



**International Expert Meeting on
Addressing Climate Change through
Sustainable Management of Tropical Forests**

Yokohama, 30 April – 2 May 2008

***Closing remarks by
Emmanuel Ze Meka
Executive Director of the
International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO)***

Madam Katharina Kümayer, Chairperson of the International Tropical Timber Council,
Distinguished guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

We have now come to the closing of this International Expert Meeting on Addressing Climate Change through Sustainable Management of Tropical Forests, after three days of intensive exchange and debate. The issue at stake certainly deserved our efforts, and I am happy to note that the meeting has generated concrete proposals to the International Tropical Council (ITTC) to further strengthen the sustainable management of tropical forests and to integrate the issue of climate change in its policy and project work. I am confident that the Council will value your efforts and that the adoption and implementation of your recommendations will not only further illustrate the importance of forest-related strategies to adaptation to and mitigation of climate change, but also strengthen the capacity of ITTO tropical member countries to tackle this critical issue.

For these results, I would like to thank and congratulate all of you who have taken an active part in this meeting. I would like to thank particularly Madam Katharina Kümayer and Ambassador Kyoji Komachi for their leadership during the meeting

I would like to thank the presenters and facilitators. Their skills and commitment have helped generate lively debate from participants coming from various horizons and concrete conclusions and recommendations for our meeting.

This meeting was certainly very important. But we all know that it was only one step towards harnessing in full the potential of the tropical forest sector to contribute in tackling the issue of climate change.

With the results of our meeting, I trust that we are certainly better equipped to advocate and promote forest related strategies to climate change adaptation and mitigation in any relevant national or international forum, including during the on-going discussions regarding the second period of commitment of the Kyoto Protocol or any post Kyoto arrangement.

But more importantly, the meeting has provided us with clear options to initiate concrete actions without further delay, including through the formulation, adoption and implementation by ITTO of a specific thematic programme aiming at strengthening the sustainable management of tropical forests in the context of climate change.

I wish all of you, and especially those who came from various parts of the world, a safe journey back home. I am looking forward to your continued support to ITTO in its endeavour to speed-up and expand the sustainable management of tropical forests as a means to contribute in tackling the issue of climate change.

Thank you very much for your kind attention and sayonara.