Submission by the Russian Federation on matters relating to holding global dialogues in 2025 under the Sharm el-Sheikh Mitigation Ambition and Implementation Work Programme referred to decision 4/CMA.4

May 2025

1. Introduction

The Russian Federation pursuant to paragraph 14 of decision 4/CMA.4, paragraph 9 of decision 4/CMA.5, paragraph 10 of decision 2/CMA.6 of the Conference of the Parties to the Paris Agreement welcomes the opportunity to present views on opportunities, best practices, practical solutions, challenges and barriers related to the Fifth Global Dialogue and Investment-focused Event under the Sharm el-Sheikh mitigation ambition and implementation Work Programme, focused on enabling mitigation solutions in the forest sector drawing on national and regional experience.

2. Relevance and significance of the topic

Forest conservation stands as one of the most critical tasks for humanity. According to the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) and International Union for Conservation and Nature (IUCN) for 2021, forests are a source for livelihoods for 1,6 billion people. Moreover, forests provide $75–100 billion annually in goods and services, including clean water, as well as give home to 80% of the world's terrestrial biodiversity.

Forests play a key role in combating climate change and are essential for the implementation of mitigation measures, serving as one of the main natural carbon dioxide sinks. According to the FAO Global Forest Resources Assessment for 2020, the total carbon stock of forests is 662 Gt. In accordance with the FAO's report «Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries in the NDC» 2021, 79% of NDCs refer to the role of forestry measures in mitigating climate change.

3. National Policy and Measures

In the Russian Federation there are more than 1,1 billion hectares of forest cover (66,2 % of Russia's territory) that on average absorb more than 1,2 $GtCO_2$-eq annually from 1990. Russia's forests account for approximately 20% of the world's forest resources, placing a global responsibility for maintaining carbon stocks and increasing the potential of GHG sequestration of forest ecosystems.

As part of the implementation of the Paris Agreement, the Russian Federation in the first NDC has announced to limit greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) by up to 70 percent by 2030 relative to the 1990 level, taking into account the maximum possible absorptive capacity of forests and other ecosystems. The Russian Federation joined the Glasgow Leaders' Declaration on Forests and Land Use in 2021, recognizing the unique role of forests in achieving balance between GHG emissions and removals.

Key low-carbon practices in the forestry sector of the Russian Federation include enhancing the efficiency of forest management, forest fire prevention, protection forests from pests, reforestation and afforestation measures. These measures are implemented under the Strategy of socio-economic development of the Russian Federation with low greenhouse gas emissions until 2050 through the State Programme «Forestry Sector Development», which includes the federal project «Forest Protection», as well as voluntary projects.

Another priority task for mitigating climate change of the Russian Federation is the development of a scientific base for studying the carbon balance and GHG fluxes in the forest ecosystems. In 2022, we adopted the Federal Science and Technology Programme of the Russian Federation in the areas of environmental improvement and climate change for 2021–2030 and launched the National Climate Monitoring System of Russia. The latter includes a system for monitoring GHG flows and absorption of climate impacting substances in terrestrial ecosystems through data from ground-based measurements, remote sensing, and mathematical modeling. The monitoring network includes more than 250 stations for greenhouse gas absorption monitoring. This data is used to refine current and historical carbon sink estimates of Russian forests and to predict the net absorption of carbon dioxide up to 2100 at the national and regional levels using various forest management and climate changes scenarios.

A significant step in strengthening the environmental and climate policy of the Russian Federation has become the establishment of Carbon measurement supersites programme — a network of scientific and educational test sites for GHG monitoring, development of technologies that enhance GHG absorption capacity, sustainable forest management as well as training of highly qualified specialists. There are 19 active supersites in Russia, 13 of which are located in forest ecosystems. In addition to GHG flux monitoring is conducted, reforestation and afforestation technologies are being developed and prototypes of future climate projects are worked out in order to enhance the GHG absorption.

4. Proposed sub-topics for the Fifth Global Dialogue and Investment-focused Event based on best national practices

The Russian Federation proposes three sub-topics for discussion during the Fifth Global Dialogue and Investment-focused Event under the Sharm el-Sheikh mitigation ambition and implementation Work Programme:

- **Measures on reforestation and afforestation**

The First Global Stocktake, concluded at the COP28 in 2023 (decision 1/CMA.5), emphasizes the importance of conserving, protecting and restoring nature and ecosystems, including forests and other terrestrial and marine ecosystems acting as sinks and reservoirs of greenhouse gases. Ensuring timely and high-quality reforestation is of great ecological importance and a mandatory condition for the use of forest resources.

According to the IPCC, ending deforestation and increasing forest coverage are cost-effective mitigation solutions that reduce emissions by more than 5 GtCO2e equivalent annually, which is about 11% of total annual emissions. In terms of mitigation, the global potential for reforestation and afforestation by 2050 is 3.9 GtCO2e per year.

The forest fund of Russia is characterized by high regional diversity (northern taiga, mixed forests of the European part, extensive boreal forests of Siberia and the Russian Far East, forest-steppes, etc.). Each of these forest zones requires a specific approach to forest management, protection and restoration of forest ecosystems. The Russian Federation is implementing the State Programme «Forestry Sector Development», which also includes the federal project «Forest Protection». The Program aims to balance forest loss and regeneration, expand areas of reforestation, establish a network of forest seed breeding centers for cultivation of planting material in the regions of the Russian Federation, stimulate the growing of economically valuable tree plantings as well as combat illegal logging.

In 2024 the ratio of reforested and afforested areas to logged and damaged forests was 154.6 %, the share of the high-value forest stands in the forest fund lands amounted to 70.1 %. Furthermore, there is one of the largest European Forest selection and seed production center centers for growing planting material with closed root systems in the Republic of Tatarstan.

Annual reforestation measures contribute to preserving and expanding of forest areas. In recent years, the forest areas are increasing due to the breeding of economically valuable species and the reduction of unforested areas. The scientific community has confirmed that increasing the area of reforestation effectively contributes to the GHG reduction.

Programs for greening the urban areas, including park creation and green space protection contribute to the significant increase of net GHG absorption. For example, natural and green areas in Moscow absorb over 1 million tonnes of GHG annually and plays a vital role in regulating the urban microclimate.

We believe that sharing best practices on reforestation and afforestation at the Fifth Global Dialogue and Investment-focused Event under the Sharm el-Sheikh mitigation ambition and implementation Work Programme will enable to develop the effective tools to achieve objectives outlined in the decision 1/CMA.5.

- **Fire prevention measures in forest and other natural ecosystems**

Forest fire prevention is the effective measure to reduce carbon emissions and combat deforestation and forest degradation and other natural ecosystems.

The Russian Federation places strong emphasis on fire safety and improving the effectiveness of ways to eliminate forest fires at federal and regional levels. Fire hazard monitoring is carried out via aviation, ground, and satellite systems, including the state satellite system called «ERA-GLONASS» and unmanned aerial vehicles.

Forest fire prevention infrastructure is aimed at ensuring fire safety. It includes the construction and clearing of mineralized firebreaks, the building of forest roads for

firefighting access, and the installation of signage and information boards about fire safety measures. An early wildfire detection and fire prevention systems are used to enhance the efficiency of forest fire prevention measures.

Criteria for assessing the regions' readiness for fire seasons and the implementation of powers for forest fire prevention are being developed, AI-powered video surveillance systems are use, regional centers for aviation forest protection are being established.

We believe that sharing knowledge and best practices in the field of forest fire prevention will enhance mutual understanding and foster unified approaches to prevent deforestation and forest degradation and other natural ecosystems.

- **Forest climate projects and other nature-based solutions**

Forest climate projects not only contribute to achieving national climate goals by increasing carbon absorption through implementing reforestation and afforestation measures, but also reducing GHG emissions by preventing deforestation and forest degradation as well as bringing the investors an additional income.

The Russian Federation is developing a regulatory and methodological framework to engage the private sector in climate projects. Since January 2025 the Forest Code of the Russian Federation includes the definition and implementation procedure for forest climate projects. Carbon market instruments are available for companies engaged in reforestation and afforestation, improved forest management (e.g., forest fire prevention and reduction of logging impacts) as well as secondary rewetting of drained peatlands. Methodologies have been developed for various forest climate projects that take into account the national context and include the high requirements for environmental integrity of projects.

Funding of forest climate projects is also provided under the National Taxonomy for Green Projects, approved by Resolution of the Government of the Russian Federation № 1587 of 21 September 2021. In the case of compliance with the established requirements, the project can be classified as sustainable and apply for access to relevant financing instruments, including sustainability-linked bonds and other forms of green financing.

The Russian national voluntary forest certification system also contributes to the significant GHG reduction and absorption. The holders of Forest Standard certificates exclude forests from commercial use, namely partial or total logging ban, thus they ensure the conservation of 4.0 million hectares of forests.

As of May 2025 there are 7 projects based on natural climatic solutions of 64 climate projects registered in the National Carbon Units Registry of the Russian Federation. The projects are being implemented throughout the Russian Federation and involve measures on forest fire prevention, afforestation, improvement of soil fertility and rewetting of peatlands.

We believe that our suggestion to discuss natural climatic solutions at the Fifth Global Dialogue and Investment-focused Event under the Sharm el-Sheikh mitigation ambition and implementation Work Programme will foster climate-resilient approaches to nature management and increase the investment attractiveness of the projects in the field of environmental protection and climate change.