

# Vienna Call for Action

for a sustainable forest-based bioeconomy



Sustainable Forest-based Bioeconomy Approaches 2024-2026

The **Vienna Call for Action** aims to scale up and evolve sustainable forest-based bioeconomy approaches (SFBA) in the spirit of collaboration. It is derived from the discussions at the Global Webinar Series 2025<sup>1</sup> and the Global Summit on Advancing Sustainable Forest-based Bioeconomy Approaches held on 23-25 February 2026 in Vienna, Austria, co-chaired by Austria and South Africa<sup>2</sup>.

The Summit is co-convened by Australia, Finland, Japan, Türkiye, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Union of Forest Research Organizations (IUFRO) and the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) Secretariat as part of the Country and Organization-led Initiative on Sustainable Forest-based Bioeconomy Approaches. The Initiative was designed in accordance with the UNFF19 High-Level Declaration (2024) and the G20 High-Level Principles on Bioeconomy, and recognizing tools, evidence, technologies and initiatives that exist to upscale bioeconomy approaches, such as the Principles for Responsible Timber Construction and the evolving Bioeconomy for Sustainable Transformation Partnership.

**We, the participants at the Global Summit**, emphasize that advancing SFBA is essential for the transitioning to nature positive, resilient, diverse, equitable and inclusive economies and societies. SFBA has the demonstrated and proven capacity to, enable societies and the planet to derive greater benefit from sustainably managed forests.

The challenge now is to drive systemic transformation at scale, taking into account the vast expertise of the forest sector as a fundamental basis for SFBA; moving from visibility to viability. To achieve meaningful impact, we call on governments, inter-governmental organizations, private sector, research and academic institutions, and other forest-related stakeholders to join forces and accelerate the following **five collective priority actions** at global, regional, national and sub-national levels advancing sustainable forest-based bioeconomy approaches:

- 1. Take leadership for systemic transformation**
- 2. Ensure an inclusive bioeconomy**
- 3. Mobilize targeted financial resources**
- 4. Create enabling conditions for forest-based value chains and innovation**
- 5. Build collaborative partnerships at all levels**

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.fao.org/forestry/our-focus/forest-products/sustainable-forest-based-bioeconomy-approaches/en>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.bmluk.gv.at/en/coli.html>

## **1. Take leadership for systemic transformation**

SFBA should be mainstreamed into policy, funded, and scaled up into practice and has to be based on sustainable forest management. Unlocking new growth opportunities for adding value with wood, non-wood forest products and ecosystem services through responsible value chains, resource efficiency and generating decent jobs are key. This is enabled through strong leadership, coherence of policies and inclusive decision-making at all levels to champion SFBA goals and benefits across climate, biodiversity, sustainability, natural resource management, energy, building, trade, social and industrial agendas.

## **2. Ensure an inclusive bioeconomy**

SFBA should aim to be people-centered and rights-based. Scaling up such ambition requires empowering all forest-related stakeholders including foresters, forest owners, SMEs, forest cooperatives and smallholders, youth, women, Indigenous Peoples and local communities. Mechanisms that enhance co-creation, inclusive access to resources as well as fair and equitable distribution of benefits should be prioritized. More emphasis is needed on securing tenure rights, gender equality and integrated policies, knowledge transfer, and market participation. These measures will help to ensure that SFBA contributes in particular to sustainable rural development, improving livelihoods, alleviating poverty, protecting cultural values and traditional knowledge, and promoting social equality, resilience and inclusion.

## **3. Mobilize targeted financial resources**

Financing is key for advancing sustainable forest-based bioeconomy approaches. Resources should move beyond project-by-project financing toward programmatic approaches that enable sector-wide transformation. This includes mobilizing substantial resources in global capital markets, such as blended finance mechanisms, de-risking instruments, access to start-up capital and green bonds. Furthermore, reorienting incentives toward renewable and bio-based solutions, tailoring solutions to local contexts and scaling up sustainable and transition investments are essential. Investments should equally focus on forest value chains, research and knowledge transfer in developing countries, where the potential for inclusive and sustainable growth is the greatest.

#### **4. Create enabling conditions for forest-based value chains and innovation**

To thrive SFBA needs a sustainable supply of wood and non-wood materials as well as supportive cohesive regulatory and market environments. All relevant actors should act now to promote and advance the implementation of sustainable forest management and ensure resource supply and promote skills, training and science-based capacity building. This includes, tackling trade-offs between land use and management objectives, supporting market access mechanisms, modernizing standards and codes, and recognizing the role of certification schemes in identifying responsibly sourced bio-based products. Public and private procurement policies can help guarantee early markets for sustainable bio-based solutions and support the cultivation of forest-based consumer markets, including through coordinated awareness raising. The scaling of technological, social, political, institutional, and financial innovations should be tailored to national and local circumstances, keeping rural development and global markets in mind.

#### **5. Build collaborative partnerships at all levels**

To realize its full potential and to maintain global momentum, SFBA should be implemented within collaborative multistakeholder partnerships at global, regional, national and sub-national levels. This benefits from holistic framing where forest-based knowledge, including technologies, approaches, sustainability metrics and indicators, Indigenous and traditional knowledge are shared across the globe, allowing planet-wide responses to the climate and environment crises as well as context-specific economic and social challenges. SFBA should be recognized in intergovernmental bodies and multilateral processes, such as FAO, UNFF, CBD, UNCCD, UNFCCC, G20, WTO and the post-2030 Agenda. Multilateral processes should foster transboundary cooperation and equally strengthen existing regional forest governance frameworks as essential complements to global agreements. By linking national programs and actions with international frameworks, countries can create synergies across policy arenas. In this way, SFBA has the potential to contribute to planetary stewardship and the transition to equitable and inclusive prosperity.