



Collaborative Partnership on Forests

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Forests are a path to sustainable development

13 May 2011, New York – As discussions draw to a close at the UN Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) in UN Headquarters this week, members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF), an international mechanism composed of 14-forest related organizations and secretariats, are calling upon countries to pay more attention to the crucial contribution of forests to sustainable development.

Members of the CPF are working to improve management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests. Sustainably managed forests contribute directly to poverty reduction by providing jobs, incomes, and consumable goods for poor families.

“At a time when we are faced with environmental, social, and economic crises that are daunting; the CPF is working intensively together to further catalyze the positive contributions of forests, including the livelihoods of forest-dependent people, as is being celebrated in 2011, the International Year of Forests.” **says Jan McAlpine, Director of the United Nations Forum on Forests Secretariat.** “Forest services and benefits are multifaceted and wide-ranging, from the environmental contributions to the social and economic. Cross-sectoral and cross-institutional cooperation and a people-relevant approach is vital not only to management of forests but for advancing sustainable development around the world.”

“Further analysis is needed during the International Year of Forests, to emphasize the connection between people and forests, and the benefits that can accrue when forests are managed by local people in sustainable and innovative ways” **says Eduardo Rojas-Briales Assistant Director-General of the FAO Forestry Department.** “Together we must continue to pursue multiple pathways towards sustainable development using forests at all levels.”

Rojas called attention to the 2011 edition of FAO's *State of the World's Forests*, which provides an analysis of how forests support people's livelihoods and the development of sustainable forest industries. According to the report, forest industries are improving resource efficiency and recycling efforts and are making progress in promoting wood products as more environmentally friendly than alternative materials. Moreover, *State of the World's Forests 2011* indicates that community-based and traditional knowledge forest management approaches can help communities harvest and sell non-wood forest products to create more sustainable livelihoods.

The relevance of traditional forest-related knowledge and practices to global efforts to advance sustainable forest management, biodiversity conservation, adaptation to environmental change, and livelihood security is highlighted by a six 6-year global study that has recently been completed by the International Union of Forest Research Organizations.

Emmanuel Ze Meka, Executive Director of the International Tropical Timber Organization noted that "Already in many tropical countries, sustainably managed forests and the products that arise from them are contributing to sustainable development at both the national and especially at the community level. But since sustainably managed forests still make up less than 10% of the total global tropical forest area, they clearly have the potential to play a much bigger role."

A successful example of sustainable forest management can be seen in Guinea, where the **Landscape Management for Improved Livelihoods (LAMIL)** project by the World Agroforestry Centre and the Centre for International Forestry Research has had a profound influence on the sustainability of four large forest areas. Prior to the project, local people were forbidden from using the forest resources and illegal logging, poaching and land clearance were leading to forest loss. The LAMIL project developed a system of co-management involving local communities and government where the local people derive real benefits from the forests, and in return have shown their willingness and ability to manage them sustainably.

"The project illustrates how changes in how forests are governed can lead to win-win outcomes for forests and people," commented **Frances Seymour, Director General of the Center for International Forestry Research**. "This project has done much to improve the welfare of the local people," said **Dennis Garrity Director General of the World Agroforestry Center**. "It has also shown that sustainable forest management and improved livelihoods are inextricably linked."

"Forests, soils and water are a trilogy that are not stand-alone, self-sustaining resources" says **Luc Gnacadja, Executive Secretary of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification**. "To foster a holistic approach to the management of these environmental resources, we must attend to three things. First, we need to focus on the causes, not the symptoms of deforestation. Second, we also need to focus on the soil, which is the real source of life for the land. Third, the communities that maintain the ecosystems we depend upon need to be rewarded."

At the recent United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) meeting in February, ministers and high officials agreed on a Ministerial Declaration which stresses that "forests are an integral part of the global environment and human well-being, providing multiple goods and services essential for people worldwide and crucial for sustainable development and the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals." The UNFF Ministerial Declaration contains the most important global forest policy issues and concerns as the concrete input on forests to the upcoming Rio +20 conference. Rio+20 (June 2012), marks the twentieth anniversary of the adoption

of Agenda 21, the blueprint for sustainable development, agreed upon at the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development. The conference will review progress made towards sustainable development and map out future strategies to address sustainable development and environmental challenges.

For more information:

- Mita Sen, sen@un.org , United Nations Forum on Forest Secretariat

#####

The Collaborative Partnership on Forests ([CPF](#)) is a voluntary arrangement among 14 international organizations and secretariats with substantial programs on forests. The CPF's mission is to promote the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forest and strengthen long term political commitment to this end.

CPF members:

- Center for International Forestry Research ([CIFOR](#))
- Convention of Biological Diversity ([CBD Secretariat](#))
- Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations ([FAO](#))
- Global Environment Facility ([GEF Secretariat](#))
- International Tropical Timber Organization ([ITTO](#))
- International Union for Conservation of Nature ([IUCN](#))
- International Union of Forest Research Organizations ([IUFRO](#))
- United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification ([UNCCD Secretariat](#))
- United Nations Development Programme ([UNDP](#))
- United Nations Environment Programme ([UNEP](#))
- United Nations Forum on Forests ([UNFF Secretariat](#))
- United Nations Framework Convention of Climate Change ([UNFCCC Secretariat](#))
- World Agroforestry Centre ([ICRAF](#))
- World Bank ([World Bank](#))