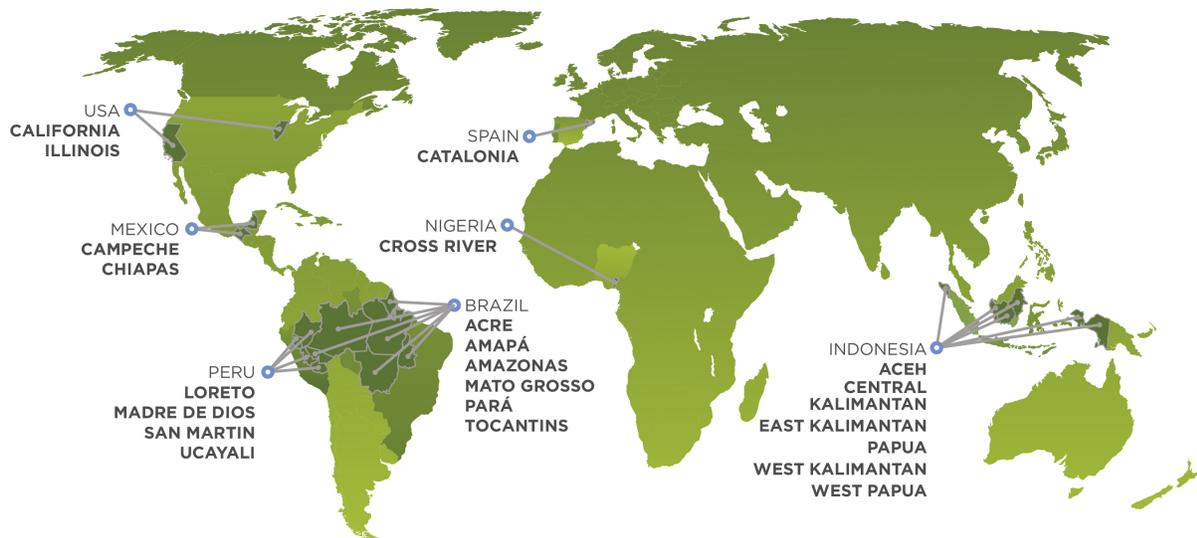


Governors' Climate & Forests Task Force (GCF)

Rio Branco Declaration

Building Partnerships & Securing Support for Forests, Climate, & Livelihoods

Rio Branco, Brazil || August 11, 2014



We, the members of the Governors' Climate & Forests Task Force (GCF), a subnational collaboration of 22 states and provinces¹ in Brazil, Indonesia, Mexico, Nigeria, Peru, Spain and the United States, during the VIII GCF Annual Meeting held between the 11th and 14th of August, 2014 in the city of Rio Branco, Acre, reaffirm our commitment to reduce tropical deforestation, protect the global climate system, improve rural livelihoods, and reduce poverty in our jurisdictions.

Together with our partners, we are on the front lines of the effort to reduce tropical deforestation, protect the global climate system, and improve rural livelihoods. Our efforts to build jurisdictional strategies and programs for low emissions development cannot be

¹ Currently, the GCF consists of the following 38 jurisdictions: Acre, Amapá, Amazonas, Maranhão, Mato Grosso, Pará, Rondônia, Roraima, Tocantins (Brazil), Caqueta (Colombia), Pastaza (Ecuador), Aceh, Central Kalimantan, East Kalimantan, North Kalimantan, Papua, West Kalimantan, West Papua (Indonesia), Chiapas, Campeche, Jalisco, Oaxaca, Quintana Roo, Tabasco, Yucatan (Mexico), Béliér, Cavally (Ivory Coast), Cross River State (Nigeria), Amazonas, Huanuco, Loreto, Madre de Dios, Piura, Ucayali, San Martin (Peru), Catalonia (Spain), California and Illinois (US).

sustained without additional support. We call upon the international community to partner with us as we continue to build robust jurisdictional programs that will enable large-scale, integrated transitions to sustainable development.

This Declaration formalizes our commitment to continue reducing deforestation, to develop partnerships with private sector initiatives that leverage the opportunities available through jurisdictional programs, and to rapidly and effectively channel performance-based funds for the promotion of forest-based and forest-friendly economic development to producers, foresters, farmers, ranchers, indigenous peoples, local communities, and other forest stakeholders. In order to accomplish these objectives, it is imperative that we have greater access to financial and technical support and, most importantly, to domestic and international market- and non-market opportunities for the emissions reductions achieved by our programs.

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Tropical forests play a crucial role in sustainable development by protecting air and water quality, soils, and plant and animal habitat, by contributing to flood mitigation and climate protection, and by providing abundant sources of medicines, food, energy, and other forest products, and they are essential to the livelihoods and cultures of forest peoples and rural communities.

One fourth of the world's tropical forests are in GCF states and provinces, including more than three fourths of Brazil's and Peru's forests, and more than half of Indonesia's.

Since 2008, GCF states and provinces have pioneered efforts to promote the integration of forest and climate protection. Together with our civil society partners, we have been leading the way in building comprehensive, jurisdiction-wide approaches to REDD+ and low emissions development.

GCF states and provinces have contributed to substantial reductions in deforestation and associated emissions. In the six Brazilian GCF states, for example, deforestation declined by more than 70% from 2006-2012, resulting in more than three billion tons of avoided CO₂ emissions.

Despite these substantial, globally significant contributions to ongoing efforts to protect forests and climate and despite the \$7.3 billion pledged by donor governments for REDD+ since 2009, the GCF states and provinces have received very little financial support through existing pay-for-performance mechanisms and other funding sources.

The progress GCF states and provinces have achieved to date is significant but fragile. More support is urgently needed to ensure the economic and political sustainability of these programs. These programs must include simple and transparent mechanisms to deliver benefits to communities, indigenous peoples, small-scale farmers, and rural producers.

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The GCF states and provinces recognize and support the important private sector efforts that are dedicated to improving the social and environmental performance of supply chains and other corporate activities. In particular, we applaud the Natural Capital Declaration, a global initiative of financial institutions launched during Rio+20, and the recent commitment by the Consumer Goods Forum, a consortium of over 400 companies with \$3.1 trillion in revenues, to achieve zero net deforestation supply chains by 2020.

The GCF states and provinces also recognize that sustainable supply chain and other corporate initiatives are far more likely to succeed at scale if they take advantage of the frameworks provided by robust jurisdictional programs for REDD+ and low emissions development. At the same time, the prospect of market transformation to carbon neutrality and sustainability that is underway with, for example, sustainable supply chain efforts should encourage governments to continue investing in jurisdictional programs for REDD+ and low emissions development, given the possibility that commodities produced in those jurisdictions that demonstrate superior environmental and social performance will enjoy preferential sourcing and market access.

GCF states and provinces are also building new partnerships to encourage environmentally and socially sustainable production and commercialization of agricultural and forest products by developing and expanding new market opportunities for sustainable products at local, national and international levels, as well as new programs to incentivize and support innovative approaches to sustainability at the local level.

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We call upon donor governments and the private sector to work with us to mobilize additional capacity-building and pay-for-performance funds for ongoing efforts in GCF states and provinces.

We call upon donor governments, the private sector, standards developers, and civil society groups to work with us to develop simple and robust performance metrics that will allow our jurisdictions to access results-based financing today.

We call upon the Consumer Goods Forum and other private sector initiatives aimed at achieving zero net deforestation supply chains to partner with us as we build robust jurisdictional programs for REDD+ and low emissions development and to develop programs for preferential sourcing of agricultural commodities from GCF jurisdictions that demonstrate performance.

We are committed to making significant emissions reductions provided that adequate, sufficient, and long-term performance-based funding is available, whether through market or non-market sources. If guarantees of this financing are made, we commit to reducing deforestation by 80% by 2020.

We are committed to ensuring that a substantial share of any additional pay-for-performance benefits that flow to our jurisdictions will be dedicated to forest-dependent communities, smallholders, and indigenous peoples.

We call upon our partners to work with us to develop clear and transparent mechanisms for securing and delivering performance-based benefits to forest-dependent communities, smallholders, and indigenous peoples.

We call upon our respective national governments, donor governments, the private sector, and civil society to join with us and to agree that at least a substantial part of all pay-for-performance funds that flow into the promotion of jurisdictional REDD+ and low emissions development will be dedicated and delivered to forest-dependent communities, smallholders, and indigenous peoples.