

The "Rio Call" addresses the need for an integrated view on natural regeneration that enhances the ecosystems resilience in order to achieve large-scale restoration. The document was drawn up by the participants of the workshop "The Role of Natural Regeneration in Large-scale Forest and Landscape Restoration: Challenges and Opportunities", held in 19-21 November in Rio de Janeiro/RJ - Brazil.

Rio Call to Promote Natural Regeneration in Forest and Landscape Restoration

We, participants of the workshop "The Role of Natural Regeneration in Large-scale Forest and Landscape Restoration: Challenge and Opportunity", 19-21 November, 2014 in Solar da Imperatriz - Rio Botanical Garden, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, and other interested parties:

AWARE of the huge extent of deforested and degraded lands on all continents and the associated loss of human wellbeing, ecological diversity, and planetary balance;

AWARE that 2 billion hectares of deforested and degraded lands offer opportunities for restoration of forests and landscapes¹;

NOTING that restoration can provide many economic, social, and environmental benefits including greater resilience and capacity to adapt to climate change, mitigation of climate change through reduction of net carbon emissions, improved water supply and quality, increased agricultural productivity, opportunities for rural livelihoods, greater production of food, fuel, and fiber, and reduced soil erosion;

NOTING that restoration can reduce pressure on existing intact forests and protected areas, enhance landscape connectivity, and expand opportunities for biodiversity conservation;

RECOGNIZING that restoration can help meet important urgent global goals and targets, including the emerging Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations (UN), the "REDD-Plus" goal of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Aichi Biodiversity Target 15 of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity adopted by the Convention on Biological Diversity and supported by other biodiversity related conventions, the Land Degradation Neutrality Goal of the UN Convention to Combat Desertification, the Bonn Challenge on Forests, Climate Change and Biodiversity, and the New York Declaration on Forests;

NOTING that the Bonn Challenge and the New York Declaration on Forests represent ambitious but achievable targets, respectively calling for restoration of 150 million hectares by 2020 and 350 million hectares by 2030 (an area greater than India);

CONCERNED that restoration of extensive areas requires methods that combine low cost with high ecological robustness, inclusion of local cultural values and practices, and broad social acceptability;

CONVINCED that methods that incorporate natural regeneration² must be prominently included in the portfolio of widely adopted restoration methods;

1. Forest and landscape restoration (FLR) is the process of regaining ecological functionality and enhancing human well-being across deforested or degraded forest landscapes.

2. Natural regeneration is a spontaneous ecological process of forest regrowth that can be assisted and managed

CALL UPON competent and interested parties

- 1) To form a global collaborative network to promote natural regeneration at large scales;
- 2) To collaboratively design the network to meet the following tentative objectives:
 - Publicize, legitimize, and support natural regeneration
 - Promote enabling policies, incentives, and legal frameworks
 - Provide a platform for inter-sectorial collaboration, learning, and mutual support
 - Collect and disseminate evidence of success and failure of natural regeneration
 - Identify and address gaps in knowledge and practice
 - Strengthen capacity to plan and implement natural regeneration at large scales
 - Identify priority areas for natural regeneration
 - Work as a subset of the Global Partnership on Forest and Landscape Restoration
 - Work with other relevant initiatives, including those focused on agroforestry

Rio de Janeiro on the 21st Day of November 2014

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