



The Coordination Mechanism for Cooperation in Forestry between China and CEEC

Climate Change and Forestry in 21st Century
Statement of the 2nd High Level meeting of the Coordination Mechanism for Cooperation in Forestry between China and CEE Countries

We, ministers, responsible for forestry, or our representatives, of the People's Republic of China and the Central and Eastern European Countries (hereinafter referred to as the CEE Countries), met on May 14, 2018 in Belgrade, Republic of Serbia at the 2nd High Level meeting of the Coordination Mechanism for Cooperation in Forestry between China and CEE Countries to discuss issues of "Climate Change and Forestry in 21st Century" and have adopted the following statement on forests.

More than one quarter of human population is directly dependant on forests for food, water, fuel, medicines, traditional cultures and livelihoods. Forests also support up to 80 % of terrestrial biodiversity and play a vital role in safeguarding the climate by biologically sequestering carbon.

The international community recognizes forests as the key component for the sustainable development of the future and as the crucial factor in climate change mitigation and adaptation.

Forests represent one of the largest, most cost-effective climate solutions available today. Action to conserve, sustainably manage and restore forests can contribute to economic growth, poverty alleviation, food security, climate resilience and biodiversity conservation. While scientific research observes the existence of an alarming global warming trend, forests are recognized as a key element of climate change mitigation and adaptation. Reducing emissions from halting deforestation and increasing forest restoration, as well as enhancing the capacity of sinks, such as forests, will be extremely important in limiting global warming to 2°C.

Both China and the CEE Countries attach great deal of importance to forestry development and share common interests and goals in implementing sustainable forest management, developing multi-functional uses of forests, deepening scientific innovation and education development and enhancing industrial, business and trade cooperation in forestry.

We believe that the Coordination Mechanism for Cooperation in Forestry between China and CEE Countries with its specific role and mission can play an important part in these

endeavours. The Coordination Mechanism for Cooperation in Forestry between China and CEE Countries fosters cooperation in forestry among 16+1 countries and:

- Promotes sustainable and multifunctional forest management;*
- Advocates conservation of forests and forest genetic resources,*
- Acknowledges the importance of forests and wetlands in wildlife habitat conservation;*
- Supports the green economy industries that respect forest conservation principles; and*
- Develops sustainable management of natural resources as an opportunity for people's greater social inclusion.*

We, the ministers of the Coordination Mechanism for Cooperation in Forestry between China and CEE Countries, reiterate the role forests play in the climate change mitigation and adaptation and pledge full support in implementation of goals of the Coordination Mechanism for Cooperation in Forestry between China and CEE Countries, as specified in the Action Plan.

We welcome the efforts of the Coordination Mechanism for Cooperation in Forestry between China and CEE Countries to strengthen capacity and education among their members and beyond to recognize that:

- All types of forests are one of the largest, most cost-effective climate solutions available;*
- The number of tree species and structural diversity of forests influence climate mitigation and adaptation;*
- Protection, sustainable management and restoration of the forests contributes to food and water security, climate resilience and biodiversity conservation;*
- Economic growth, trade and sustainable development, based on wood and non-wood goods production and services, should be consistent with the sustainable management of forests and conservation and appropriate enhancement of biodiversity.*

We acknowledge the need to develop the capacity of small producers, develop investment opportunities into forestry and wood sector, strengthen forestry education at all levels and raise knowledge of consumers of forestry wood products.

We welcome the efforts of the Coordination Mechanism for Cooperation in Forestry between China and CEE Countries to strengthen scientific and research cooperation and promote sharing best practices and to encourage cooperation in forestry education.

We support the China and CEEC's joint research programmes in the field of sustainable forest management and in particular in connection with the climate change challenges, mitigation

strategies and adaptation to decrease the vulnerability of our forests and forest-dependent people.

We call on the national and international stakeholders to increase and speed up their efforts on forests and climate change mitigation and adaptation activities by promoting strong cross-sectoral collaboration with a wide range of partners and stakeholders, including national forests departments (commissions, services), non-governmental organizations, academics, international organizations, and others.

We recommend all 16+1 members to take full advantage of the Coordination Mechanism for Cooperation in Forestry between China and CEE Countries to strengthen communication and collaboration in forestry and to support China and CEE Countries to promote information exchanges, activities coordination and pragmatic cooperation.

We welcome the official launching of the website China CEEC forestry as a tool for mutual benefits of cooperation and we underline the importance of an ongoing development and maintenance of China-CEECs forestry website for information sharing.

We stress also the importance of the Coordination Mechanism for Cooperation in Forestry between China and CEE in promoting the economic and trade cooperation including increased investments into the forestry and wood sectors based on strengthened research and education cooperation.

*Belgrade,
May 14, 2018*