

**UNEP/CBD/COP/9/3: Report of SBSTTA13
XIII/2. Review the implementation of the
programme of work on Forest Biodiversity**

SAVE THE WORLD'S FORESTS – Biodiversity & Climate

Climate change is undoubtedly the most serious environmental threat currently facing the planet. Leading IPCC scientists warn that if we allow average global temperatures to rise above 2° Celsius, up to 30% of plant and animal species face increased risk of extinction, and about 15% of ecosystems are likely to be seriously affected. A series of reports released during 2007 by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) acknowledged that climate change is already having heavy negative impacts.

Keeping the global temperature increase below 2°C (compared to pre-industrial levels) means anthropogenic global emissions of GHGs must peak no later than 2015 and that by this time the world must be set on track for drastic reductions in overall emissions.

Forests – and particularly tropical forests – are critical to climate regulation, through the carbon they store, absorb and recycle. However, industrial logging and deforestation for plantations and agriculture are rapidly destroying these natural buffers. The rapid ongoing expansion of these industries is a disaster for both climate and biodiversity.

Deforestation contributes to climate change through substantial GHG emissions: deforestation – mostly of tropical rainforests – accounts for about one fifth of all global emissions. This is more than the emissions from all the world's cars, trucks, and aeroplanes put together. Moreover, climate change – in part driven by forest destruction – may soon tip these carbon stores into sources as forests start to die back.

Forests are more than just Carbon

Forests are essential to life itself; they keep climate in check, regulate water flow, and maintain the healthy ecosystems on which humanity depends. Orangutans, elephants, tigers, and jaguars all make their homes in tropical forests that contain half or more of all land-based species on earth. Protection of biodiversity should prioritize the protection of intact and other important natural forests, such as peatland forests. These store significant amounts of carbon, and are key to protecting biodiversity given negative impacts of climate change.

Up to 150 million indigenous people live in forests worldwide and are guardians of the forests. All too often they have been sidelined or subject to human rights abuses by those intruding into their forests. Indigenous peoples need to have their futures and rights secured.

The 9th Conference of the Parties (COP9) at the crossroads

The in depth review of this programme of work at the 9th Conference of Parties is a unique opportunity for the world's forests. **Greenpeace calls on governments to further strengthen the implementation of the expanded programme** of work on forest biological diversity, in particular in view of the 2010 biodiversity target and the need to reduce carbon emissions from deforestation. The current document UNEP/CBD/COP/9/3: Report of SBSTTA13 XIII/2 lacks any strong recommendation for decision. It recommends to *urge* or to *invite* parties to act. However, in order to strengthen the implementation, COP9 has to make a difference and *decide* upon or *request* parties to act.

Greenpeace calls for the establishment of new forest protected areas and their sustainable and innovative financing, with a focus on forest areas of particular importance for biological diversity, especially large intact forests, along with urgent action to prevent human-induced fires, especially those caused by the agricultural sector, including through the strengthening of relevant governance structures.

Greenpeace considers the designation of protected areas, where all industrial extractive and destructive activities have been excluded, as a key tool for the protection of biodiversity and the achievement of a reduction in emissions from deforestation. Emissions resulting from land-fragmentation, e.g., as a product of road building, are significant in their own right, and add to the emissions that result from land conversion to agriculture and other activities. For example, Greenpeace estimates that in the case of a single logging concession in the Congo Basin over 5 million tonnes of CO₂ would be released as a result of infrastructure development and timber extraction. Although Greenpeace supports environmentally responsible and socially just logging practices in existing ventures, we oppose the expansion of logging operations that lead to an increase in emissions and therefore the extension of carbon financing to such activities.

Greenpeace further urges states to agree international definitions for, amongst others, the following terms: plantations, degraded forests, semi-natural forests and large intact forests (primary forests). In order to avoid loopholes in implementation, these definitions should apply globally and be specific and comparable. However, recognising ecological differences between biomes/ecosystems (e.g. between tropical and northern boreal forests), it may be necessary to further elaborate more specific, biome-based definitions.

The forest biodiversity and climate crisis is of such magnitude that countries cannot afford to wait until 2013 before taking significant measures to decrease deforestation. In particular, the international community must immediately build capacity and provide institutional, technical and financial support to developing countries to reduce forest destruction.

Target the Drivers of Deforestation

Measures must be targeted at the drivers of deforestation: unsustainable consumption and trade in commodities (timber, soya, palm oil, cattle, etc.), land conversion for agriculture and plantations, illegal and destructive logging, poor forest governance and law enforcement, endemic corruption, expansion of the mining sector and other extractive industries and infrastructure development.

In this context, Greenpeace urges states to agree sustainability standards for timber harvesting and mechanisms for timber tracking and licensing for the purpose of combating illegal logging and promoting sustainable use of forest resources. In addition, states should initiate a process towards agreeing common principles and criteria of good forest governance, building on the progress already made in various regional FLEG/T processes and the Amazon Treaty. The outcome of the latter should positively contribute to the ongoing negotiations under the UNFCCC for the establishment of a permanent financing scheme for the reduction of emissions from deforestation and degradation in developing countries (REDD), recognising that good forest governance and effective prevention of illegal logging will be two important parameters of these negotiations.

Rights and Livelihoods of Indigenous Peoples

All aspects of implementation must give due regard to the rights, social needs and livelihoods of indigenous peoples, avoiding in particular land conflicts, increased state control over forests, exclusionary models of forest conservation, violations of customary land and territorial rights. Human rights, free prior and informed consent, equitable benefit sharing, respect for traditional knowledge, and land tenure security must be central components of all policies and discussions. In particular, clear provision must be made – within any mechanism or fund – that recognises the land, resource use and ownership rights of indigenous peoples and directly engage such communities and civil society in international and national processes to discuss policies, mechanisms, and approaches aimed at reducing emissions from deforestation.

There are only two years left to realise the implementation of a global network of forest protected areas and to reduce and halt the loss of biodiversity by 2010. It is high time for courageous and clear commitments at COP9.

Greenpeace urges parties at the 9th Conference of the Parties (COP9) on the following issues in particular:

- To initiate a **Heads of States initiative to increase public funding** for biodiversity conservation significantly towards the estimated **global need of 30 billion Euro per year** for protected areas on land and at sea, including for community conserved areas and collaboratively managed protected areas, **engaging all developed countries** from 1st January 2009 - with **Germany** as the host country of COP 9 taking the first step by donating **new and additional 2 billion Euro per year**;
- To decide that protection of biodiversity shall be fully integrated into future climate change agreements, including agreements on the reduction of emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD);
- To develop a global mechanism to halt illegal logging by 2012;
- To stop perverse subsidies and mandatory targets for biofuels and develop ecological and social sustainability criteria for the production of biomass;
- To apply the precautionary principle by adopting a moratorium preventing release of genetically engineered (GE) trees;
- To integrate the UN Resolution on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples into all relevant decisions and to consult and cooperate in good faith with representatives of indigenous and local communities throughout the entire planning and decision making processes relevant to forest biodiversity;

Greenpeace is welcoming the findings of the in-depth review of the programme of work on forest biodiversity and the report of the **Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on the Review of Implementation of the Programme of Work on Forest Biodiversity** in preparation of the review and invites parties **to make better use of it's findings** on:

Financing Forest Protected Areas

- To provide sustained financing of forest protected areas and adopt innovative financial mechanisms for managing forest protected areas more effectively and establishing new forest protected areas with a focus on forest areas of particular importance for forest biological diversity especially large intact forests;
- The Greenpeace proposal **Forests for Climate** (www.greenpeace.org/forestsforclimate) would be able to provide funds to the greatest number of countries with tropical forests. **Forests for Climate is designed to become a crucial part of the** second phase of the Kyoto Protocol agreements on climate change in 2013. As the climate emergency requires urgent action, countries that commit to **Forests for Climate** could make funding available to protect forests as early as 2009.
- Industrialised nations would be able to meet a proportion of their overall emissions reduction targets through the purchase of cost effective "tropical deforestation units." This "tropical deforestation commitment" would be additional to deeper cuts in their domestic energy and industrial emissions. A minimum mandatory commitment would ensure a steady and significant stream of funds. The billions raised would then be used to help developing countries protect their tropical forests.
- **Forests for Climate** recognises that carbon markets are important tools in climate protection. The cheaper tropical deforestation units would therefore not be directly exchangeable in the markets. This avoids the risk of them bringing down the price of carbon, and reducing incentives to invest in clean and renewable energy technologies.

Climate Change and Forests

- To preserve natural forests and minimise deforestation and forest degradation, applying the principles of ecological and socially responsible forest management and the ecosystem approach, including low impact logging and the rehabilitation of natural forests and forest landscapes as a major contribution to reducing both forest biodiversity loss and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions;
- To seek a commitment from the private sector most relevant for conversion and deforestation to halt any new conversion activities and to engage in a national or sub-national implementation process for the Programme of Work;
- To mitigate human-induced, uncontrolled/unwanted forest and wild-land fires, especially those caused by the agricultural sector, and strengthen relevant governance structures;
- To further integrate forest biodiversity aspects of climate change impacts and response activities into national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs), and into national forest programmes and other forest related strategies, as well as support research to better understand the impacts of climate change on forest biodiversity;

Ecological and Socially Responsible use of Forest Resources, Illegal Logging and Related Trade

- To agree on common principles and criteria for good forest governance, building on the progress already made in various regional FLEG/T processes and the Amazon Treaty;
- To agree on a global mechanism to regulate timber harvesting and trade for the purpose of combating illegal logging and promoting ecologically and socially responsible use of forest resources.
- To request that parties adopt national legislation which prevents the sale of illegal and destructive timber and timber products on the market, incorporating deterrent sanction mechanisms, and to also make use of additional FLEGT options to prohibit the illegal logging and related trade.
- To recognise and strengthen the positive role of market based certification schemes and public procurement policies, which promote the use of timber and/or forest products from legally and environmentally responsible and socially just forest management, and to develop, adopt and promote such measures;

Biofuels and Conversion

- To bring an end to perverse subsidies and mandatory targets for biofuels and develop ecological and social sustainability criteria for the production of biomass;
- To adopt guidelines or standards for the production of bioenergy, which take into account the direct and indirect negative impacts of the production and consumption of bioenergy – in particular biofuels – and other causes of land conversion and forest degradation on forest ecosystems; and

GE Trees

- Recognising that the use of any GURTS will not remove the threat of genetically modified trees to forest biodiversity, call on parties to apply the precautionary approach and to adopt a moratorium on environmental releases of genetically engineered trees, including field trials.

Contact: Martin Kaiser, Greenpeace International,
Tel: +49-40-3061-8321 (office) / +49-171-878-0817 (mobile)