ASEAN LEADERS' DECLARATION ON THE ONE BILLION TREES GROWING INITIATIVE

WE, the Member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), namely Brunei Darussalam, the Kingdom of Cambodia, the Republic of Indonesia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, the Republic of the Philippines, the Republic of Singapore, the Kingdom of Thailand, the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste, and the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, gathered in the Republic of the Philippines from 10–12 November 2026 on the occasion of the 49th ASEAN Summit;

RECOGNISING that forests are vital assets that sustain biodiversity, support livelihoods, enhance ecosystem services, and contribute significantly to climate change mitigation as major carbon sinks;

RECALLING ASEAN's shared commitments to sustainable development, climate action, biodiversity conservation, and sustainable forest management as reflected in the ASEAN Community Vision 2045 and relevant regional frameworks;

ACKNOWLEDGING the global urgency to halt deforestation and forest degradation taking into account national circumstances, priorities and capabilities and to promote ecosystem restoration in support of the objectives of the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration, United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD);

RECOGNISING FURTHER the importance of sustainable forest management, nature-based solutions, forest landscape restoration, protected areas and initiatives such as Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+) in contributing to climate mitigation, biodiversity conservation, and sustainable land use;

EMPHASISING the importance of strengthened regional cooperation, integrated national and sub-national institutional coordination and multi-stakeholder partnerships in promoting sustainable forest management and enhancing the resilience of forest ecosystems in ASEAN;

REINFORCING ASEAN's central role in fostering collaborative initiatives that protect natural ecosystems, enhance environmental sustainability, and promote the well-being of our peoples;

RECOGNISING FURTHER the vital role of forests in supporting sustainable livelihoods, and the need to empower local communities and forest-dependent populations, through the creation of green jobs, capacity development and equitable

access to forest resources to strengthen socio-economic resilience and enhance sustainable forest management; and

DO HEREBY DECLARE TO:

1. Commend the ASEAN One Billion Trees Growing Initiative as a regional effort aimed at promoting tree planting, forest restoration, and sustainable forest management across ASEAN Member States.
2. Contribute to the initiative through voluntary tree-growing efforts, ecosystem restoration, and sustainable land management practices, in accordance with their national circumstances, national laws, domestic policies, capacities and development priorities.
3. Promote the restoration and rehabilitation of degraded forest landscapes, including mangroves, peatlands, watersheds, and other critical ecosystems, while encouraging the use of native and climate-resilient species.
4. Support efforts to enhance ASEAN's forest carbon sinks and contribute to long-term regional climate mitigation efforts, consistent with the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) of ASEAN Member States.
5. Encourage knowledge-sharing, research collaboration, and the use of digital technologies to improve forest monitoring, transparency, and sustainable forest management.
6. Promote inclusive participation, including through community-based forest management, social forestry initiatives, and the engagement of youth, women, and local communities.
7. Encourage partnerships with Dialogue Partners, international organisations, financial institutions, the private sector, and non-governmental organisations and other relevant stakeholders, including efforts to mobilise sustainable financing and innovative mechanisms to support sustainable forest management and restoration.
8. Cooperate and share best practices in advancing the initiative, through relevant ASEAN Sectoral Bodies with the support of the ASEAN Secretariat.
9. Promote the initiative as a means to harmonize national reforestation, forest rehabilitation, and sustainable forest management strategies.
10. Foster awareness and strengthen knowledge-sharing on the benefits of ecosystem restoration, sustainable forest management and tree growing initiatives among all ASEAN stakeholders.
11. Promote the initiative's role in the use of digital technologies, traceability tools and public-private partnerships to ensure effective monitoring, transparency and scalability.
12. Promote collaboration and dialogue on primary forests, recognising their vital role in ecosystems, biodiversity, climate resilience, and the livelihoods and cultural values of local communities, by strengthening partnerships, resource

mobilisation and technical support to advance integrated, inclusive, and cross-sectoral efforts.

ADOPTED on this Fifteenth Day of November in the Year Two Thousand and Twenty-Six in a single original copy in the English language.