

INTERNATIONAL TROPICAL TIMBER ORGANIZATION



NEWS RELEASE

US\$12.4 MILLION IN NEW FUNDS FOR TROPICAL FORESTS

Biennial work program approved; 12 new projects launched

LA ANTIGUA, GUATEMALA, 19 November 2011: The International Tropical Timber Council (ITTC) announced today at the closing of its Forty-seventh Session additional funding of US\$12.4 million towards the conservation and sustainable management, use and trade of tropical forest resources, including over \$800,000 for the implementation of activities from a new work program for 2012-13. Funding announced at the Session included new pledges as well as those made earlier in 2011.

The Council is the governing body of the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO). It meets at least once a year to discuss wide-ranging issues aimed at promoting sustainable tropical forest management and the trade of sustainably produced tropical timber.

The bulk of funding announced at the Session (over \$10 million) will support the implementation of 12 projects and 1 pre-project (including additional funding for one on-going project). The new projects funded include one to develop a forest productivity information system in Guatemala where the Council Session was hosted and another to further develop a trans-boundary conservation area between Indonesia and the Malaysian state of Sarawak. Two large projects were funded under a new collaborative initiative with the Convention on Biodiversity to develop forestry training institutions in central African member countries and to support biodiversity conservation in Amazon countries. Funds were also provided for a large project to develop and implement a timber tracking system in Africa based on DNA finger-printing and stable isotopes. Other projects will promote community rehabilitation of degraded forests in Ghana, the sustainable use of bamboo in Indonesia, improved forest governance in the Philippines and value-added wood processing in Peru.

Pledges announced at the Session also included additional funding for the implementation of ITTO's thematic program on tropical forest law enforcement (\$225,000) and an on-going program to enhance members' ability to implement CITES listings of tropical timber species (\$230,000). Additional activities will be implemented under these programs starting in 2012.

The funding made available for activities under ITTO's 2012-2013 Biennial Work Program will facilitate ITTO's work related to climate change, enable ITTO's participation in the Rio+20 meeting in 2012, promote wood processing by small and medium-sized enterprises and allow for establishment of a learning network for forest landscape restoration. Funding was also pledged to develop a new Action Plan (2013-2018) for the Organization and for continued work on revising guidelines for sustainable tropical forest management. The Freezailah Fellowship Fund was also topped up by Council, adding \$400,000 to its resources to allow this valuable program to continue offering awards to deserving candidates.

Donors at this session were the governments of Japan, Switzerland, Germany, the USA, Australia and Korea. Funds were also provided by ITTO's Bali Partnership Fund and private sector donors. Descriptions of all newly funded projects and activities will be published on ITTO's website.

The Council also reviewed the status of ratification by members of the International Tropical Timber Agreement, 2006 (ITTA, 2006) during the Session and agreed on transitional measures until its entry into force. The entry into force of this successor agreement to the Organization's current governing treaty (ITTA, 1994) has been delayed due to the slow pace of ratification by members. The Council noted that several members were in the final phases of ratifying the new agreement which will likely lead to its entry into force in 2012.

For more information on ITTO and/or the 47th Council session go to www.itto.int.