



## **ITTO STATEMENT FOR THE AICHI – NAGOYA MINISTERIAL MEETING ON REDD+ PARTNERSHIP**

26 October 2010, Nagoya, Japan

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Your Excellencies, honorable Ministers, distinguished members of the REDD+ Partnership, ladies and gentlemen, colleagues;

ITTO, the International Tropical Timber Organization, is grateful for the opportunity to participate in this Ministerial Meeting. The Organization that I lead is about to complete 25 years of working for the conservation and sustainable management of tropical forests. During this period, major efforts have been done to improve the value attached to the various goods and services provided by the tropical forests. Among the most important of these are initiatives undertaken by ITTO and others to compensate communities and other land owners who conserve and sustainably manage forest resources.

In this framework, the emergence of the REDD+ mechanism represents a breakthrough. For the very first time substantial political, financial, technical and academic support is being put together to allow for the valuation and remuneration of one important forest benefit –mitigation of climate change – while having the potential for substantial impact on other forest related benefits such as biodiversity conservation, landscape restoration, watershed protection, recreation, livelihoods enhancement and others.

As we are aware, REDD+ will not come without challenges. But we are confident that, combining current knowledge and experience in conservation and sustainable management of forests with adequate political and financial support will lead us to positive results. I would like to offer some brief thoughts on factors relevant to ITTO's mandate on tropical forests that I believe will contribute to the successful implementation of REDD+.

ITTO has implemented over 700 projects in the tropics over the past 25 years, and has generated a unique on-the-ground experience on local level problems and their solutions. In building this long-term relationship with our member countries, we learned that the secret of a successful project implementation is to make sure that the beneficiary country is in the driver's seat, playing a leading role in the initiative in order to ensure long-lasting positive impacts and sustainability after project completion.

Another challenge to the success of REDD+ regards the risk of benefiting only a small group of countries. We must ensure that the new mechanism provides opportunities for all tropical countries to engage in it.

The tropical world hosts today around 800 million ha of degraded forests. This is enough evidence of the importance to address forest degradation in the framework of REDD+. Here again, ITTO offers a long-term experience of working with members



and partners in the restoration and rehabilitation of degraded forests with a strong participation of local communities.

In addition to reaching various countries, REDD+ must reach various types of forest. Since more than 80% of tropical forests are outside protected areas, REDD+ must target both protected and production forests. Particularly those production forests that are sustainably managed by Governments, the private sector, local communities and indigenous groups.

A final comment concerns the need for the engagement of the private sector for REDD+ to evolve into a full market-based mechanism. ITTO is already working intensively with the private sector in this area, including through a new Thematic Programme named REDDES – Reducing Deforestation and Forest Degradation and Enhancing Environmental Services. We are proud to have provided a modest but solid contribution to jump start REDD+, with ten REDDES-funded pilot field projects underway in the three tropical regions. Under the ITTO regular programme there are also projects in support of REDD+. These include a public-private partnership between local and national institutions and Seven and I Holdings (a parent company of 7-11 convenience stores) to conserve and realize the carbon storage benefits of Meru Betiri National Park, in East Java, Indonesia. Negotiations are underway with other companies seeking to establish such partnerships in other countries.

Serving as an interface with all stakeholders, as a facilitator and a promoter of these and other initiatives, ITTO is committed to support its member countries in their REDD+ processes. Our organization offers its long-term experience in tropical forests to work together with other development partners in order to make REDD+ a reality as quickly as possible. This is a great opportunity for tropical forests and for those who depend on them for their livelihoods. Together, we will make REDD+ work.

Your Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, I thank you very much for your kind attention.

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