

# FORESTS FOR PEOPLE



INTERNATIONAL YEAR  
OF FORESTS • 2011



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OF FORESTS • 2011**

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# Foreword

**JAN L. MCALPINE, DIRECTOR, UNITED NATIONS FORUM ON FORESTS SECRETARIAT,  
UNITED NATIONS DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS**

Forests provide sustenance and livelihoods for an estimated 1.6 billion people across the world. They directly contribute to poverty reduction and the alleviation of hunger by providing jobs and incomes for poor families. In a global environment where the challenges are many — from growing unemployment rates to rising food prices and climate-related stresses — the need to manage our natural resources sustainably has become all the more urgent.

There has been increased interest in realizing the full potential of forests for global sustainable development in recent years and the United Nations General Assembly's decision to proclaim 2011 the International Year of Forests has been instrumental in translating this interest into year-long action. Since its inception in 2000, the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF), a subsidiary body of the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations (ECOSOC), has had the main objective of promoting the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests and strengthening long-term political commitment to this end.

People's interactions with forests provide practical experiences on how to operationalize sustainable development, translating rhetoric to reality and providing a valuable toolkit of good practices and lessons learned. Coordinated efforts and cross-sectoral approaches are required to maximize the benefits of forests for the sustainable development of people. In June 2012, the international community will converge on Rio de Janeiro for the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development. Forests offer tested solutions to key challenges in sustainable development and contribute to all three pillars that support such development.

The publication of *Forests for People* as part of the activities to commemorate the International Year of Forests, 2011 will undoubtedly contribute to raising awareness and strengthening sustainable forest management for the benefit of current and future generations. The stories that comprise this publication draw upon diverse experiences from around the world, reflecting the many ways in which people are changing their interaction with forests to improve the sustainability of their development.

Achieving sustainable solutions ultimately requires a process of dialogue and shared learning. This publication contributes to such a process by bringing together best practices from governments and stakeholders and I am certain that *Forests for People* will contribute to greater understanding and a convergence of approaches for forests and people — and their sustainable future worldwide.



Jan L. McAlpine  
Director, United Nations Forum on Forests Secretariat  
United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs

# Acknowledgements

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Asian Development Bank	Lake Taupo Forest Trust
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**NIKOLAUS BERLAKOVICH, FEDERAL MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY,  
ENVIRONMENT AND WATER MANAGEMENT, AUSTRIA**

It is widely recognized that the value of forests for life in general, and the potential benefits and solutions they bring to our increasingly challenged world, are enormous. However, the demands directed towards the world's forests are numerous, expanding and partially conflicting with each other.

Forests should sustain livelihoods, host biodiversity, help stabilize the climate, provide sustainable materials and renewable energy, contribute to greening the economy, protect soils and water, and prevent floods, erosion and avalanches. At the same time forests are not only under threat from deforestation and forest degradation, but also from storms, drought, fire, pests and disease — hazards aggravated by climate change.

Fragmented approaches and singular actions must fail when addressing the complexity of these expectations and challenges. We do have the solution at hand for securing the long-term economic, environmental and social functions of forests comprehensively and in a balanced manner — the concept, principles and practice of sustainable forest management.

Let us enhance our efforts, let us strengthen our commitments and establish robust political frameworks at all levels in order to put sustainable forest management into practice worldwide.

Nikolaus Berlakovich  
Federal Minister of Agriculture, Forestry,  
Environment and Water Management, Austria



**IZABELLA TEIXEIRA, MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT, BRAZIL**

The United Nations General Assembly declared 2011 as the International Year of Forests to raise awareness on sustainable management, conservation and development of all types of forests. Sustainable forest management is a multilayered concept that aims at securing biodiversity, productivity and vitality while ensuring that goods and services derived from forests meet everyday needs. The theme of *Forests for People* highlights the value of forests and their economic and social relationship with humankind. Sustainable forest management can also contribute significantly to sustainable development, poverty eradication and the achievement of internationally agreed commitments, including the Millennium Development Goals.

With receding forests, expanding deserts, changing rainfall patterns and rising sea levels, climate change will disproportionately affect the world's poorest communities. Among them, the most vulnerable group will be women. They are usually responsible for gathering firewood, water, and food supplies for their families, and deforestation makes it harder to secure these resources. The involvement of women in forest governance would benefit forest and biodiversity conservation efforts. The local communities' livelihoods are directly linked to the conservation and sustainable use of forests' natural resources.

The Brazilian National Forest Programmes are formulated in order to ensure that forest-based people and the next generation will have the opportunity to marvel at the forest. Brazilian forests directly support the livelihoods of at least ten million people, and are home to a great portion of the global terrestrial biodiversity. Forests provide essential ecosystem services such as watershed protection, water flow regulation, nutrient recycling, rainfall generation and disease regulation.

Our future depends upon our forests and the protection of forests depends upon us. We must act now.

This UNFF publication is a golden opportunity to fast-track a wide range of positive initiatives and programmes that address multiple challenges, and encourage countries and people to use the new optimism and best practices surrounding forests in catalyzing long-lasting and transformative solutions.



Izabella Teixeira  
Minister of Environment  
Brazil



**JOE OLIVER, MINISTER OF NATURAL RESOURCES, CANADA**

Historically, forests have been a fundamental part of our environment, economy, culture and traditions. International Year of Forests, 2011 is therefore a wonderful opportunity for us to celebrate the many benefits that forests provide.

Canada takes great pride in its reputation as a leader in the sustainable uses of forests and has long been committed to sharing its forest management expertise with the world. Through initiatives such as the International Model Forest Network — first launched by Canada nearly 20 years ago at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro — we are working in close cooperation with nearly 30 other countries to improve forest management practices globally. As these partnerships have shown, social, economic and environmental concerns are not mutually exclusive but, when addressed together, provide substantial and lasting value.

Forests and people are interconnected, as communities, families and individuals throughout the world depend on forests for their livelihood. Forests have a unique and special value as a resource, and Canada is proud to support their sustainable development, both now and for the enjoyment of future generations.

Joe Oliver  
Minister of Natural Resources  
Canada



**BOŽIDAR PANKRETIĆ, DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER OF REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT,  
FORESTRY AND WATER MANAGEMENT, REPUBLIC OF CROATIA**

“Lucky are nations sharing their lives with forests, even luckier are those who appreciate the wealth they possess,” said Josip Kozarac, esteemed Croatian writer and forester, in the late 19th century. He was a modern-day visionary, which can be clearly seen by the fact that more than a century later, in the year 2011, in which we celebrate the International Year of Forests under the motto ‘Forests for People’, these words have not lost their meaning and relevance, standing as evidence of a strong connection between forests and people as well as the great influence that forests have on all segments of our lives.

Encouraged precisely by these thoughts, the Republic of Croatia has launched the initiative to declare the International Year of Forests. It has been our wish to step up efforts to promote sustainable forest management, as well as development and conservation of forests worldwide. Therefore, we are very excited that this useful *Forests for People* publication is being issued, as it will permanently record the experience of many experts in the field of sustainable forest management and convey the message that sustainable development and sustainable management are the only true foundations for the future and prosperity of all people on the planet.

We therefore hope that the book *Forests for People*, particularly in today’s world when global forest ecosystems are under tremendous pressure, will help ease the path towards the development of a number of forest policies and strategies worldwide which will be based on principles of sustainability.

Božidar Pankretić  
Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Regional Development,  
Forestry and Water Management, Republic of Croatia



## **JARI KOSKINEN, MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY, FINLAND**

Finland's forest sector has recently faced new challenges, including the global economic crisis, structural changes in industry and changing expectations concerning the roles of forests. To meet these emerging needs, we are reshaping our forest-related policies, institutional and legal frameworks, economic instruments and information resources.

The cornerstone of Finland's forest policy, the National Forest Programme 2015, was renewed in 2010 to account for recent developments and to improve its coherence with other forest-related policies, including biodiversity initiatives and the national climate and energy strategy.

Our forest policies directly promote sustainable forest management in Finland and the achievement of global objectives, including those set by the United Nations Forum on Forests.

Finland's unique forest ownership structure provides a robust basis for sustainable forest management. Our forests are largely owned by families and small-scale forestry represents a significant source of income for many households. This type of ownership encourages sustainable forest management that considers the needs of future generations.

State-owned forests, mainly located in the north, are managed by the state agency Metsähallitus to fulfil multiple functions. The needs of the indigenous Sámi people represent an important consideration regarding forest management in Finnish Lapland.

All of Finland's forests, regardless of their ownership, are maintained according to the principles of sustainable forest management. In addition, our legal tradition gives everyone free access to all forests for recreational purposes, including picking wild berries and mushrooms.

In Finland, we are convinced that our aim to build a 'green economy' will provide unique opportunities for the forest sector locally, nationally and globally. This approach is not only about technology, but is a holistic approach encompassing many social and ecological benefits. It will particularly enhance socio-economic development in rural regions.

The policies needed to reach these goals must go far beyond those of the traditional forest sector. Cross-sectoral approaches and investments are crucial and private sector and financial institutions must also be involved.

By treating these challenges as opportunities, we believe that in Finland we can continue to creatively utilize our sustainably managed forests as a pillar of the national economy and a source of livelihood and well-being for our people.

Jari Koskinen  
Minister for Agriculture and Forestry  
Finland





**ILSE AIGNER, FEDERAL MINISTER OF FOOD, AGRICULTURE AND CONSUMER PROTECTION, GERMANY**

The forest is more than a mere wood supplier. It is a natural habitat and a water filter, a workplace and a place for leisure — and ultimately, it is our number one climate protector.

Germany is the homeland of sustainable forestry. The traditional, sustainable management of the forests, coupled with a well-positioned forestry and wood cluster, make Germany a global player in terms of both production and foreign trading of timber. In addition to this, roughly a quarter of the forested area provides special protection for rare plant and animal species.

One of the biggest challenges of the future lies in the area of tension to be found between an increasing demand for timber on the one hand and effective conservation of forests and nature on the other. Our answer is to be found in sustainable, multifunctional forestry, which combines utilization and protection in many different ways and secures jobs and income, and adds value throughout the region. In this way, the forest is also protected in its function as the most popular excursion and leisure destination in all of Germany.

To ensure that our forest maintains this versatility, Germany has made two groundbreaking decisions this year. One of these was the adoption of a new national 'Forest Strategy 2020', which strives to achieve a new balance between the variety of demands placed on Germany's forests on the one hand and their sustainable efficiency on the other. In addition to this, we agreed to establish a forest climate fund to adapt the forest to the effects of climate change and promote the CO<sub>2</sub> reduction potential of wood. In this way, the positive influence that forests and wood have on our climate will be intensified in the long term.

I hope that *International Year of Forests, 2011* will also have global effects, which will be felt well beyond 2011.

Ilse Aigner  
Federal Minister of Food, Agriculture and Consumer Protection  
Germany



**JAYANTHI NATARAJAN, MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA**

Forests in India are integral to environment, economy, culture and traditions. They provide a range of essential ecosystem services in addition to valuable timber, fuelwood, fodder and non-timber forest products (NTFP) for sustainable livelihood of rural people and forest-dependent communities.

The National Forest Policy, 1988 provides the roadmap for sustainable management of forest with people's participation through Joint Forest Management which is based upon a 'care and share' principle. This, coupled with enactment of supportive acts, provides a sound legal framework to the forest management and ecological security of the country.

In accordance with the Millennium Development Goals, India has taken steps to make an impact on poverty by promoting NTFP development for people living in and around forests for sustenance and supplemental income. The recently launched Green India Mission, one of the missions under the National Action Plan on Climate Change, acknowledges the role of the forestry sector in environmental amelioration through climate mitigation, food and water security, biodiversity conservation and livelihood security of forest-dependent communities and strives for increase in forest cover of 5 million hectares as well as quality improvement of another 5 million hectares.

While addressing the livelihoods of forest-dependent communities — focusing on poverty alleviation and maintaining the habitat of Protected Area Networks for wildlife management — India is one of the few countries where the forest and tree cover has shown an increase of around 3 million hectares between 1997 and 2007, as well as improving quality of life by promoting urban greening in towns and metro cities, such as Delhi, Hyderabad, Chandigarh and Bangalore.

I wish all success to the UNFF for its endeavour in bringing out this landmark publication, *Forests for People* in the International Year of Forests, 2011.

Jayanthi Natarajan  
Minister of Environment and Forests  
Government of India



**MICHIHIKO KANO, MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND FISHERIES, JAPAN**

Japan is one of the most forested countries in the world, with nearly 70 per cent of its total land area covered by forest. It is crucial for Japan to secure and upgrade the environmental services provided by forests and so the challenge ahead of us is to ensure the stable supply of timber with the maximum use of planted forests, to revitalize local communities through expansion of job opportunities and, subsequently, to establish a wood-based low carbon society in order to help the realization of a green economy.

International Year of Forests, 2011 provides us with the opportunity to raise worldwide awareness of the multiple values and the significant contribution to global livelihood forests bring. Japan's National Committee declared 'Walk in the Woods' as the national theme of the year. I believe that each citizen should join the campaign and contribute to the positive outcome of our activities which protect and foster rich forests.

Let us tackle the global issues we face, such as deforestation and illegal logging, and share the wisdom and start to make substantial commitments to our future success.

Michihiko Kano  
Minister for Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries  
Japan





## **HENK BLEKER, MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE AND FOREIGN TRADE, THE NETHERLANDS**

Forests have always played an important role in the Netherlands. In the seventeenth century they provided timber for the construction of the Dutch merchant fleet. Today they serve an important recreational function in this densely populated country.

The ecological value of forests and nature has in the past rightly received much attention. Now there is a growing awareness of the need to involve people, especially the young, in the conservation and development of forests and nature. This can be achieved by ensuring the functions of forests and nature are more closely aligned to the wishes of the public, and that they are easily accessible. Forests are not only there for people, but people are there for forests. This means that forests and nature are protected, managed, maintained and developed by people. The Government is responsible for protecting and enhancing nature. At the same time it believes responsibility for nature and forests should be shouldered across society as a whole. As well as having rights to a public amenity, people also have responsibilities.

That is why I support International Year of Forests, 2011, and its 'Forests for People' theme. The initiative will raise awareness of the role forests can play in sustainable development and a green economy, issues that are central to the Rio+20 UN Conference on Sustainable Development in 2012. But International Year of Forests, 2011 also emphasizes the importance of forests for people. This book shows what people can do to keep forests sustainable. In the Netherlands we also make use of forests outside our national boundaries: over 90 per cent of our annual timber consumption is imported. I therefore believe it is important that the wood we use comes from sustainably managed forests. This is why we are working towards more sustainable supply chains, both for those products which may require forest clearance to provide space for their production, as well for timber. Lastly, many forests disappear because their potential economic value is underestimated. This is why sound and sustainable financing of forest management is important, so their economic value can stimulate their conservation. I hope this book will contribute to the revaluation and therefore the conservation of our forests.

Henk Bleker  
Minister for Agriculture and Foreign Trade  
The Netherlands



Image: Bob Friedlander

**LARS PEDER BREKK, MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND FOOD, NORWAY**

The International Year of Forests, 2011 has given me a unique opportunity to highlight the benefits, opportunities and challenges for forests. The FOREST EUROPE ministerial conference in Oslo in June became a milestone for the work on forest cooperation in our region. As host and co-chairman of the conference I was pleased by the positive outcome. Ministers responsible for forest policies in Europe agreed on future goals, targets and actions for FOREST EUROPE and decided to open negotiations on a legally binding agreement on forests in Europe. Through FOREST EUROPE we have developed strategies for sustainable forest management and tools available for the European region in order to monitor and develop sustainable forest management and support countries in their national forest policy development and implementation.

Reducing deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries (REDD+) will have substantial benefits in addition to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. These include positive impacts on biodiversity and on sustainable economic development, including poverty reduction. Thus, reducing deforestation and forest degradation can produce a triple dividend — gains for the climate, for biodiversity and for sustainable development. This was the background for The Norwegian Climate and Forest Initiative launched during the climate change negotiations at Bali in December 2007. COP 16 in Cancún provided great steps forward and a new momentum in the development of REDD+. REDD+ is a priority area for Norway in our effort to mitigate climate change, and important work has been done during the International Year of Forests.

Norway has domestic experience in the field of forest and natural resources management that is guiding our policies for the future. Through the last hundred years, both the standing stock and the annual growth of forests in Norway have more than doubled, although removals have been relatively stable. Due to this long-term effort, the forest in Norway is currently sequestering a volume of CO<sub>2</sub> similar to half of the country's domestic greenhouse gas emissions. Forests can continue to provide a multitude of benefits for the society. Not less, but more international cooperation is needed in order to fulfil our ambitions for the forests of the world. The International Year of Forests has inspired us to strengthen this cooperation.

Lars Peder Brekk  
Minister of Agriculture and Food  
Norway



**JUAN RAFAEL ELVIRA QUESADA, SECRETARY OF ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES, MEXICO**

Conservation of forests in Mexico is of international importance, because much of the biological diversity of Mexico's forests is unique to this country, and therefore an important contribution to our planet's overall biodiversity.

Besides their importance in environmental terms, Mexico's forests are closely associated with the cultural richness which depicts the country. It is no coincidence that many of the best protected forest areas are managed by indigenous groups, communities and ejidos.

Taking responsibility, the Federal Government, with the help of society, has been given the task to preserve this natural wealth, which is also a heritage of the world.

As a nation we have understood that preserving natural resources is compatible with economic development. Moreover, we have proven that sustainable forest management is a real opportunity for national development and welfare of the population.

The Federal Government is promoting public policies towards sustainable management of the country's forest ecosystem, mainly to strengthen the conservation and restoration tools in order to ensure the continuance of this natural wealth in the present and future.

Juan Rafael Elvira Quesada  
Secretary of Environment and Natural Resources  
Mexico



**ESKIL ERLANDSSON, MINISTER FOR RURAL AFFAIRS, SWEDEN**

As the Minister for Rural Affairs in Sweden I am responsible for forest and forestry issues and, as a forester myself, forests are of great importance to me.

A central theme in how we use our natural resources in Sweden is that they should be used but not overused. Forests are of great economic significance in Sweden. The major part of Sweden's land area is covered by productive forests and they need to be used wisely and with a long-term perspective.

At the same time there are other values to be considered. Swedish forestry and forest policy was early to recognize sustainable resource utilization and to adopt ambitious targets for biodiversity conservation. Forest management in Sweden today acknowledges two equal aims including both production objectives and environmental considerations. This is in line with the concept of sustainable forest management which considers economic, ecological and social aspects of forest management. Most Swedes have a close relationship with the forest and thanks to the Right of Public Access, almost all forests are open for visitors. Sweden is largely defined by its forests. Its 'Forest Kingdom' concept has become a vision as well as a policy programme initiated by the Swedish Government. The main objective is to create new jobs related to forests in Sweden and to help economic development especially in the rural areas. Sustainability is a central theme.

The global context is also a priority in Sweden's 'Forest Kingdom' vision which includes facilitating forest know-how overseas. This UNFF publication is an excellent initiative which gathers information and stories about forests from all over the world and it is with great pleasure that I look back at an international year for the forest. It has highlighted the important role forests play for the well-being of mankind.

Eskil Erlandsson  
Minister for Rural Affairs  
Sweden



**THOMAS J. VILSACK, SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE,  
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

A century ago, Gifford Pinchot, a conservation leader in the United States, realized that both peace and prosperity depended on access to natural resources, including the forests that sustain so many people around the world. He reasoned that forestry and conservation should therefore be world priorities. His reasoning still rings true today. Forests cover about 31 per cent of the world's land area, supplying drinking water to billions of people worldwide. They provide habitat for wildlife, sequester and store carbon and furnish livelihoods for communities around the world. These are just some of the many benefits that people receive from forests.

Today, forestry and conservation have indeed emerged as world priorities, as reflected in the events associated with the International Year of Forests, 2011. The theme for these events, 'Forests for People', highlights the central role of forests in the lives of people around the world — and the key role that people can play in sustaining forests for the benefit of all.

As we look to the future, we would do well to remember that key insight made a century ago: conservation of natural resources through sustainable forest management is central to human peace and prosperity.

Thomas J. Vilsack  
Secretary of Agriculture, United States Department of Agriculture  
United States of America





**DR JACQUES DIOUF, DIRECTOR-GENERAL,  
FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS**

As a key component of the global ecosystem, forests cover one third of Earth's land surface, regulate water cycles and climate and are home to 60-80 per cent of terrestrial biodiversity and hundreds of millions of people.

Forests play a critical role in achieving food security and sustainable development. Foods from forests, such as leaves, fruits, seeds and nuts, provide a critical part of nutritionally poor diets. The collection, processing and sale of forest products, if handled in a sustainable way and promoted through small forest enterprises, can provide income-generating opportunities to people in forest-rich remote rural areas. Moreover, forests contribute to the provision of biodiversity, decrease soil erosion and protect from natural disasters, as well as providing us with clean water – important benefits that are often not quantified.

Forests also have fundamental social functions, such as empowerment, education and health. A natural resource that offers us so many benefits deserves special attention in our quest for sustainable development.

Forest restoration and sustainable forest management can provide a workable solution to using and preserving the world's forests in the long term, to help ensure forests truly remain a key resource for people. Practising sustainable forest management will help make the world's poorest more food secure and better able to live in sustainable, resilient environments. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations' work on the management and protection of all types of forests addresses these challenges to unlock forests' full contribution to sustainable development.

Dr Jacques Diouf  
Director-General  
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations



Image: ©FAO/Simone Casetta

**ACHIM STEINER, UNITED NATIONS UNDER-SECRETARY GENERAL  
AND UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

In 2011, we celebrated the International Year of Forests and these celebrations could not have occurred during a more appropriate time.

Climate change and biodiversity loss have brought forests to the attention of governments, global leaders and millions of people across the world. New kinds of economic analysis of forest ecosystems, from services such as water regulation and soil stabilization to nutrient recycling for agriculture and carbon capture, have also been emerging and attracting the attention of the finance sector and the development community.

By some estimates these services are worth trillions of dollars a year and in many developing country communities they are part of the natural asset base, worth up to 90 per cent of the GDP of the poor.

For the large majority of terrestrial biodiversity and for the 1.6 billion people that depend on forests for their daily livelihood or the various industries that rely on wood or other forest services and goods, it is imperative that forest destruction and degradation is stopped and reversed.

Some countries are now building on the United Nations Environment Programme-hosted partnership — The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity — to assess the rich and wide-ranging value of forests as the first step towards factoring them into national accounts and perhaps a broader indicator of wealth beyond simple GDP.

During the International Year of Forests, 2011 and in the lead up to RIO+20, we have a golden opportunity to place forests in the centre of the necessary and urgent transition towards a green economy while capturing the rich and varied value of one of humanity's key life support systems.

I would encourage countries and communities to see how intelligent public policy allied to smart mechanisms can be designed and deployed to accelerate and scale up sustainable forestry within a green economy as a key strategy towards sustainable development and poverty eradication worldwide.

Achim Steiner  
United Nations Under-Secretary General and  
United Nations Environment Programme Executive Director



**ROBERT B. ZOELICK, PRESIDENT OF THE WORLD BANK GROUP**

International Year of Forests, 2011 presents an important opportunity to take a fresh look at how healthy forests support a wide range of development goals, including energy access, overcoming poverty, food security, and climate change adaptation and mitigation. How can we make the best use of trees as solar-based, renewable sources of fuel and building material? What is the potential of agroforestry to fertilize and retain water for both public and private investment? How can we tap the long experience of indigenous peoples in managing natural resources and adapting to climate change to help maintain forest ecosystems?

The World Bank Group is committed to working with developing countries as partners to preserve and carefully manage these precious natural resources. One good example of this is the Wildlife Premium Market Initiative, a programme to value the wildlife in forests as a complement to ongoing efforts to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD+). We need to recognize the value of forests that are teeming with life: we don't want silent forests.

In the International Year of Forests, 2011 the World Bank Group joins the rest of the world in celebrating the work of preserving forests, reversing deforestation, and promoting the significance of forests for sustainable development. Forests are the lungs of the world. For many creatures, they are also the last wildlife habitats — rich reservoirs of biodiversity, vital ecosystems. They are fundamental to our planet.

Robert B. Zoellick  
President of the World Bank Group



**LUC GNACADJA, EXECUTIVE SECRETARY,  
UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION**

We need to think outside of the box in order to preserve our land and forest resources in drylands, because desertification, which means land degradation in drylands, can easily lead to forest degradation. However, a healthy forest in these habitats can play a multiple role — from buffering against drought and land degradation, to preserving rich biodiversity. Forests cover about 18 per cent of land in drylands, and represent a natural capital for adaptation and mitigation to climate change. More importantly, they offer a safety net against poverty by providing a vital ecosystem of goods and services.

The real significance of forests in drylands, however, is not only the protection of one third of the global population who live there; but for the forests' impact on food security for those of us who live in non-dryland regions. If you consider that 44 per cent of the world's food production systems and 50 per cent of its livestock are in drylands, you will see how important the preservation and restoration of its soil is for all of us. Land degradation over the next 25 years is forecast to reduce global food production by up to 12 per cent, resulting in an increase in world food prices by as much as 30 per cent. For global food security, the availability of land for farming will be key to maintaining medium- and long-term food supplies and price stability. In this regard, agroforestry offers a promising avenue for land restoration, while feeding the poor. Agroforestry is driving the Greening of the Sahel in West Africa, where land improvement is occurring on more than five million hectares.

Land degradation and desertification imply forest degradation and vice versa. If we continue to underestimate the importance of forests in drylands, their sustainable management and conservation activities will never attract adequate technical resources and financial investments. The existing and potential contribution of the drylands will never be realized without investing in the prevention and reversal of forest and tree degradation in the drylands. May we never forget that forests keep the drylands working.

Luc Gnacadja  
Executive Secretary  
United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification



**IRWIN LAROCQUE, SECRETARY-GENERAL, CARICOM**

CARICOM Member States are highly dependent on their natural resources base — limited and threatened though it is — for socio-economic development. Central to our natural resources base is our forestry sector which is characterized by two main structures: those relating to the small islands, and those of the continental countries in the subregion.

Some of the island countries have little of their original forest cover remaining. Population density on those islands is high, and most of the forest was cleared for agriculture, housing and tourism development. The continental countries have low population density with relatively large tracts of forests which offer them greater flexibility for alternative use of their forest resources. The forest resources in the Caribbean are currently used as the major source of watersheds, providing habitat for biological diversity, ecotourism and recreational sites, timber, fuels and other household materials.

In the Caribbean, stakeholder participation has been a significant component of strategies for the management of our forests. There is smooth facilitation of this thrust since most of the forest resources are in public ownership.

The development of programmes by continental Caribbean countries related to the regulation of climate and sequestering of carbon emissions is also a critical component of the management of our forests. And, in the context of the broader development goals of the Caribbean, the forest is being evaluated for its contribution to economic diversification, income generation, and poverty alleviation in keeping with the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Irwin Larocque  
Secretary-General  
Caricom

