



## Collaborative Partnership on Forests

### Opening Statement of Eduardo Rojas-Briaies Chair, Collaborative Partnership on Forests Warsaw, Poland; 18 November 2013

*Hon. Marcin Korolec, Polish Minister of Environment and President of the UNFCCC COP19*

*Dr. Peter Holmgren, Director-General of the Center for International Forestry Research*

*Ms. Ann Tutwiler, Director-General of Bioversity International*

*Ms. Rachel Kyte, Vice President of Sustainable Development at the World Bank*

*Vice-Rector of the University of Warsaw*

*Prof. Dr. Ruth De Fries, The Earth Institute*

*Distinguished delegates,*

*Ladies and gentlemen,*

Allow me to welcome you to the Global Landscapes Forum (GLF) on behalf of the two Forum organizing partners – the Collaborative Partnership on Forests and the Agriculture and Rural Development Consortium. As Chair of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF), a mechanism that includes 14 international organizations with a global mandate and substantial programmes on forests, I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the work of the partners of both consortia and thank them for their extensive efforts over the last year to make this new event happen. I would like to express our gratitude to the Government of Poland, the University of Warsaw and in particular Prof. Piotr Paschalis for the crucial support he provided in facilitating the extraordinary facilities for this Forum. I would also like to recognize the excellent work done by CIFOR's Communication Director John Colmey, who orchestrated this important event.

As you will recall, the mandate of the CPF is to support the implementation of the international arrangement on forests and coordinate forest activities in order to synergize its work and deliver as one. This mechanism is one of the most advanced of its kind in the UN system. Over the last 10 years, CPF has been implementing initiatives that are championed by one or more of its partners.

Nearly seven years ago, in a moment where many argued for a more central role for vegetation and especially forests in the climate change negotiations, CIFOR proposed the CPF to arrange the first Forest Day event. Forest Day has been catalytic in joining the disparate voices on forests and was influential in the process that led to the REDD+ decision emerging from the 2007 COP13 negotiations in Bali.

Similarly, as agriculture became a more central issue in the climate change debates, the first Agriculture and Rural Development Day was convened in 2009 in the lead up to COP15 in

Copenhagen, and further days followed. Many of you may have also attended the Agriculture, Landscapes and Livelihoods Day (or ALL-5 Day) last year at COP18 in Doha, Qatar. The convening of these days have had an impact on decisions taken both in the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice and other intergovernmental negotiating processes, including Rio+20.

During 2012, with a little friendly prompting, a discussion started in both organizing consortia on whether to create a joint event containing elements of Agriculture and Rural Development Day, Forest Day as well as the Mountain Day organized by the Mountain Partnership. Emerging public and research interest began to recall the need for a “landscape approach” to consider the linkages between the agriculture and forest sectors and their connection to fragile ecosystems such as mountains and drylands. This sparked the need for a new type of international event at the COP. Again, CIFOR was crucial to this change and – supported by the World Bank – it would join the efforts of the consortia and constituencies interested in the landscape approach to form a new event, the GLF.

The need for a landscape approach is not a new one. Watershed approaches have contributed to forest science from its very beginning in 1824 when a corps of Ingénieurs des Eaux et Forêt was established in Nancy, France. There is a growing understanding that a common approach to many related issues such as tenure, land use planning, sustainable land management, disaster risk reduction through prevention, especially in mountain environments, preservation of biological diversity, soil and water protection, landscape values enhancement and optimizing sustainable production in a given landscape is due. This approach is exactly the Leitmotiv of the innovative nature of the GLF, including by integrating issues like food security.

By integrating agriculture, forests, mountains and rural development, the GLF ensures a rural approach that is urgently needed in a world progressively urbanizing. Rural areas lag behind urban ones in living conditions. Initiatives like the GLF can help achieve the political momentum needed to overcome their progressive marginalization deepened by scattered administrative sectorialization.

The debate on food security and nutrition is also changing. We are moving to a more holistic approach that considers the contributions of forests and other natural resources to food security, including the direct contributions of forests such as meat, honey, fruits, seeds and other non-wood forest products; indirect ones such as firewood, pollination or fodder; and environmental services that ensure clean fresh water and soil protection. The International Conference on Forests for Food Security and Nutrition held last May at FAO HQ in collaboration with many of the partners present here today was a milestone in this regard. The Conference also called for improved data collection at national and international levels. In this context, the CPF has recently initiated a global scientific assessment on forests and food security in the framework of its Global Forest Experts Panel initiative, led by IUFRO, in order to inform the relevant discussions on the post-2015 development agenda.

The discussions on the post-2015 development agenda are quickly progressing. It remains to be seen how the different landscape elements such as agriculture, forests, mountains, land degradation and desertification, climate change, biodiversity, bioenergy and disaster risk reduction will be incorporated into the future Sustainable Development Goals. It is important, however, that we work to achieve a balanced approach to these issues— one that does not prioritize one sector’s policies over others and highlights the interlinkages of all of them.

Such an approach would need to be based in 3 basic elements:

- a) the contribution of natural resources to environmental, social and economic development (downstream perspective)
- b) the economic returns provided in order to enable the resource to answer to the complex social demands including the necessary investments in degraded ecosystems (upstream perspective)
- c) a consistent governance mechanism that arbitrates competing demands and adjusts them to the carrying capacity of the resource.

On behalf of the CPF, we look forward to the discussions today and wish you all an inspiring new experience that we hope will contribute to the UN sustainable development process and a sound agreement on climate change, which are both expected in 2015. Allow me to recall that in 2015 Expo Milan will offer the opportunity to showcase the world food's from a 360 degree perspective. As Commissioner General of the UN for Expo 2015 I invite you to take advantage of this opportunity.

Thank you for your attention.