

ASTANA STATEMENT

The First Meeting of Ministers Responsible for Forestry in Greater Central Asia

30-31 May 2016

Astana, Kazakhstan

Participants of the 1st **Meeting of Ministers Responsible for Forestry in Greater Central Asia** (hereinafter - the meeting)

Noting the importance of sustainable development and management of forests for social and economic development and to maintain a favorable environment in the region, Taking into account the proximity of aspects of policy goals and objectives of the member countries of the forestry sector, confirmed during the 2nd Regional Workshop on strategic forestry cooperation in Greater Central Asia held in Ulan Bator (Mongolia) from 15-17 July 2015, Recognizing the need for closer regional cooperation in the field of conservation, protection and reproduction of forests, mitigate negative impacts of global climate change, desertification, land degradation and strengthening the forestry potential in the region,

Have agreed as follows:

1. To take into account the policy and the main activities in the field of forestry of the representatives of participating economies of the meeting.
2. To welcome the efforts of forest authorities of the participating economies to increase the forest cover in the Greater Central Asia region reduce forest fires, forest pests and diseases, illegal logging and weaken the processes of desertification and degradation.
3. To mark an important role in addressing these issues such as the development of a wide cross-border and regional cooperation based on mutual discussion and awareness of the challenges and achievements of the forest sector, its legislative support, participation in the implementation of joint programs and projects, research and development. The most promising areas for such cooperation are the following:
 - mitigating the impact of climate change and forest health decline;
 - preventing cross-border forest fires;
 - combating forest land degradation and desertification;
 - promoting development of the regional forest monitoring system;
 - promoting biological methods for forest protection;
 - promoting development of forest plantations in sustainable manner in desert areas;

- conservation and utilization of forest genetic resources;
 - promoting development of methodologies for assessing the value of forest ecosystem services;
 - promoting capacity building and training of specialists in forestry;
 - Other areas to be agreed by the participating economies in the future
4. To recommend to ensure effective regional and cross-border cooperation within the economies of the Greater Central Asia and continue to interdepartmental consultations and to keep communication among the participating economies by nominating focal points in the state forestry authorities of participating economies entrusted with the following:
- organizing and maintaining interdepartmental relations;
 - developing and coordinating mechanisms of interaction between the economies;
 - preparing and organizing of meetings/conferences at the level of heads and experts of forestry authorities of the economies to discuss major regional forestry issues.

Participants of the 1st **Meeting of Ministers Responsible for Forestry in Greater Central Asia** recognized the efforts and support of APFNet in promoting forestry cooperation in Greater Central Asia region, urged all interested organizations, experts and the public in the region to take an active part in the development of this cooperation for the conservation, expansion of the area and increase the sustainability of forests.

Participating economies thanks APFNet for organization of this meeting and require APFNet to provide necessary supports for the next meeting to be held in 2018.

It is adopted in Astana (Kazakhstan) on 30-31 May 2016. The original copy in Russian and English languages is kept at the Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Kazakhstan, which is in the prescribed manner, a copy of Statement will be send to each participating economy of the meeting.

State Forestry Administration of the People's Republic of China	Agency of Forestry under the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan
Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Kazakhstan	State Committee for Environmental Protection and Land Resources of Turkmenistan
State Agency of Environmental Protection and Forestry of the Kyrgyz Republic	Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources of the Republic of Uzbekistan
Ministry of Environment, Green Development and Tourism of Mongolia	

