

Foreword

Forests would get more serious attention if people realised how important they are for addressing extreme poverty and illness, violent conflict, corruption, climate change and lack of clean drinking water. Research can provide evidence for that and help shape policy agendas.

Forest policies could benefit poor families, women and ethnic minorities much more if those groups' voices were heard and policy-makers understood the impacts of their actions. Research can facilitate both those things.

Most forestry and conservation projects lack clear objectives, strategies and systems for monitoring and learning from their results. Research can provide information that would enable project managers to become more efficient and effective.

Small-scale forest enterprises and communities need more information about markets and technologies to be competitive and sustainable. Research can help provide that.



For a dozen years now CIFOR and its partners have been doing precisely those sorts of research, and there is more and more evidence we are getting results. Whether it is in Cameroon or Burkina Faso, Nepal or the Philippines, Brazil or Nicaragua, governments, aid agencies, NGOs, researchers, journalists, companies and communities have been using information and tools from CIFOR to improve what they do. This Annual Report tells a few of those stories, but it does not do much more than scratch the surface.

Angela Cropper
Chair, Board of Trustees

Perhaps the example that best symbolises what this effort was all about in 2005 is Liberia's international workshop on community forestry, held outside Monrovia. After years of darkness and destruction in that heavily forest-dependent country, the workshop provided a ray of hope that forests could benefit communities, instead of fueling further violence. It was the first major event ever held in Liberia to discuss how forests could improve the lives of local people, and pretty much all the groups concerned with forests showed up to share experiences, learn from other countries and debate what should happen in the future. CIFOR was proud to be a part of that discussion.



2005 was also the last full year that the two of us will serve as CIFOR's Director General and Board Chair, and we both feel honoured to have had that opportunity. We would like to use this occasion to thank all the many partners, staff members and supporters who have helped make CIFOR such an effective organisation over these past twelve years, and made our own lives a little easier and more enjoyable. You are the ones that made all this possible. As we pass the baton to our successors, Frances Seymour and Andrew Bennett, we are confident that they will make CIFOR even better, and that CIFOR's research will continue to make a difference for people and forests.

David Kaimowitz
Director General



The confluence of the Mamberamo and Wiri Rivers, near Kwerba, Papua, Indonesia. (Photo by Miriam Van Heist)