

**Joint Statement by the Chair of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) Committee on Forests and the Forest Industry Bureau (COFFI) and the Acting Chair of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) European Forestry Commission**

**Executive Committee (EFC) session of the United Nations Forum on Forests**

globe

directed to immediate actions to address

term actions to confront this and similar

To this end, the UNECE and FAO – in continuation of their close collaboration on forests since 1947 – will

We must not forget that the threat of climate change looms large over our forest ecosystems with impacts already apparent in many places. The boreal forest, which comprises the largest share of forests in the region, is the world's largest terrestrial sink for CO<sub>2</sub> and is particularly affected by changing climate conditions, posing challenges for ecosystem adaptation and the risk of massive greenhouse gas release. This, and the fact that boreal forests are an important resource base for a number of COFFI and EFC member states, points to the need for better cooperation in the region. To address these issues, COFFI and EFC recently established a dedicated Team of Specialists on Boreal Forests.

Excellencies, colleagues, and delegates,

As we proceed into a period of uncertainty, we must not allow ourselves to slip into complacency or shortsightedness. Rather, we must strengthen our efforts to encourage countries to maintain, restore and protect the health and vitality of their forests, and to enhance the benefits these forests and their various outputs bring to society when sustainably managed.