

Welcome to Forest Day

UNFCCC COP 13 Parallel Event

Nusa Dua Bali, 8 December



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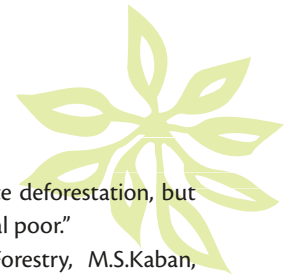
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Below: Frances Seymour opening Forest Day. Above left: Katherine Sierra (World Bank), Frances Seymour, M.S. Kaban (Indonesia's Minister of Forestry), Rudy Rabbinge (Wageningen University) and Ernesta Ballard (Weyerhaeuser) at the closing plenary. Above right: Yvo De Boer (UNFCCC), Don K. Lee (IUFRO), Ze Mekka (ITTO) and Boen Purnama (Ministry of Forestry). Photos by Eko Prianto

A day to remember



“Forest Day enabled us to promote the issues that we believe really matter: getting forests into the climate-change negotiations, and ensuring that REDD projects not only reduce deforestation, but provide livelihoods for the rural poor.” Markku Kanninen

Nobody who attended the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) conference in Bali in December 2007 was left in any doubt about the importance of forests. If we are successfully to tackle global warming, we have to change the way we manage and exploit forests. At present, deforestation and degradation account for around 20 per cent of all carbon emissions. This exceeds the emissions from the entire global transport sector.

Two years earlier, at the 11th session of the Conference of Parties (COP11), discussions began on how to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation – REDD, as it is now known. The following year, the Stern Review, commissioned by the UK Government, suggested that ‘avoided deforestation’ should be an important element in future climate-change negotiations. The Bali Conference – COP13 – made it clear that it will be. The fact that over 800 people attended the first ever ‘Forest Day’, organised by CIFOR and its partners in the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF), indicates how forests have moved to centre stage in the global climate debate.

Forest Day attracted scientists, members of national delegations, representatives from inter-governmental and non-governmental organisations and journalists. “I never dreamt that so many people would attend,” says Markku Kanninen, director of CIFOR’s Environmental Services programme. “Forest Day enabled us to promote the issues that we believe really matter: getting forests into the climate-change negotiations, and ensuring that

REDD projects not only reduce deforestation, but provide livelihoods for the rural poor.”

Indonesia’s Minister of Forestry, M.S.Kaban, gave the welcoming speech on behalf of President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono. Short contributions followed from Frances Seymour, CIFOR’s Director General, Wangari Maathai (via video), winner of the Nobel Peace Prize and founder of the Kenya Green Belt Movement, Katherine Sierra of the World Bank, Victoria Tauli-Corpuz of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, Rudy Rabbinge of Wageningen University and Ernesta Ballard of Weyerhaeuser Company. The main feature of the day comprised four parallel panel discussions, each focusing on themes relevant to forests and climate change. These included: how to estimate carbon stocks; the governance challenges associated with reducing emissions from deforestation and degradation; adaptation to climate change; and how to ensure that the benefits of REDD projects are fairly shared.

The key points to emerge during the discussions were summarised in the closing plenary by CIFOR’s Director General. She outlined the areas where there was a clear consensus. Although significant methodological challenges remain, we have enough information to design mechanisms for reducing emissions from both deforestation and forest degradation. Challenges related to governance pose the greatest risk both to investors in REDD schemes and to local communities affected by them. Much more research needs to be done on this. Adapting to climate change, as well as mitigating climate



Logging and timber processing, Cameroon (Patrick Nyemeck); a woodland-dependent community, Burkina Faso (Daniel Tiveau); forest ravaged by fire, Danau Sentarum National Park, West Kalimantan, Indonesia (Ryan Woo).

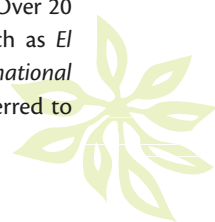
change, is also important, and efforts should focus on the most vulnerable people.

In practical terms, what did Forest Day achieve? "I don't want to claim that we definitely influenced the UNFCCC negotiations," says Kanninen, "but there is undoubtedly a correlation between our recommendations and the text produced by the negotiators." The text recognises that forest cannot be ignored in future climate change deals, and that the focus should not just be on curbing deforestation, but on forest degradation as well. "What this means", reflects Kanninen, "is that sustainable forest management will be included in the final agreement, and this paves the way for introducing measures which will benefit the livelihoods of forest-dwelling people."

Yvo de Boer, UNFCCC Executive Secretary, told delegates that he believed that the Forest Day Summary would help to inform the negotiating process, and the feedback from delegates was overwhelmingly positive. For example, Rudy Rabbinge, Dean of Wageningen University, who is also Chair of the CGIAR's Science Council, wrote in a message to CIFOR's Director General: "I think that

you've reached a wide audience and made clear what role the CGIAR may play in this important field." Alexander Buck, Deputy Executive Director of the International Union of Forest Research Organisations (IUFRO), wrote: "I can only echo what has been said by others before: this was an excellent and highly successful event." And a representative of the International Tropical Timber Organisation (ITTO) expressed his appreciation in these terms: "Apart from setting up message tables outside the meeting rooms, I don't think it could have been better run."

During the Bali conference, CIFOR launched *Do Trees Grow on Money?*, an analysis of research on deforestation in terms of its relevance to policies designed to reduce emissions from deforestation and degradation (see pages 30). This generated considerable media coverage, as did CIFOR's participation throughout COP13. Over 20 newspapers – including heavyweights such as *El Pais*, *Le Figaro*, the *Financial Times*, the *International Herald Tribune* and the *Straits Times* – referred to CIFOR research or quoted CIFOR scientists.



CIFOR's Climate Change and Forests Initiative



CIFOR's Climate Change and Forests Initiative embraces both strands of its climate research agenda: adaptation to climate change and mitigation. Adaptation looks at how governments and communities can enhance the role of forests in adapting to climate change; mitigation examines how forests can be best managed to reduce forest-related carbon emissions and improve rural welfare. The Initiative was launched in September 2007 at the annual meeting of the Clinton Global Initiative (CGI) in New York. The CGI forum brings together people from government, industry, academia and civil society to address global challenges in such areas as health, the environment and development. CIFOR pledged to appoint three new senior scientists to work on climate issues and to host an annual Forest Day in parallel with the UNFCCC's negotiations. CIFOR's Director General, Frances Seymour, was accompanied at the forum by the Director General of Indonesia's Forestry Research and Development Agency and member of CIFOR's Board of Trustees, Ir. Wahjudi Wardoyo, MSc.

A certificate signed by former President Bill Clinton officially recognises CIFOR's Climate Change and Forests Initiative.