CIFOR’s strategy 2008 - 2018

Making a difference for forests & people

CIFOR has a new strategy that focuses its resources on critical global issues influencing the world’s tropical forests and the people who depend on them.

“Forests are now receiving a level of attention that we haven’t seen for many years, if ever, and there’s no doubt that climate change is a major reason for this,” said Andrew Bennett, Chair of CIFOR’s Board of Trustees.

“So, CIFOR must ensure it represents the best interests of tropical forests and the people who depend on them, and informs the global climate debate with relevant, thorough and up-to-date research.”

Fittingly, the Board of Trustees has approved a new strategy, which positions the Center to respond to the emerging challenges and opportunities that now characterize the literal and figurative forest landscape, while maintaining...
CIFOR began the process of selecting priority research domains by seeking ideas from staff, board members and external stakeholders. This input was consolidated into a ‘long list’ of 13 candidate research domains. To help reduce the list down to six, CIFOR applied the Delphi approach to priority setting, with reference to a set of criteria identified by CIFOR scientists and management.

At the end of the priority-setting process, six research domains were selected for inclusion in CIFOR’s future research agenda:

1. Enhancing the role of forests in mitigating climate change
2. Enhancing the role of forests in adapting to climate change
3. Improving livelihoods through smallholder and community forestry
4. Managing trade-offs between conservation and development at the landscape scale
5. Managing the impacts of globalised trade and investment on forests and forest communities
6. Sustainably managing tropical production forests

You can download the full version of this CIFOR strategy at [http://www.cifor.cgiar.org/strategy](http://www.cifor.cgiar.org/strategy)
Staying the course on the road to Copenhagen

‘The road from Bali to Poznan and Copenhagen must be paved not with good intentions but concrete actions and rigorous implementation.’


The Bali Action Plan, to which Witoelar was indirectly referring, is a process for negotiating a global climate strategy to succeed the Kyoto Protocol. Crucially, this Plan acknowledges the importance of forests to addressing climate change, and specifically the enormous potential of reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD).

The Plan prescribes two years of consultation - focusing on technical and methodological issues; policy approaches and positive incentives - before final details are agreed at COP15 in Copenhagen, December 2009.

So, as we arrive at COP14 in Poznan, Poland (the halfway point on the road to Copenhagen) can we say that the road so far has been “paved with concrete actions and rigorous implementation?”

Certainly there have been many good intentions announced

In December last year, the World Bank launched The Forest Carbon Partnership Facility, which at last count had accepted 25 countries for support under its ‘Readiness Mechanism’. In September 2008, the UN launched its UN-REDD programme, which promises to deliver assistance in establishing forest monitoring, assessment and reporting systems to nine developing countries. A number of governments, including Australia and Norway, have established bilateral initiatives to assist with REDD design and implementation. And a recent report from the UK, the Eliasch Review, suggests that including the forest sector in carbon markets could provide finance and incentives to reduce deforestation rates by up to 75% by 2030.

So, what can we expect to be achieved in Poznan? Where do we need to be, come the closing plenary on 12 December, to stay on track for Copenhagen?

“We’ll have a first version of negotiating text on the table in Poznan,” said Yvo de Boer UNFCCC Executive Secretary, in a recent interview with the World Business Council for Sustainable Development.

“I don’t think we need to have specific numbers for individual countries in Poland. But I do hope that Poland will shed more light on where the group of industrialised countries as a whole need to be going by 2020 . . . in a way, the whole picture needs to come together in Copenhagen.”

Frances Seymour, CIFOR’s Director General, says the challenge is to maintain the momentum that was generated in Bali.

“In Bali, the world’s attention was firmly on forests, which ensured the agreement recognised the significance of forests to climate change,” says Seymour.

“In Poznan, further progress will depend on how well the ‘willingness to pay’ on the part of industrialised countries lines up with the ‘willingness to play’ on the part of developing countries, when it comes to REDD.

“For example, there are concerns that the current financial crisis will undermine the ‘willingness to pay’ of industrialised countries, both in terms of political will to finance reductions in forest-based emissions, but also to make commitments to significant reductions in emissions overall.

“At the same time, a key challenge will be reaching an agreement that targets emissions reductions in a way that optimises trade-offs between efficiency and equity, which is necessary to support the ‘willingness to play’ of countries that are concerned about equitable distribution of funds.

“At the end of the day,” says Seymour, “the challenge for us all on the road to Copenhagen is to stay the course.”

Story by Tim Cronin, CIFOR

“In Poznan, we need to ensure that the “willingness to play” on the part of industrialised countries lines up with the “willingness to pay” on the part of developing countries, when it comes to REDD.”

Frances Seymour
CIFOR
Climate change has spawned many new buzzwords. The following list may help you better understand some of these terms as they apply to forests.

**Adaptation:** naturally occurring or synthetic adjustments in natural or human systems that try to reduce the harm or exploit the benefit from global warming.

**Afforestation:** planting new forests on lands that have not previously contained forests.

**Anthropogenic emissions:** greenhouse gases associated with human activity, such as deforestation from logging.

**Biofuels:** fuel from renewable biological sources, such as plants. Sources linked with deforestation include palm oil and soy beans.

**Carbon Dioxide (CO2):** a naturally occurring gas, as well as a by-product of burning fossil fuels and biomass, or other land use changes and industrial processes.

**Carbon sequestration:** the uptake and storage of carbon. Trees absorb carbon dioxide and release the oxygen via photosynthesis.

**Carbon sink:** areas that absorb and retain a high concentration of CO2, such as oceans, soil and forests. Can be artificial too.

**Carbon tax:** surcharge levied on energy sources that emit carbon dioxide into the atmosphere.

**Clean Development Mechanism (CDM):** scheme that helps industrialised countries meet their Kyoto Protocol emission targets by investing in emission reduction activities in developing countries.

**Climate change:** a gradual change in the “average weather” that a given region experiences due to changes in concentration of atmospheric greenhouse gases.

**Conference of the Parties (COP):** a decision-making body comprised of the parties that have ratified the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change.

**Deforestation:** the change of forested lands to non-forest uses.

**Ecosystem services:** the benefits that an ecosystem provides to human life. Forests provide food, water, timber, fibre; they regulate climate, floods, disease, and water quality; they also deliver “cultural services” such as recreational, aesthetic, and spiritual pursuits.

**Ecosystem:** A community of organisms and its physical environment.

**Global warming:** the average increase in the Earth’s temperature, which leads to changes in the climate.

**Greenhouse effect:** occurs when gases such as CO2 prevent the heat generated by the sun and radiated back from the earth to escape the Earth’s atmosphere.

**Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC):** a joint UNEP-WMO body responsible for providing the scientific and technical foundation for the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

**Kyoto Protocol:** an international agreement to reduce greenhouse gas emissions as much as 5 percent from the 1990 level, in order to slow global warming.

**Mitigation:** taking actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and to enhance carbon sinks aimed at reducing the extent of global warming.

**Payments for environmental services:** schemes where beneficiaries of ecosystem services pay those who manage them to ensure the services continue.

**Peat:** an accumulation of partially decayed vegetation matter. Peat forms in wetlands variously called bogs or moors, and peat swamp forests.

**Planted forest:** wooded land where trees have been established through planting or seeding.

**Primary forest:** wooded land of native species largely untouched by human activities and where the ecological processes are not significantly disturbed.

**REDD (reduced emissions from deforestation and forest degradation):** a mechanism aimed at reducing global greenhouse gas emissions by compensating countries for avoiding deforestation and degradation.

**Reduced impact logging (RIL):** planned and carefully controlled tree felling to minimise the impact on the surrounding environment.

**Reforestation:** establishment of forest plantations in areas regarded as former forest lands.

**Stern Review:** 2006 report by Sir Nicholas Stern for the British Government that examines the effect of climate change on the world economy. Not the first such report but perhaps the most influential.

**UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC):** 1992 treaty calling for the stabilisation of greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would not affect the climate.

*Story by Greg Clough, CIFOR and USAID*
Forest Day 2
UNFCCC COP 14 Parallel Event
Poznan, 6 December 2008
Forests are now at the very center of the climate change debate

What is Forest Day 2?
Forest Day 2 will bring together the world’s pre-eminent forest stakeholders, agenda setters and policy makers to address the key forest and climate issues of our time:

- Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation (REDD)
- Climate change adaptation
- Sustainable forest management
- Poverty, livelihoods, equity and justice
- Data collection, baselines and methodologies
- Rights, compliance, law and enforcement
- Forest investment and environmental service payments

What is happening on Forest Day 2?
Diverse and dynamic fora for community, civil society, corporate and government participants to present findings, engage in dialogue and develop solutions.

- Plenaries, cross-cutting sessions, side events, poster session and exhibition booths
- Field trip (Sunday, 7 December, organized by the Polish State Forests NFH)

Co-hosted by CIFOR, the Government of Poland & the Polish State Forests NFH, and the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF): CIFOR • CBD Secretariat • FAO • GEF Secretariat • ICRAF • ITTO • IUCN • IUFRO • UNCCD Secretariat • UNDP • UNFF Secretariat • UNFCCC Secretariat • UNEP • World Bank

For more information: cifor-forestday@cgiar.org
www.cifor.cgiar.org/Events/COP14-ForestDay/forest_day2008.htm
Indonesia’s globally important biosphere, Tanjung Puting National Park (TPNP), could serve as a potential site for demonstrating a range of activities for reducing carbon emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD).

The finding was made in a preliminary survey by CIFOR’s Daniel Murdiyarso. It comes at a time when environmentalists have been expressing concerns about the impact of oil palm development on the 400,000 ha park.

TPNP, in Central Kalimantan, is well known for its orangutan rehabilitation centre run by the Orangutan Foundation International (OFI), six hours via road and river from the district capital, Pangkalan Bun.

However, it’s not just the 6,000 orangutans that make the area attractive for REDD trials, according to Murdiyarso, it is the park’s overall biodiversity and range of ecosystem services.

“Tanjung Puting is a national treasure and a world eco-icon. UNESCO gave it biosphere status for its ecodiversity and potential to demonstrate a balanced relationship between humans and the environment,” Murdiyarso says.

The region’s rich biodiversity includes 220 bird species, 17 reptile species and 29 mammal species, including the long-tailed macaque, the agile gibbon and the Malayan sun bear. Tree species include ramin, ulin and jelutung. According to UNESCO, over 100,000 people live in the biosphere, with most of them relying on subsistence agriculture and, increasingly, tourism dollars.

Murdiyarso is concerned about TPNP’s future. Some 16,000 ha in the north of the park have already been cleared for oil palm, according to the Los Angeles Times.

Further south, where Murdiyarso undertook his survey, more forest may be removed if several companies now planning to develop 60,000 ha of oil palm get local government approval.

Between the 60,000 ha and TPNP lies an important strip of peat forest, which falls under the central government’s jurisdiction. Not only is it a local livelihood source, if carefully managed it could serve as a protection buffer for the park.

The key to this may be its REDD potential. Parts of the zone carry over 150 m$^3$ of timber per hectare, equaling the kinds of carbon density needed to attract REDD funding and offer a viable alternative to oil palm.

“They need to discuss all the issues: jobs, social cohesion, the environment. Local people depend on the forests here for food, materials, watershed protection and other environmental goods and services,” Murdiyarso says.

He stresses that oil palm and tourism are both important for economic development. But TPNP offers the added benefit of conserving important species and protecting environmental services important for people’s development. And it may not be long before investors and governments around the world are willing to pay to preserve the forests that protect these species and services.

Murdiyarso says several scenarios are under consideration to safeguard the strategic strip of forest.

OFI suggests the central government should upgrade the status of buffer zone to Forest for Special Purposes (KHDTK). But Murdiyarso fears this may take too long, as it pits the central government against the local government and its oil palm plans.

Daniel feels OFI and other stakeholders could apply to manage the strip under an Ecosystem Restoration Permit. This would be more acceptable to local interests as the permit holders could promote activities such as a logging moratorium, biodiversity and landscape maintenance, accelerated natural regeneration, enrichment planting and local livelihood activities.

This would conserve the forests and their ecosystems and also earn money by being linked to among others, UN-promoted demonstration REDD activities and through emerging carbon markets.

Murdiyarso’s survey was supported by: USAID, Orangutan Conservation Service Program, Orangutan Foundation Indonesia and World Education.

*Story by Greg Clough, CIFOR and USAID*
In early October, CIFOR made its presence felt at the fourth World Conservation Congress in Barcelona. The event was spearheaded by the International Union for Nature Conservation (IUCN), and brought together over 5,000 participants to discuss solutions for the world’s most pressing environment and development issues.

For CIFOR, it was an important opportunity to showcase its project activities and communicate vital research findings.

CIFOR kicked off its involvement with a Forest Pavilion event to discuss the recommendations from a recent, somewhat controversial, report - “Conservation and Use of Wildlife-Based Resources: The Bushmeat Crisis.” The report was co-published by the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and co-authored by the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) and Overseas Development Institute (ODI). The event involved several authors of the report discussing the practical implementation of these recommendations.

The following day, CIFOR hosted events on “Participatory Modelling for Sustainable Landscapes” and “Tracking Outcomes in Forest Landscapes,” before collaborating with The Samdhana Institute on two events that sought to find sustainable forestry solutions in some of the world’s most biologically rich, yet economically poor regions on earth - the Congo Basin (“Poverty in the Midst of plenty”) and Papua.

During the Congress, CIFOR’s Director General, Frances Seymour, moderated several events on behalf of CIFOR’s partners and collaborators, including the launch of the World Resources Report 2008, hosted by the World Resources Institute (WRI), and a popular session hosted by the Natural Resources Defence Council (NRDC) on “Illegal Logging, Timber Trade and Climate Change: Making Connections and Identifying Solutions.”

Currently, a growing number of conservation approaches revolve around strengthening the land tenure rights of local communities, in order to provide the incentive and framework for these communities to manage their natural resources sustainably. In conjunction with IUCN and the Commission on Environmental, Economic, and Social Policy (CEESP), CIFOR hosted an event that explored the “Issues and Opportunities in Rights-Based Approaches to Conservation.”

The Fourth World Conservation Congress may not have solved all the world’s problems, but it provided the opportunity for like-minded individuals and organisations to join hands and take a step in the right direction.

**Story by Tim Cronin, CIFOR**

“Forests are being hailed as a potential solution to the global climate crisis,” said Frances Seymour, CIFOR Director General. “Huge sums of money are being projected to conserve tropical forests – sums that could finally convert the political and economic priorities that drive deforestation.”

“But carbon sequestration is not the only reason why forests are important. Forests harbour over half of the world’s terrestrial biodiversity; they sustain the livelihoods of over a billion people worldwide; and they provide a whole range of other ecosystem services, including water filtration, soil stabilisation, and the raw ingredients for much of the world’s medicine,” added Seymour.

“With this new strategy we’ve tried to find the right balance we seek. To respond to the opportunities presented by this unprecedented focus on forests, without losing sight of our core purpose, which is to advance human well-being, environmental conservation, and equity.”

**Story by Tim Cronin, CIFOR**
Asia Pacific Forestry Week

Organised by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO), Asia Pacific Forestry Week brought together over 700 participants from governments, NGOs, research institutions, regional and international networks, UN agencies, the private sector, the media and the broader forestry community. The theme for the event was “Forestry in a Changing World.”

CIFOR’s involvement included co-hosting two plenary sessions, launching a number of books, and promoting countless publications and other materials through its exhibition booth.

On Wednesday, 23 April, CIFOR - in conjunction with FAO - co-hosted a plenary session on Forests and Climate Change.

This event provided the platform for a range of experts, enthusiasts and decision makers to raise key issues in relation to climate change mitigation and adaptation. CIFOR’s Daniel Murdiyarso delivered one of two keynote presentations (‘Entering a Readiness Phase for Full REDD Implementation’) while Markku Kanninen moderated the panel session on Climate Change Mitigation and Bruno Locatelli was a panelist for the session on Adaptation.

While a broad range of issues were discussed, there was general consensus that our window of opportunity to respond is small, and yet as crucial as ensuring the response is implemented promptly is ensuring that the response is designed properly. This means addressing issues from outside the forestry sector and ensuring that poverty alleviation is core to any strategy.

“Although poverty will not be totally alleviated by forests, the loss of forests will have disastrous and unprecedented impacts on poverty,” said Boone Kauffman, US Forest Service, in his keynote address on “The Vulnerability of Forests to Climate Change.”

In its capacity as host of the Secretariat of the Asia Forest Partnership (AFP), CIFOR also co-hosted the plenary dialogue on “Timber Trade, Forest Law Compliance and Governance.” This event was organised in collaboration with the Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES), The Nature Conservancy (TNC), the Department for International Development (DFID) and the Ministry of Forestry of Indonesia (MoF).

The event was moderated by Rico Hizon, BBC Asia Business and Finance Correspondent, who commenced proceedings by confidently proclaiming “WE WILL FIND THE SOLUTIONS!” He continued to foster an upbeat mood for the dialogue, which saw a broad cross-section of stakeholders engage

Continued on page 12
Over 150 forest experts and enthusiasts - representing government, research institutions, universities, civil society, forest communities and donors - participated in the inaugural Forest Day Central Africa, held on 24 April in Yaounde, Cameroon. The event, organised by CIFOR’s Regional Office for Central Africa, saw lively discussions and timely presentations about issues related to forests and climate change mitigation.

The significance and success of the event was reflected in the high-level participation, featuring representatives from the Cameroon Ministry of Forests, Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Scientific Research and Innovation, the Vice-President of the National Assembly, and several Members of Parliament.

“I believe the day was a success because people from so many different backgrounds attended,” says Cyrie Sendashonga, Regional Coordinator of CIFOR’s Central Africa office. “The programme was designed to have input from as many people as possible. Clearly there was a need throughout the region to know more about forests and climate change mitigation and to incorporate the specific needs of this region in designing successful REDD mechanisms.”

Reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD) has featured heavily in discussions about climate change since it became clear that deforestation accounts for almost a quarter of total greenhouse gas emissions. While the issue unites a wide range of stakeholders, from the private sector to indigenous communities, Forest Day sessions made it clear that many challenges remain before an effective system can be put in place.

During her opening speech, Sendashonga pointed out that, “REDD poses a risk if it’s implemented in a context of bad governance and inadequate institutional framework.”

Other participants stressed the speculative nature of the REDD debate. “The results of the negotiations are uncertain and prices of agricultural products are rising,” said Claus Falkenberg of German Cooperation (GTZ). “Moreover, there is a lack of data to evaluate forest loss in Central Africa.”

Much discussion evoked the question of what impact REDD will have on rural poverty in the region. According to Patrice Bigombe of the Research Center for Sustainable Development in Central Africa (CERAD), weak tenure rights will severely hamper REDD profits for local communities. “Traditional forest rights are often not recognised, leaving it open-ended who is to pay for conserving the forest,” he observed.

Other issues that emerged were the need to build capacity in the region, to ensure that indigenous people and forest communities take part in REDD negotiations, and the fact that forest degradation is much more an issue for the Congo Basin forests than deforestation, making it essential that degradation is featured in any REDD mechanism.

Sendashonga said in her closing remarks that the Commission of Central African Forests (COMIFAC) welcomed the idea of making Forest Day an annual event under COMIFAC’s leadership.

Story by Janneke Romijn, CIFOR
At the Ninth Conference of the Parties of the Convention on Biological Diversity, representatives from leading conservation and research organisations debated the importance of landscape approaches to forest conservation and management. At the centre of this discussion was the question of whether landscape approaches, which have been presented as potential solutions for mediating the trade-offs between conservation and development, are relevant and effective, and if so, for whom?

The discussions centred on tropical forest landscapes, which “are typically characterised by weak institutions for environmental governance in complex, changing landscapes of forests, agriculture and other land uses,” said Jeffrey Sayer of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), who chaired the event.

The role of research in informing and achieving landscape level conservation was explored by Meine van Noordwijk of the World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF) and Alain Billand of the Agricultural Research Center for International Development (CIRAD).

Van Noordwijk’s presentation focused on the question of how research can alter the trajectory of landscapes that are moving from forests to intensive agriculture, in order to preserve forest cover. Forest cover in these areas has functional, direct uses for local communities, as well as preserving connectivity among larger forest reserves.

Billand emphasised the need to bring diverse stakeholders together for landscape management. While an ideal future for landscape approaches would bring together different stakeholders, with the security of contractual agreements, Billand acknowledged that landscapes are also shaped by informal practices.

The panel discussion, which followed the presentations, largely complemented what the speakers presented. Gillian Shepherd, from the Overseas Development Institute (ODI) and IUCN Commission on Ecosystem Management, described the multiple uses of landscapes and their resources for local communities, and stressed that first priority should be local livelihoods.

Andre Kamden Toham, from the WWF Central African Regional Programme Office, emphasised the need to ensure that good governance and management are in place, and the engagement of local communities enhanced through payments for environmental services.

Jane Carter, from Intercooperation, discussed the interests of donors, that often focus on the development of the rural poor rather than conservation. She also stressed the importance of a multi-stakeholder approach that included partnerships between government agencies, civil society and local communities.

Finally, Robert Nasi, from CIFOR, argued that landscape approaches were beneficial to the forestry sector as the activities of land users beyond the forest concession can often impact the forest in negative ways, ultimately adversely affecting certification status.

The most common theme that emerged from the event was the need for a multi-stakeholder approach, which develops a shared long-term vision of the management of a landscape. Ultimately, the participants acknowledged that the ideas behind landscape approaches are worthwhile, but their application has not been consistent, and the need is greater than ever.

Story by John Watts, CIFOR and AusAID
On 15 October, CIFOR and the Forestry and Forest Products Research Institute Japan (FFPRI), with support from the Embassy of Japan and the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), hosted the inaugural CIFOR Japan Day, at CIFOR’s headquarters in Bogor.

The purpose of the event was to create momentum for a more flexible and multi-faceted relationship between Japanese and CIFOR scientists by introducing relevant Japanese activities in forestry research and technical cooperation. The event also included a number of posters on display, which enabled interested parties to learn about specific initiatives and to discuss opportunities for potential collaboration.

“We owe an enormous debt of gratitude to Japan for the significant financial support provided during CIFOR’s formative years, and we continue to value ongoing scientific and policy-oriented partnerships,” said Frances Seymour, CIFOR Director General, in her welcoming remarks. “This workshop builds on discussions that came out of a seminar in Tokyo in June on reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD). We are here today to set a platform for future collaboration.”

His Excellency Mr. Kojiro Shiojiri, Japanese Ambassador to Indonesia, echoed these remarks. “Forests are hugely important for sustainable development, which is closely linked to addressing deforestation and degradation.”

Speakers included Professor Masahiro Amano, from Waseda University, a key advisor to the Japanese Government on climate change, Kenji Fukuyama, Principal Research Coordinator for FFPRI, Yasuhsa Tanaka, Chief Advisor for JICA, and Professor Toshihisa Honma, Hokkaido University. They were joined by a broad range of experts on issues including timber product trade, participatory management, biodiversity and climate change.

Participants stressed the complementarity between the expertise of Japanese scientists on biophysical research methods, and CIFOR’s strengths in socio-economic and policy-oriented research approaches.

“Future collaboration should combine these to enhance the ‘human dimension’ of forestry research,” said Gen Takao, Task Manager, CIFOR-Japan Project. “In this complicated world, with a lot of competing interests, today we clearly recognised that collaboration was the key to achieving genuine impact through our research.”

Collaborative efforts between CIFOR and Japan have included a long-term project on “rehabilitation of degraded tropical forest ecosystems (1996-2005)” and an ongoing project on “sustainable utilisation of diverse forest environmental benefits,” which promotes sustainable forest management in Indonesia through the use of satellite imagery and geographic information systems.

Story by Widya Prajanthi and Tim Cronin, CIFOR
The following letter was written to the editor of Nature – an international weekly science journal – in response to an editorial published on 22 May 2008, titled “Two Symbols, One Solution.” It was penned by CIFOR’s Doug Sheil and The Nature Conservancy’s Erik Meijaard.

SIR – Your editorial cautioning against how condescending it can be to focus on species over people (Nature 453, 427; 2008) resonates with our experience in Indonesia. But symbols are powerful—perhaps what we need are a new set of symbols. The appeal of charismatic animals and idyllic forests is not universal. Indeed criticising these western icons, which privilege animals over people, has become an easy rallying cry for local leaders the world over, tarnishing conservation as new colonialism. Recently a candidate for the Governorship of East Kalimantan (Indonesian Borneo) commented that choices between people and orangutans (Pongo pygmaeus) should favour people. In Indonesia, where until 2005, 52.4% of the people lived on less than USD 2 per day (UNDP, Human Development Index; 2007) such politically pragmatic opinions are unlikely to change soon. Here the iconic images are of the noble fight against poverty—wild animals are largely irrelevant.

We all need to listen to learn. In one of our conservation programmes, local community members recently told us that they are the orang-utan (=forest people), “Why don’t you help us first?” In a democratic world we need to find other ways to answer such questions about conservation and development (M. Padmanaba and D. Sheil Bull. Brit. Ecol. Soc. 16, 1137; 2007). People in developing countries are seldom anti-conservation per-se, though they often resent the conservation imposed on them. There is a need to develop a common language, as well as icons for environmental conservation that translate across cultures.

What can these icons be? Images to represent conservation practice might include people negotiating over maps—the idea of seeing how and where communities and governments are willing to support conservation. Another might be the dollar-sign—“$” that the wealthy may need to pay for offsetting opportunity costs of their own kind of conservation. The symbol of knowledge represents the need to generate and transfer useful environmental science (D. Sheil and E. Meijaard Bull. Brit. Ecol. Soc. 38, 75; 2007). One more would be the ballot—the idea that conservation needs to have the same kinds of democratic checks and balances we require in other societal choices. These abstract process-based ideas are unfortunately less photogenic than fluffy animals, but they lie at the basis of reducing loss of tropical forests, and through that save orangutans and other species.
If current levels of hunting persist in Central Africa, bushmeat protein supplies will fall dramatically, and a significant number of forest mammals will become extinct in less than 50 years,” said Robert Nasi of CIFOR, an author of the report. The report sums up the latest state of knowledge on this controversial issue and makes a strong case for developing a regulated and legalised bushmeat industry to ensure that the poorest forest dwellers can continue to access this vital source of protein and livelihoods, but in a more sustainable way. The report notes that it is important to make a clear distinction between commercial entrepreneurs, who engage in what they know to be an illicit activity, and poor rural people, for whom bushmeat represents both animal protein and a cash-earning commodity. “If local people are guaranteed the benefits of sustainable land use and hunting practices, they will be willing to invest in sound management and negotiate selective hunting regimes,” said Frances Seymour, Director General of CIFOR. “Sustainable management of bushmeat resources requires bringing the sector out into the open, removing the stigma of illegality, and including wild meat consumption in national statistics and planning.” “Reframing the bushmeat problem from one of international animal welfare to one of sustainable livelihoods—and part of the global food crisis—might be a good place to start,” she added.

Story by Jeff Haskins, Burness Communications

Illegal logging
The need to look beyond the chainsaw

Since the 1990s, global concern over illegal logging in tropical forests has grown. Numerous initiatives have been established and agreements signed to promote the sustainable use of forest resources and combat illegal forest practices.

The European Union’s Action Plan on Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) is one of the most comprehensive and ambitious attempts of timber-consuming countries to reduce illegal logging.

However, a lack of understanding of what causes illegal logging jeopardises the success of any action, according to CIFOR researcher Paolo Cerutti.

“Although there is a lot of concern about illegal logging, the real nature and extent of the phenomenon are often unclear, as many developing countries don’t produce comprehensive data about their forestry sector,” says Cerutti.

He describes the situation in Cameroon, a country that is often thought to have a high amount of illegal logging.

“Since data is scarce, it’s hard to prove the extent of illegal logging in Cameroon. And if you don’t know exactly the problem, it’s hard to find effective solutions,” says Cerutti.

“The amount and quality of data about industrial wood production and export in Cameroon have improved in recent years, but we don’t know much about logging for the domestic market.”

“What is the impact of these small-scale logging operations on the national economy? On urban and rural livelihoods? On biodiversity? This lack of data makes it very difficult to propose viable policy options for the logging sector.”

In order to gain a better understanding of the scope and impact of the domestic timber markets in Central Africa, CIFOR will conduct a two-year study in Cameroon and Gabon, the main timber exporting countries in the region.

The data collected will assist the governments in shaping their forest policies. The information will also help the European Union, and other external partners, to assess the impacts of FLEGT and other forest policies on sustainable forest management and livelihoods.

Small Logging Enterprises
CIFOR research has shown that illegal logging and exports in Cameroon have not been as prevalent as some figures suggest. Research has also revealed that illegal logging in the Central African country is partly caused by small-scale operators who have no legal options to harvest timber.

“While international attempts to reduce illegality in the forest sector tend to focus on industrial logging, the problem is to some degree at the local level,” explains Cerutti.

“Bureaucracy and regulations that don’t take into account the specific circumstances of small-scale operators have obstructed the efforts of these informal businesses to operate legally. Improving the professional skills of these entrepreneurs and regulating their activities could have a big impact on both livelihoods and illegal logging.”

Voluntary partnership agreements
One of the elements of the EU’s FLEGT Action Plan is Voluntary Partnership Agreements (VPAs) with timber producing countries that wish to eliminate illegal timber from their trade with the EU. The agreement involves a licensing scheme and a definition of “legally-produced timber”.

Cameroon is one of the first African countries to negotiate a VPA with the European Union.

While the agreement is likely to include a reference to livelihoods, to ensure that any action against illegal logging is fair and equitable, exactly how this will be achieved is not yet clear, according to another CIFOR researcher, Guillaume Lesueur.

“To measure the impact of FLEGT on livelihoods, you need more data about the informal timber sector in the country. How many people work in this sector? How much money do they make? What logging method do they use? What is the impact on the local biodiversity? These are questions we will try to answer with this study.”

*Story by Janneke Romijn, CIFOR*
Forest governance and decentralisation in Africa
Sharing lessons and seeking opportunities through dialogue

From April 8 to 11, 2008, the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry of South Africa and the Federal Office for the Environment of Switzerland co-hosted the “Workshop on Forest Governance and Decentralisation in Africa,” a country-led initiative in support of the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF).

The workshop, held in Durban, South Africa, brought together stakeholders from government, civil society and regional and international organisations to share experiences on decentralisation and forest governance from across Africa, through presentations, round-table discussions, field trips and information sessions.

Participants explored: the history of decentralisation reforms on the continent; the relationship between decentralisation and rural livelihoods; means of reconciling biodiversity conservation and environmental service protection with decentralised decision making; forest sector finance and governance reforms; and the management of international trade and investment (most notably, timber and carbon) to ensure benefits flow to forest communities.

Keynote speakers questioned whether democratic decentralisation has been achieved on the continent; stressed the need to build upon the web of institutions and informal networks through which local aspirations and capabilities are most often manifest; and argued for a new institutional architecture for forest governance in the context of expanded forest-based trade and investment based on the principle of checks and balances.

Workshop participants and other speakers stressed the need to remove regulatory constraints to local communities, ensure the downward accountability of local authorities, strengthen local forest tenure rights, and create opportunities for more transparent and deliberative decision making in the sector.

There was also some consensus on the need to align tenure with institutional capacity to manage forests sustainably, in reference to large areas of state forests managed unsustainably due to insufficient human and financial capacity to regulate access.

Field trips included visits to local communities benefiting from South Africa’s land restitution process, field sites of the “Working for Water” programme, research sites where the impact of plantations on stream flow is being assessed, and certified plantations of MONDI. These provided a concrete demonstration of how forest tenure reforms, cross-sectoral approaches to water governance and the influence of international markets on corporate practice are playing out within the host country.

The initiative was co-sponsored by South Africa, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, Norway, the United States of America, Germany and Finland. Technical support was provided by CIFOR and Intercooperation.

Story by Laura German, CIFOR

“The principle of ‘subsidiarity’ should be applied, so that forest management functions are handed to the lowest possible level where agreed aims can be achieved. This will need to go hand in hand with efforts to build human and financial capacity.”

Laura German
CIFOR
April, 2008: Staff from CIFOR’s Information Services Group (ISG) gathered at the International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI) campus in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, to explore and experiment with knowledge sharing (KS) principles and methods. The event was the culmination of a three-phase workshop on Information, Communication and Technology – Knowledge Management (ICT-KM), involving 40 participants from CGIAR Centres, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO) and the Forum for Agricultural Research (FARA).

Dina Satrio and Yuan Oktafian attended a series of sessions designed to improve the participants’ understanding and appreciation of the role and value of KS in research and institutional arenas; to increase their capacity to apply KS concepts and approaches; and to foster interaction among CGIAR staff and research partners.

Participants were encouraged to apply the theoretical principles of KS to actual examples from the workplace that aim to enhance creativity, information sharing, and most notably, interactive collaboration among users. Yuan focused on the ongoing development of CIFOR Web 2.0, while Dina focused her attention on promoting usage of the CIFOR Intranet.

“Having both online and face-to-face workshops has given us interesting perspectives on two different ways of working together,” added Dina. “While technology can provide opportunities to interact with more flexibility and less expense, it cannot match the atmosphere and teamwork that is captured face-to-face.”

Budhy Kristanty and Widya Prajanthi, from CIFOR’s Communications Unit, attended a workshop on “News Story Development,” held from 14 – 17 April. The objectives were to identify news story ideas; enhance the skills of CGIAR communications staff; and foster collective and collaborative action across the CGIAR communications teams.

Twenty participants representing 10 of the 15 Centres were in attendance.

Specific guidance was provided on how to develop press releases, identify powerful messages, make a story newsworthy, pitch stories and maintain solid links with national and international media.

“It was very important for us to join this workshop in order to enhance our skills in story development and media outreach, as well as to build our communications networks across the CGIAR centres,” said Widya.

“Before coming to Ethiopia, I didn’t realise how diverse, complex and dynamic some of these CG issues are. I now have a far better understanding of the many research activities that are going on around the world and how they relate to the work of CIFOR.”

Widya’s sentiments were echoed by Budhy. “Often, there is a challenge for CIFOR to fit in with CGIAR objectives and themes, which are obviously focused on agriculture, while we’re all about forestry.”

“It was very worthwhile to meet face-to-face so we could get a better understanding of what these themes are and how we can fit in,” said Budhy. “Already we’re pursuing a number of initiatives that tie in with other centres and I look forward to further strengthening these relationships.”

The “News Story Development” workshop concluded with a field trip to the ILRI and International Water Management Institute (IWMI) project site in DebreZeit, some 50 km from Addis Ababa. Here, participants had the chance to visit the Belbela and Woldecha dams, and to speak with local farmers who expressed their appreciation for this project and the significant impact it has had on their livelihoods.

Dina Satrio
CIFOR

Story by Widya Prajanthi and Budhy Kristanty, CIFOR

For more information about the CGIAR’s Knowledge Sharing initiatives, go to: http://www.ks-cgiar.org
Forests, human health and the impacts of climate change

The World Health Organization (WHO) dedicated the focus of this year’s World Health Day, on April 14, to “Protecting Health from the adverse effects of Climate Change.”

Though one may not readily see a connection between climate change and health, the two are inextricably linked. Studies from around the world, including those by CIFOR’s Carol Colfer, demonstrate that climate and weather have a powerful impact on human life and health, especially the health of vulnerable, forest-dependent people.

However, according to CIFOR scientist Patricia Shanley, who has spent over 5 years studying the complex relationship between forests and health, “at present, people living in forests deal with much more immediate problems than climate change, like children dying of dysentery and malaria and other diseases caused by the indirect effects of forest degradation. Add to this the fact that many of their medicinal plants and other Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFP) are being destroyed through logging.”

Climate change is likely to exacerbate these problems by influencing the biodiversity assets and ecosystem services of tropical forests. This will lead to indirect impacts like a decrease in water supply and quality, which in turn will lead to an increase in water-related diseases, especially water-borne diseases following extreme rainfall.

Changes in temperature and rainfall will also alter the distribution of disease vectors carrying malaria, dengue, and diarrhoea particularly worrisome – as well as rodent and other pest populations.

In addition, climate change is likely to increase the frequency, persistence and magnitude of El Nino events, including forest fires, which can lead to significant health problems. According to WHO, more than 200 million people in Southeast Asia were affected by the 1997-98 forest fires in East Kalimantan, with cases of pneumonia and respiratory diseases increasing exponentially.

By and large, the likely impact of climate change on forests and human health needs far more attention and involvement from practitioners in both the health and forestry sectors globally.

In 2007 CIFOR organised a series of workshops in Brazil, Cameroon, Ethiopia and West Kalimantan, to discuss the links between forests and human health. The findings from these events, as well as other research findings, were presented at a series of recent meetings in Geneva, Stockholm and Washington in order to make donors and policy makers more aware of these important, but often neglected, links.

Story by Widya Prajanthi, CIFOR

“At present, people living in forests deal with much more immediate problems than climate change, like children dying of dysentery and malaria and other diseases caused by the indirect effects of forest degradation.”

Patricia Shanley
CIFOR

Hundreds of millions of people live and work in forests across the world. One vital aspect of their lives, yet largely unexamined, is the challenge of protecting and enhancing the unique relationship between the health of forests and the health of people. This book, written for a broad audience, is the first comprehensive introduction to the issues surrounding the health of people living in and around forests, particularly in Asia, South America and Africa.

The book concludes with a synthesis designed for use by practitioners and policy makers to work with forest dwellers to improve their health and their ecosystems and also as a vital addition to the knowledge base of all professionals, academics and students working on forests, health and development worldwide.

Published by Earthscan, with CIFOR and People and Plants International, 2008. Carol J. Pierce Colfer is Principal Scientist in CIFOR’s Governance Programme. Web link: http://www.earthscan.co.uk/?tabid=1487

Human Health and Forests
A Global Overview of Issues Practice and Policy
Mitigation and adaptation
Two sides of the same coin

International concerns about forests and climate change have primarily focused on how to reduce carbon emissions from deforestation or improve carbon sequestration through reforestation.

These basically constitute the mitigation approach which tends to address the forests and climate change debate from the perspective of how forests affect climate.

An equally important, but less prominently discussed approach is adaptation, which looks at the debate from the reverse perspective – how climate change impacts on forests and how to cope with change.

This is not to suggest that the two perspectives are mutually exclusive.

According to CIFOR’s Manuel Guariguata, co-author of a recent paper entitled Mitigation needs adaptation: Tropical forestry and climate change, more attention must be focused on the policies and technologies that will help forest ecosystems adapt to climate change so they can maintain their productive potential.

“Mitigating the way forest-related carbon emissions and storage affect the climate is absolutely critical. But let’s not forget that forests contain a lot more than just carbon when it comes to their economic importance. And then there’s the social, environmental and cultural importance of forests too,” Guariguata says.

But the long-term survival of many tropical forests is now threatened, as they struggle to adapt to unstable temperatures and rainfall, and an increase in the intensity and frequency of extreme weather events. Add to this the effects of human-caused forest fires, fragmentation, and overexploitation of timber, the capacity of forests to sustain the delivery of goods and services may be severely compromised.

“We believe that that tropical foresters, forest managers, and forest-dependent communities don’t appear to appreciate the risks posed by climate change,” Guariguata says. “And if they do, there is little practical guidance, either published or else properly disseminated, as to how to maintain the adaptive capacity of tropical forests to climate change, especially from a production standpoint.”

According to the report, many governments are focused on more readily apparent threats to their forests, for example, illegal logging or deforestation resulting from agricultural or population expansion.

Some small but useful steps towards solving this problem are suggested in the report. These recommendations include the use of reduced impact logging (RIL); ensuring greater genetic diversity among seedlings for replanting; optimising the size of planted juvenile tree populations; and offering financial incentives to encourage the uptake of adaptation measures.

While Guariguata and his colleagues believe that a lot of these recommendations are quite feasible, they are not overly optimistic about how likely or how soon they will be implemented by governments.

“I don’t think I or my colleagues kid ourselves that all the adaptation measures needed are going to be implemented overnight. A more realistic first step is getting forests and climate change adaptation included in national development and planning programmes. The next step is to ensure that forest managers and policy makers are aware that some forestry practices may need re-assessment.”

Story by Greg Clough, CIFOR and USAID

Teak has played a vital role in Javanese culture and economy for centuries. Originally a species from Burma, Javanese teak represents 35% of the world teak supply, with logs and sawn timber sales for 2001 amounting to more than 680,000 m³, valued at nearly AUD 115 million.

Furniture production is a major industry throughout Central Java, with more than 15000 factories depending on teak to survive. Much of this raw timber comes from smallholder plantations in and around the Gunung Kidul District.

During the 1970s, drought, civil unrest and other factors left this area largely degraded and unproductive, yet a range of government rehabilitation initiatives over the last 30 years has meant the region is now made up of 60% productive land, the majority of this comprising teak plantations. These plantations also deliver added value as they can be combined with planting crops, traditional medicinal plants or livestock food sources.

And yet most small-scale teak farmers in the region are still living below the poverty line.

According to Dede Rohadi, from CIFOR’s Forests and Livelihoods programme, the reason for this is that “smallholders tend to take prices that are often well below market rates because of their restricted access to information and market networks, and their low quality timber, which is due to limited knowledge of silvicultural and teak production methods.”

“These farmers need urgent cash for school fees or medical bills,” added Rohadi, “yet they have no access to capital reserves while waiting to harvest their plantation. Income from cash crops or other sources often fail to cover daily living costs, so cutting a tree is seen as the only option – regardless of its size or time of year.”

In 2007, CIFOR launched a four-year research project designed to improve silvicultural techniques, establish micro-finance schemes and educate farmers on marketing strategies. The results will also support the local certification process and inform policy at a local, regional and national level. Seven villages throughout Gunung Kidul were selected as project sites.

The project is funded by Australian Center for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR), and CIFOR is working in collaboration with the Gunung Kidul District Government (Working Group for Sustainable Forest Management), the Indonesian Forestry Research and Development Agency (FORDA), the World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF), the Farm Forestry Consortium (Pokja), Bogor Agricultural University (IPB), Australian National University (ANU) and Winrock Foundation.

From 14-17 April, 2008, stakeholders met in Yogyakarta to discuss preliminary research activities and to ensure that these activities are synchronised with the work plan for teak farm forestry development throughout Gunung Kidul.

The meeting was attended by project partners, as well as local farmers, NGOs and district government officials.

Story by Budhy Kristanty, CIFOR

Teak Farm for the Future

At this first annual meeting in Yogyakarta, CIFOR took the opportunity to produce a short documentary about the project. The 15 minute DVD presents the research project’s context and objectives through a simple, visual and emotional narrative.

It tells the story of one local teak grower – Samadi, from Katongan Village – and the way he has overcome a range of obstacles to make his business profitable and sustainable. Featuring interviews with family and community members, local government officials, timber industry representatives, CIFOR scientists and other players, the video provides a range of perspectives on the issues facing the teak industry in Java, and the collaborative solutions that are available to address them.

If you would like a copy of the DVD, contact Philip Manalu at p.manalu@cgiar.org
In terms of economic advantages, the communities in the areas covered by LAMIL are beginning to receive tangible impacts from their sustainable management practices.

Louis Corronado
USAID

Improving livelihoods through landscape management in West Africa

The implementation of an integrated approach to landscape management, combining agroforestry innovations and a review of participatory natural resource management processes, has brought about greater interest and provided incentives for subsequent involvement of rural communities in conservation activities.

Mahmoud Camara, Guinean Minister for Agriculture, Livestock, Environment, Water and Forests

In response to global concerns regarding the social, environmental and economic consequences of poor landscape management, CIFOR and the World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF) launched the Landscape Management for Improved Livelihoods (LAMIL) project in September 2005.

The Fouta Djallon Highlands in central Guinea were identified as the initial project site, as this is the source area for several of West Africa’s most important waterways, including the Niger, Gambia and Senegal rivers. Moreover, in excess of 70% of the population lives in rural areas, with most livelihoods dependent on forestry activities, agroforestry and animal husbandry.

Funded by USAID, the first phase of the project was completed in March 2008 and involved collaboration with international partners, including the United States Forestry Service (USFS) and the International Crops Research Institute (ICRISAT); and national partners, including the Water and Forestry Directorate and the National Institute for Agricultural Research. Other institutions represented included the African Union, Rio Tinto, and various NGOs such as Guinee Ecologie, Croix Verte, and Agence pour la Commercialisation Agricole (ACA).

The broad objectives of LAMIL are to empower local village communities to organise themselves, to acquire legal recognition, and to partner with the state in managing forest resources. Incentives for such communities include financial benefits from the sale of forestry and agroforestry products, access to agroforestry plots within the classified forests, and involvement in decision-making processes.

Looking at the effects of social stratification, education, age, wealth, ethnicity and geographical location, the project also considers gender as an important element to achieving improved livelihoods. Although the majority of the Guinean agricultural population is female, only six per cent of Guinean farms are headed by women. Their workload is between 15 to 17 hours per day, and they have extremely limited access to agricultural tools.

LAMIL’s approach to addressing such issues revolve around institutional strengthening at the community level and supporting the provision of an enabling environment for more efficient and productive natural resource management.

During the concluding workshop of LAMIL’s first phase, Louis Corronado, Deputy Director of USAID’s Guinea Mission, echoed the sentiments of Minister Camara. “In terms of economic advantages, the communities in the areas covered by LAMIL are beginning to receive tangible impacts from their sustainable management practices,” said Mr Corronado. “Some of these beneficiaries have more than tripled their annual revenue and are contributing to increasing vegetation cover.”

As an example, the Community Forest Management Committees (FMCs) in Nyalama had generated around USD 1,500 over 11 years, prior to LAMIL. Following support from the project to restructure their management and secure legal rights, they have since generated USD 1,500 over the last 11 months.

The success of the LAMIL project in Guinea has created enormous interest in integrated landscape management in neighbouring Sierra Leone and Liberia. As a result, USAID has agreed to provide funding for the second phase of the project, enabling CIFOR and ICRAF to test the adaptation and adoption of LAMIL approaches within a new context of border regions, national parks and sub-regional collaboration.

This second phase commenced in April 2008 and will continue until September 2009. Target sites include the Ottamba Killimi National Park in Sierra Leone and the Ourekaba and Madina Oula landscapes on the Guinean side of the common border. This site will also become one of CIFOR-ICRAF’s Landscape Mosaics research sites (see page 10).

Story by Widya Prajanthi, CIFOR
Australian Government funds REDD research

The Howard Government of Australia was among the first to commit significant financial support to the development of reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD). The Rudd Administration, which took office immediately before the Bali COP in December 2007, has followed through with this commitment and in May 2008 announced a AUD 3 million grant to CIFOR for REDD-related research.

In collaboration with a range of partners in Indonesia and elsewhere, CIFOR’s project, REDD: Research to Support Design and Implantation for Effectiveness, will assess the relative effectiveness, efficiency and equity of alternative approaches to REDD.

The grant was announced on May 26 by Australia’s Minister for Climate Change and Water, Senator Penny Wong and Minister for Foreign Affairs, Stephen Smith. The funds are part of the Rudd Government’s International Forest Carbon Initiative.

“Climate change is one of the greatest social and economic challenges of our time,” said Senator Wong. “It is a global problem requiring a global solution. Australia must play its part in reaching that global solution through our actions at home and abroad.”

“The Rudd Labour Government has delivered 2.3 billion dollars over the four years of this budget to help individuals, communities and businesses meet the challenges of climate change as we work in partnership with other nations to develop cooperative, global solutions.”

“In Bali, the international community agreed that demonstration activities were needed to show that activities to reduce deforestation could be effective, long-lasting, support local economies, and reduce greenhouse emissions,” added Senator Wong.

The research undertaken by CIFOR will seek to identify: cost efficient methods for determining REDD baselines and for monitoring changes in carbon stocks; improved policies, institutional arrangements and reward mechanisms for cost-efficient and pro-poor REDD schemes at the national level; and appropriate REDD architecture at the global level, taking into consideration the barriers to adoption by key forest nations such as Indonesia.

“There’s a lot of expectation surrounding the potential of REDD to mitigate climate change,” said Frances Seymour, CIFOR’s Director General. “And while the international community must move quickly on these issues, our priority at CIFOR is to ensure that we get it right.”

“In the near term, research findings can inform the design, selection, and implementation of demonstration activities, while further research will be used to develop recommendations for policy and institutional design and implementation, including consistent policies linking local contexts to national and global regimes.”

“The Australian Government has been a strong supporter of CIFOR dating back to CIFOR’s establishment, and we look forward to a long and fruitful collaboration in tackling crucial issues such as climate change,” added Seymour.

The International Forest Carbon Initiative builds on Australia’s existing commitments to reducing deforestation and has a particular focus on countries in the region including Indonesia and Papua New Guinea.

CIFOR will carry out this research in collaboration with a range of partners, including the Indonesian Ministry of Forestry, Australia’s Department of Environment and Water Resources, the Australian Greenhouse Office, the Australian National University (ANU).

Story by Widya Prajanthi, CIFOR

Senator Penny Wong
Minister for Climate Change and Water

Photos by Christian Cossalter, Mamat Rahmat and Chistian Goenner
Conflict in natural resource management can be a catalyst for constructive change says CIFOR alumni Yurdi Yasmi. The challenge is managing it.

Yurdi Yasmi conducted research for his PhD at CIFOR where he worked in the Governance programme from 1998 to 2007. He began his research by developing a way to identify conflict and its escalation in natural resource management.

Conflict emerges when there is “impairment” or harm caused to a stakeholder, he said. This clearly distinguishes conflict from differences in opinion or practice where impairment is not caused.

Anxiety and frustration are usually initial stages in the escalation of conflict and are generally followed by debate, lobbying and protest, with the potential to raise the issue to a national or international scale. He argues that conflict escalation in natural resources management is complex that there is no single pattern of escalation applicable to every situation of conflict.

Yasmi’s PhD, published October 2007, focuses on communities in West Kalimantan, East Kalimantan and Sumatra, where the world’s last frontiers of tropical forest remain. Full document http://library.wur.nl/wda/dissertations/dis4264.pdf

Commodity and conflict

Yasmi experienced conflict first hand when undertaking research in Bulungan, East Kalimantan, when he looked into allegations that local communities suffered water and air pollution caused by logging companies. According to Yasmi, they were excluded from negotiations and denied rights to use wood from the forest for their houses and churches.

This scenario is not uncommon in forest management in Indonesia. Forest resources such as medicinal plants which local communities depend on can be instantly classified ‘company property’ and guarded in a military-like fashion. Compensatory facilities provided by logging companies such as clean water are often delayed and unsatisfactory, and promises are continually postponed.

“Too often people living in rich areas are poor because they have no rights,” Yasmi said. “Local government lack skills in natural resource management and they do not involve the local community, which creates frustration. Then when conflict emerges, we know it is there but we don’t know what to do about it.”

Yasmi said that in any transformation process, there is always a shock. He compared the escalation of conflict to a glass of water being shaken.

“When there is a shock, the water moves and it triggers people to think for improvement. But without management, the glass will fall over and the water will splash,” he said. “The consequences can be unbearable.”

“With the right institutional capacities and appropriate, responsive management procedures in place, conflict can become a catalyst for constructive change,” Yasmi believes. If there is governance and management that can provide a setting for negotiation among parties involved then positive social changes are achievable.

Community and conservation

Aside from poverty, human rights and social issues, Yasmi’s research shows that conflict management has many links to forest conservation and sustainability.

“Traditionally, forest communities are very environmentally friendly,” Yasmi said. But he believes that with today’s increased competition over the control of dwindling natural resources, denial of communities rights now effectively discourages them from caring for the forests.

“Without clear rights and ownership there is no incentive to preserve the forest.”

Because of a lack of good governance and forest management, ownership is usually unclear. There are competing claims over resources and it is usually the local communities – who know the most about the forest – who are left out of the negotiations.

For conservation to be effective Yasmi believes, that it must include the local community.

Yasmi is now researching conflict and natural resource management at the Regional Community Forestry Training Centre, (RECOFTC), where he uses research products to feed into training and capacity building to assist conflict management in forests in the Asia Pacific region.

Story by Clare Rawlinson, CIFOR
Welcome!

Dennis Sonwa joined CIFOR’s Central Africa Regional Office in July 2008 as a Scientist with the Environmental Services and Sustainable Use of Forests Programme. Dennis has a PhD in Agroforestry from the University of Bonn, Germany. Prior to joining CIFOR he worked as for IITA in Yaounde, Cameroon.


Kate Langford joined CIFOR in May 2008 through AusAID’s Volunteering for International Development from Australia (VIDA) programme. She is attached to the Environmental Services and Sustainable Use of Forests Programme.

Lamine Sere joins CIFOR’s West Africa Regional Office as the IT Administrator. He is based in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso.

Elizabeth Forwand joined CIFOR in August 2008 as a research Assistant to the Director General. She has a dual Masters degree in environmental management and forestry from Duke University, USA. Upon graduating from Duke University, she worked with Lembaga Ekolabel Indonesia (LEI) as a Certification Assistant until July 2008.

Louis Verchot joined CIFOR in August 2008 as a Senior Scientist with the Environmental Services and Sustainable Use of Forests Programme. He will work on CIFOR’s Climate Change and Forests Initiative. Louis has a PhD in Forestry from the North Carolina State University, USA.

Monica Fisher joined CIFOR in October 2008 as a Scientist with the Forests and Livelihoods Programme. Monica obtained her PhD in Agricultural Economics from Purdue University, Indiana, USA.

Ratih Septivita (Vita) joined CIFOR in June 2008 as a Programme Support Officer with the Forests and Livelihoods Programme. Vita has a Bachelor Degree in Communications Studies from the University of Indonesia. Prior to joining CIFOR she worked for IBM Indonesia.

Rika Harini Irawati joined CIFOR in September 2008 as a Project Officer with the Furniture Value Chain (FVC) Project in the Forests and Livelihoods Programme. Rini has a Bachelor degree in Forest Management from Bogor Agricultural University, Indonesia.

Ronnie Babigumira joined CIFOR in May 2008 as a Research Fellow with the Forests and Livelihoods Programme. Ronnie has a Masters Degree in Agricultural Economics from Makerere University, Kampala, and is currently finishing his PhD thesis at the Norwegian University of Life Sciences.

Sandra McGuire joined CIFOR in September 2008 as Director of Information Services.

Satria Oktarita was appointed in October 2008 as a Communications Assistant with the Information Services Group. Rita has a Bachelor Degree in Forest Management from Bogor Agricultural University, Indonesia.

Sofia Mardiah was appointed in April 2008 as a Research Assistant with the Forests and Governance Programme. Sofi has a Masters Degree in Natural Resources and Environmental Management from Bogor Agricultural University, Indonesia.

Sofyan Kurnianto was appointed in April 2008 as a Research Assistant with the Environmental Services and Sustainable Use of Forests Programme. Sofyan has a Bachelor of Science Degree from Bogor Agricultural University, Indonesia.

Stibniati Atmadja (Nia) joined CIFOR in September 2008 as a PostDoc / Research Fellow with the Forests and Livelihoods Programme. Nia obtained her PhD in Natural Resource Economics from the North Carolina State University, USA.

Sufiet Erlita joined CIFOR in July 2008 as an Information Officer with Information Services Group (ISG). Sufiet has a Masters Degree in Management from Trisakti University, Jakarta and a Bachelor Degree in Library and Information Science from the University of Indonesia.
Wim Ikbal Nursal was appointed in April 2008 as a Research Assistant with the Environmental Services and Sustainable Use of Forests Programme. Wim has a Masters Degree in Information Technology from Bogor Agricultural University, Indonesia.

Verina Ingram joined CIFOR’s Central Africa Regional Office in August 2008 as a Scientist with the Forests and Livelihoods Programme. She has a MSc Degree in Environmental Technology from Imperial College, UK. Prior to joining CIFOR, Verina worked for the Forest Governance Facility (FGF) in Yaoundé.

Youssoufa Mekou Bele joins CIFOR’s Central Africa Regional Office as a Research Assistant with the Environmental Services and Sustainable Use of Forests Programme. Youssoufa has a MSc. Degree in Botany from the University of Buea, Cameroon.

### Farewell!

**Douglas Sheil and Miriam van Heist** have moved on after more than 10 years of service with CIFOR. Doug and Miriam now serve as Director and Deputy Director at the Institute of Tropical Forest Conservation, Mbarara University of Science and Technology, Uganda.

**Greg Clough** has moved on after 6 years with CIFOR as a Communications Specialist. Greg has relocated to Acé, Indonesia, and is working with USAID. He will continue to provide communications consultancy to CIFOR.

**Henry Pratowi Jobebihako** has moved on after 10 years with CIFOR’s Human Resources department. Henry has joined an international organization in Jakarta, Indonesia.

**Chetan Kumar** has completed his assignment as Project Coordinator after more than three and a half years with CIFOR. Chetan is now finishing his PhD at Cambridge University, UK.

**Marieke Sandker and Janneke Romijn** completed their assignments in August 2008 after 3 years of service with CIFOR. Both were Associate Experts supported by the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

**We thank them for their contributions to CIFOR and wish them every success.**

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