



PRESIDENCY OF THE
**COUNCIL OF
MINISTERS**
SIXTH CONSTITUTIONAL GOVERNMENT

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PRESS RELEASE

Extraordinary meeting of the Council of Ministers of December 16th, 2016

The Council of Ministers met on Friday and approved the **General Forestry Regime**, presented by the Minister of State, Coordinator of Economic Affairs and Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries. Although between 2003 and 2010 Timor-Leste lost 17.5% of its forest area, in particular primary forest, 58% of the country is still covered by forest. Timor-Leste is located in a biodiversity area globally significant – known as Wallacea – and, to maintain it, a sustainable management of forests is particularly necessary. Despite Timor-Leste having a globally significant biodiversity, the National Plan to Fight Land Degradation identified deforestation as one of the causes of erosion and degradation of river basins.

Still in this same area, the Council of Ministers approved the draft resolution on the **Agreement for the Establishment of AFOCO – Asian Forest Cooperation Organization**. The aim is to strengthen regional cooperation in the forestry sector in order to cope with the impact of climate change. This agreement comes in the wake of the dialog on Forestry Cooperation between the ASEAN Member States' Governments and the Republic of Korea, and the decision to invite Bhutan, Kazakhstan, Mongolia and Timor-Leste to participate in the dialog on the creation of the Asian Forest Cooperation Organization.

Following the approval at the meeting of the Council of Ministers on March 9th, 2016, the **Regime for the Transition of the Staff of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation (MNEC) to the Diplomatic Career** was presented, as is provided for in the Statute of the Diplomatic Career. This is a special regime, within the Public Administration, and includes a series of public officials from MNEC, designated as diplomatic staff. The diploma specifies the rules for entry, progression and promotion.

The Minister of Planning and Strategic Investment, as Chief Negotiator for **maritime borders**, presented the **state of play on the position of Timor-Leste** in this matter.



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