultures. Monocultures also prove vulnerable to climate change[6], and then we have a negative spiral of deforestation and negative reforestation.

CONNECTIONS BETWEEN BIODIVERSITY AND CLIMATE

Climate change is predicted to be the leading cause of biodiversity loss in this century[7]. Climate change will create extreme and different weather conditions that will change existing habitats and ecosystems and thus change the conditions for the life cycle of animals and plants. At the same time, biodiverse ecosystems are essential for continuous adaptation to climate change through biological processes such as habitat change, life cycle change or the development of new physical features. The more diverse, the more resistant to climate change an ecosystem is. Biodiverse ecosystems thus play a major role in the global carbon cycle as they are more robust in their binding of CO_2, thereby reducing the negative effects of climate change. At the same time, preserving ecosystems, such as mangroves, can help reduce the extent of damage caused by climate change, such as floods and storm surges[8]. Biodiversity is thus important to safeguard in the fight for a strong and protective forest that works both in adaptation to climate change (adaptation) and the fight against climate change (mitigation)[9].

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FORESTS AND PEOPLE

Deforestation in areas managed locally in the forest is as low or even lower than in uninhabited protected areas[10]. The forest generally benefits people, for some people, forests are their entire basis of life, for others an important part, as a buffer against extreme poverty because supplementation of incomes with forest products in everyday life or value in hard times is a safety net. However, clear forest access and use rights are essential and must be enforced. It provides both incentives to look after the forest and ensures control of the migration of people into protected forest areas[11].

Indigenous peoples often inhabit the forests in the areas where Forests of the World work, and in many cases have been awarded a collective territory. It makes good sense in relation to forest conservation to secure a well-defined group of exclusive rights[12], as it has been shown to provide an incentive to think long term, which is crucial in sustainable forest management. Investing for the next generation is solely done by safeguarding the forest against over-exploitation. This may seem obvious, but in many places, there is an approach to nature protection, which excludes all human activity[13], so-called “fortress conservation”. Many indigenous people need a whole landscape to practice their way of life, which usually consists of sweat farming, gathering, hunting and fishing in its basic form. It is therefore their interest to safeguard diverse ecosystems. The diversity and the large, cohesive forest landscapes are of crucial importance in the climate context, cf. previous sections.

Other local communities cover a diverse population, which is primarily understood as migrants to the forest, be it from the city, the mountains or other rural areas where, often due to new land use (see later section on direct or indirect land use change), is no longer an opportunity to live as a subsistence farmer. For small farmers who just need 'a piece of land to cultivate', it can be difficult to understand that the indigenous people need so much space. They have a shorter history in the forest and often do not have the same rights as indigenous peoples, which makes them weaker agents of legal forest conservation. By contrast, they are often well-organized and have the capacity to form part of the rules and economics of a modern society, and thus are interesting target groups in projects other than the indigenous peoples, such as FSC group certification or forestry plots. The relocation of small farmers clearing forest in the territories of indigenous peoples often gives rise to conflicts that can be serious.

The authorities play a big role here. The best forest conservation occurs when there are clear ownership, access and use rights, as well as support to enforce these rules by the authorities. Often, however, authorities are reluctant to enforce statutory rulings, occasionally

promoting straightforward migration and clearing of forests, which can be both in protected areas and indigenous peoples' territories (there are often overlaps). Here it is the experience of Forests of the World that communication between peasants and indigenous peoples in relation to finding compromises is crucial for forest conservation. The authorities also play a major role in relation to illegal logging. Without real enforcement by the authorities, the risk of violence, corruption and internal strife increases, which challenges local social and organizational structures. Here, the robust internal organization of indigenous and other communities is essential. Forests of the world supports the building of solid, democratic organizations.

INVOLVEMENT IN FORESTS AND CLIMATE PROJECTS

Non-Carbon Benefits, NCB's, denote what forest-based climate efforts positively contribute to, in addition to carbon sequestration and storage, be it social or environmental improvements, and denote NCB's forest-dependent communities' contribution to strengthening climate sustainability[14]. By involving local communities in forest-related projects, local decision-making processes of local groups and communities are often strengthened, and thus their ability to improve forest management in the future and to manage the threats that may come against the forest they depend on. Involvement create commitment and ownership[15].

In cases where authorities or donors wish to measure the climate impact of forest conservation measures, Forests of the World believes that the local population in the given area should be involved in the work of measurement, monitoring and evaluation. In addition to contributing to the creation of local ownership, upgrading and development, which helps to ensure continuity and thus the project's sustainability, significant savings are obtained when not all such activities are to be undertaken by expensive external consultants[16]. Local communities can, using simple methods, estimate bound carbon in the forest based on relevant parameters, which should be sufficient.

For indigenous peoples, a number of specific rights apply where the nation state and/or donor country has ratified one or both conventions, ILO 169[17] and UNDRIP[18]. These include the right to Free, Prior and Informed Consent, FPIC (Free, Prior and Informed Consent), which is intended to ensure indigenous peoples influence decisions in projects that will affect them in all its stages[19]. Involvement of indigenous peoples is thus not done with merely informing or consulting, they must participate in decision-making on an informed basis well in advance of the project. Exclusion or direct recognition of indigenous peoples' right to participate in

decision-making discourages direct ownership of the process, which has also proven to put projects on hold. In Panama, the indigenous peoples were aware of their right to the FPIC, prompting a national climate project, the UN-REDD program, to stall while awaiting an independent study of the process[20], and then an overall evaluation of the UN-REDD guidelines.

CAUSES OF DEFORESTATION

In addition to redeveloping forest for plantations and agriculture[21], including biofuel, soy, African palm oil and extensive cattle farming, much deforestation is due to logging, mining and mega infrastructure construction such as dams and roads[22]. Mining and logging often open the forest by the construction of roads, and conversely, the construction of roads through forests can open for uncontrolled logging and migration. Logging itself does not necessarily clear the entire forest, but after a selective harvesting of the largest, most valuable trees, it is easier for small farmers and cattle farmers to clear the rest. The forest has been degraded (Deforestation and Degradation, the two D's in REDD). In South America, the main causes of deforestation are cattle farming and soybean production, in Central America the establishment of oil palm plantations plays an increasing role. In addition, there is in some places great pressure on the territories of indigenous peoples and protected areas on the part of poor peasants.

Plantations can, by any right, be claimed to contribute to carbon binding, but it is worth investigating what was before the plantation. It is not uncommon for plantations to be planted in favor of old forests[23], whether for timber, biofuel or palm oil. Furthermore, the plantation operation can displace the people who used to live there. Soybean producers often buy grazing land that is easier to access than forests, but cattle farmers are pushed further into the forest, which is felled and burned in favor of grass. This is an example of what is called Indirect Land Use Change, ILUC. Another example of ILUC may be biofuels, which are often grown on agricultural land and thus promote the clearing of forest for cultivation of food. As a result, there is no longer an effective reduction of CO_2 emissions by replacing fossil fuel with biofuels in the larger accounts.

The causes of deforestation most often trace as well to the desire of the given government to develop the country, and then also all the way to Europe and the rest of the Western world as both goods and materials containing products grown on agricultural land that was previously tropical forest, as well as wood products made of illegally chopped wood[24].

MITIGATION OR ADAPTATION?

The climate debate talks about two different types of efforts, namely the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions (mitigation) and adaptation to climate change (adaptation). The reduction can be done by either preserving carbon stocks, such as forest, or increasing them, for example by to planting new forest (cf. point 1). Adaptation refers to the ability of both ecosystems (see paragraph 2) and humans (cf. section 3) to adapt to climate change, moderate its devastating effects, seize new opportunities or deal with the consequences. It is important to support both types of efforts as both are needed in the fight against climate change. Often, it is the poorer parts of the world that feel the most about climate change and are hit hardest, and thus those who are most in need of adaptation efforts to resist climate change. At the same time, from the wealthier countries, and thus the donors of climate investments and subsidies, there is often a greater focus on emission reduction measures, as these ultimately benefit them most. Forest conservation involves both types of efforts, which is why it is a hugely important tool for climate change, both locally and globally.

QUOTA TRADE

Forests of the World are against trade in CO_2 quotas from forests. First, the effect of forest credits is uncertain as it is extremely complicated to measure the exact accumulation of carbon in forests[25]. If the effects of forest-related climate action are to be documented, quotas will be very expensive and disproportionate means will go to measurement, monitoring and verification without benefiting indigenous peoples and locals, or contributing to the actual protection of the forest. Secondly, there is a risk that large quantities of cheap CO_2 emissions from forestry will allow states and businesses to continue with their emissions of greenhouse gases rather than making efforts to minimize their climate impact in other sectors. This will allow rich and industrialized countries to continue their disproportionate emissions of CO_2 rather than investing in the necessary development of e.g. green energy and climate-friendly transport of goods and people[26]. Thirdly, there is a risk that the large amounts of quotas that could potentially be created through forest projects could flood the quota market and undermine the ambitions of the Paris Agreement (the 1.5-degree target).

However, Forests of the World are aware that in practice there may be situations where our interests intersect with the trading of CO_2 quotas from forests. In such cases, we will follow the guidelines formulated in our practical approach below.

CONSUMPTION IN DENMARK

Reduced deforestation and destruction are a global responsibility. Thus, Forests of the World

believes that the Danes should become more aware of their daily consumption's consequences for the rainforest. It is to a large extent consumers in the developed countries that contribute to putting pressure on forests in developing countries. This is due to many ingredients in our everyday goods and products have been grown on land where there was previously forest (cf. point 5). However, it is important to emphasize here the great responsibility of the politicians and food importers, since it is ultimately up to them which choices consumers can make at all. The products that are currently putting a lot of pressure on the rainforest through direct or indirect felling are soybeans and palm oil. Soybeans are used in large style to feed pigs and cows in Europe, while palm oil is found in almost all vegetable oil-containing foods from dressing, biscuits and ice cream to cream and soda. As long as palm oil and soy are not produced in a guaranteed sustainable way - and as consumption increases and increases - it will continue to be due to deforestation either directly or indirectly by increasing demand and thus the incentive for producers to farm in rainforest areas[27]. For further details see Forests of the World position on Soy and Palm Oil.

SUBSIDIES, FINANCING AND GREENWASH

Forests of the World believes that subsidies, investments and tax relief should be phased out for activities that threaten nature and biodiversity, such as dam construction, mining, uncontrolled logging, agriculture and plantations, including production of non-biofuels, cattle and animal feed. sustainable. Instead, investments should be made in sustainable alternatives, such as renewable energy installations that do not threaten biodiversity, locally rooted forestry, sustainable forest management, etc.

There are many potential sources of funding for sustainable, forest-related climate measures, both traditional, such as increased development and climate assistance, and more innovative sources such as taxes on aircraft or corporate contributions. It is important that potential funding does not come at the expense of existing development and climate support, but is always new and thus an additional resource.

The funding must not involve greenwashing[28] for companies that let green investments replace their efforts to reduce their own climate impact. We are thus skeptical of companies that use and communicate the effort/investment as a substitute for a greenhouse gas emission that they themselves contribute to.

At the same time, it is uncertain how much CO_2 is actually bound in a particular area of the rainforest, so companies should not communicate that they have prevented the release of a specific amount of CO_2. Companies, on the other hand, should merely communicate that

they have supported the conservation of a certain amount of forest and thus the many tonnes of CO_2 stored therein.

THE PRACTICAL APPROACH OF FORESTS OF THE WORLD

In the Forests of the World we try to integrate and take into account the above-mentioned facts in our practical work. We believe that a straightforward and very effective prevention against anthropogenic climate change is to protect pre-existing robust carbon stocks by preserving old forests, rich in biomass and biodiversity. This is achieved through sustainable local management and monitoring of both old and younger forests. Finally, we are working on forest restoration by natural vegetation in, for example, water supply areas. Our approach to 'practical' forest conservation is to work with indigenous and local people to implement measures such as sustainable forestry, forestry or monitoring of illegal activities, and to build strong organizations around the actual production/activity where they do not already exist.

At the international level, indigenous peoples have been adept at getting their case on the agenda of the global climate debate, and their rights are protected by two conventions in particular, namely ILO 169[29] and UNDRIP[30]. At the local level, indigenous peoples are experts in just their forest and ecosystem. It is usually between the international conventions and the local level that the problems arise. One thing is to ratify international conventions, another is to bring them into the national social and economic reality, where strong actors are often better at setting the agenda than the marginalized groups. Therefore, the Forests of the World support advocacy, land rights and organizational development for these groups of marginalized peoples.

Our work on forest and climate is carried out in close cooperation with our partners in Latin America, Africa and Asia and also network partners in the North. It is civil society organizations, indigenous peoples and local forest groups that deal with the forest, in concrete manners as well as political.

In addition, Forests of the World are participating in international climate negotiations, including participating in UN climate summits, COPs, where we have been instrumental in ensuring that the forest and indigenous peoples' rights have gained a place in the international climate agreement - the Paris Agreement. We want to push for the many words and decisions to be translated into actions where the forest and indigenous peoples are taken into account. Forests of the World also follow what Denmark does within our own borders and what goals Denmark sets in relation to the EU, to ensure that Denmark lives up to promises in the Paris Agreement, the New York Declaration on Forest and in the 17 Sustainable Development Goals. We seek to influence the

objectives by cooperating with government officials, influencing politicians and by participating in the 92 group, which is a collaboration between various Danish NGOs.

Forests of the World as above mentioned are in principle opposed to the sale of CO_2 quotas, which originate from a forest. But since our forest conservation projects, among other things, also result in carbon conservation in the forest, we need to consider how we communicate and manage benefits to the climate in support forest conservation projects. Forests of the World does not believe that forest conservation projects can stand in the way of efforts to reduce CO_2 emissions at national, sector or personal level. CO_2 quotas cannot compensate for a climate impact elsewhere. Supporting our forest conservation work must be seen as something extra.

Dissemination of sale of quotas:

However, there may be special situations where we as an organization must specifically deal with the sale of quotas, as we will not prevent our partners from working with and possibly selling quotas from existing quota projects. We will not enter into or participate in the development of projects for the sole purpose of selling quotas. However, if our partners ask for contacts to potential buyers or help with the sale of quotas, for example, then we will use the following guidelines:

- ➢ Check how the quotas have been produced and whether the project meets our own criteria for a good project. Has the project included a consideration of indigenous and local people's rights and prior consent (FPIC - Free Prior and Informed Consent)? Is the forest truly preserved with high biodiversity and what is the safety of its standing?
- ➢ The income from the quotas must contribute to our partners and benefit people in the forest.
- ➢ To measure, we recommend training and use of local monitoring teams and locally adapted methods.
- ➢ It must not affect land rights or the like in a way that can take away the right to live in and use the forest from our partners.
- ➢ We prefer that buyers have done everything they can to reduce their own CO_2 imprint.
- ➢ We prefer that buyers do not assume or communicate that they become CO_2 neutral with the purchase of quotas. The quotas are an extra and a good bet. But they do not offset the buyers' CO_2 accounting.
- ➢ We will not be mentioned as intermediaries of the contact or as part of the agreement. And we will reserve the right to publicly point out that the buyers of quotas do not make a big enough effort at home, as well as we will be allowed to point out if we believe they greenwash their own emissions with the purchased quotas.

Participation in projects where allowances are an element:

Forests of the World always assesses which elements are important in a project. Should an opportunity arise for participation in a project where quotas are only part of the project's objective, our participation will only be possible according to the following guidelines:

➢ If quotas are the predominant goal of a project, then we do not participate in the project itself.
➢ If quotas are a small part of the project, we may consider participating in more than just communicating contacts.
➢ If we do not see options other than CO_2 quotas as saving an area, then the secretariat must consult the Board of Directors for extraordinary decision on participation.
➢ All projects that have an element of quota trading must pass by the board.

Examples of World Forests work in the Global South and in Denmark:

This is far from an exhaustive list of projects, but just examples of the different ways Forests of the World works with forest conservation, all of which are in line with our climate position. To see more go to:

https://www.forestsoftheworld.org/program-services.

Conservation of old forest: In Honduras, the Forests of the World work with people and communities living in the 'buffer zone' of some protected areas, with projects that can provide revenue so the pressure on the forest subsides. Examples are sustainable forest management, forestry agriculture and tourism.

Monitoring: In Bolivia and Panama, Forests of the World is working on a drone project (Eyes in the sky - feet on the ground) to secure indigenous peoples access to technically monitor deforestation in their territories.

Forest management: In Bolivia, the Forests of the World works with cooperative forestry and FSC group certification of forest management villages.

Organization, advocacy and land rights: In Panama, the Forests of the World works on resolving territorial conflicts and titling territories for indigenous peoples.

Campaigns: An example of a climate campaign in Denmark is the recent one against Burger King, because of their total indifference to the origin of the meat they use. The campaign particularly ran on social media.

FORESTS OF THE WORLD

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