

EMBARGOED UNTIL SATURDAY, DEC 8, 12pm

GREEN GOVERNORS CALL FOR ACTION ON “FORESTS NOW”

8th December 2007 – Forest Now Declaration Side Event, UNFCCC Climate Conference, Bali, Indonesia

Three pioneering Green Governors, between them responsible for large swathes of Indonesia and Brazil's rainforests, today signed up to the six-point plan of action of the Forests Now Declaration which calls for tropical forests to be given a value in the world's carbon markets.

The Governors, Irwandi Yusuf (Aceh, Indonesia), Barnabas Suebu (Papua, Indonesia), and Eduardo Braga (Amazonas, Brazil) have become innovators in the global fight against climate change. Whilst international agreements are painstakingly being negotiated through the UN, they have led with definitive action to curb deforestation in their densely forested provinces. The three Governors signed the landmark Declaration as part of 'Forest Day' at the UN climate change conference in Bali. This follows their joint proclamation yesterday of a moratorium on logging to end the destructive exploitation of the forests under their control.

Amazonas State alone harbours 10% of the world's remaining rainforest, and endorsing Forests Now, Governor Braga said "In the Amazon we've proven that we can reduce the carbon emissions from deforestation when the political will and the right incentives for people who live in the forests are there. If applied around the world, models like this can have significant and immediate impact on climate change."

The destruction of tropical forests accounts for about 20% of global carbon emissions – more than the entire global transport sector. The UK government's 2005 *Stern Review* identified forest protection and limitation of deforestation as being quick and cost-effective avenues for reducing global carbon emissions – yet until now they have barely featured in governments' plans to tackle climate change. By acting to protect forests and reduce emissions from deforestation *now*, on their own lands, the Governors have sent a strong message to their national governments and have opened the door to millions of dollars of potential investments from carbon markets. Already investments are beginning to flow, both from voluntary carbon markets and from private investments to protect the ecosystem services forests provide to humanity.

International momentum behind the Forests NOW Declaration has built rapidly since its launch high in the treetops of the Amazon rainforest on September 10th, by the Global Canopy Programme and the State of Amazonas. Leaders from across the major forested nations, major NGOs, businesses and many of the world's most eminent scientists have endorsed its aims. Just prior to the UN conference, Costa Rica's President and Nobel Prize winner, Oscar Arias Sanchez, signed the Declaration, following the Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea, Sir Michael Somare. In October, Nobel Peace Laureate and Goodwill Ambassador for the Congo Basin Forest Ecosystem, Wangari Maathai, endorsed the Declaration, saying "We need a mechanism that will assist people in developing countries, certainly in Africa, to protect their standing forests and plant trees, to protect their soil, protect biodiversity and protect livelihoods while reducing carbon emissions for everyone."

"This is a declaration of hope" said Andrew Mitchell, Director of the Global Canopy Programme, which sponsors the Declaration. "Halting deforestation is an opportunity to score a big win against climate change – These forests support the livelihoods of 1.4 billion of the world's poorest people, and offer services critical to humanity's survival, such as rainfall generation and maintaining half of all life on Earth - benefits we all need but do not yet pay for."

--- ENDS ---

www.forestsnow.org

For more information on the Forests NOW Declaration or the Global Canopy Programme, please do not hesitate to contact Daniel Byrne on 0870 240 5536 / 07882 033 166 or Daniel@redheadpr.co.uk

Notes to Editors

The Forests Now Declaration

“Forests Now in the Fight Against Climate Change”

The Forests Now Declaration is a six-point plan calling on governments to reduce emissions from deforestation and protect standing forests through global markets. It has been signed by over 300 high level endorsers, including leaders from across the world’s great tropical forests.



Professor Virgílio Viana
State Secretary for Environment,
Amazonas, Brazil



Professor Wangari Maathai
Goodwill Ambassador for the
Congo Basin Forest Ecosystem



Sir Michael Somare
Prime Minister of Papua
New Guinea

CALLS TO ACTION

The Forests Now Declaration calls for the inclusion of forests in all the world’s carbon markets, and the simplification of incentives to restore and plant new forests. It also urges support for forested nations to build capacity to fully participate in those markets, incentives for early action on forests, and the development of new market mechanisms to value the services forests provide to humanity while they still stand.

“History has shown that conservation alone is no match for commerce”, said Mitchell “There is not enough philanthropy around, nor donor appetite, to fix the scale of the problem so we must use commerce as an ally, not view it as an enemy. Only markets can sustainably deliver funds on the scale of billions per year for rainforest services, enough to out-compete the power of palm oil, soya or beef to convert forests for land”.

ENDORSERS TO DATE INCLUDE

Political representatives from the great forested regions, including Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea, Sir Michael Somare; President of Costa Rica Oscar Arias Sánchez; Amazonas State Secretary for Environment Professor Virgílio Viana; Nobel Peace Prize Laureate and Goodwill Ambassador to the Congo Basin Forest Ecosystem, Professor Wangari Maathai; Minister of Environment for the Democratic Republic of Congo, Pembe Didace Bokiaga; Executive Director of the 30-country Coalition for Rainforest Nations Kevin Conrad;

Scientific luminaries such as Harvard entomologist E. O. Wilson, former Director of Kew Gardens Sir Ghilleen Prance, President of the Heinz Center Professor Thomas E. Lovejoy, Chair of the International Geosphere-Biosphere Programme, Dr. Carlos Nobre, and primatologist and UN Messenger of Peace, Dr. Jane Goodall;

NGOs such as Care International, Conservation International, Fauna and Flora International, Friends of the Earth - Brazilian Amazonia, the Green Belt Movement, Union of Concerned Scientists, Wetlands International, and the Wildlife Conservation Society;

Religious Leaders such as the Bishop of Liverpool, and the leader of the Orthodox Church, His All Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, who has led 200 religious leaders, politicians and environmentalists to the Amazon and the Arctic to explore these issues.

Businesses including, Aveda, Chicago Climate Exchange Ecoscurities, Habitat and Sustainable Forestry Management Limited.

FROM BRAZIL TO BALI: A GLOBAL CALL TO ACTION

The Forests NOW Declaration began its journey in an observation tower above the Amazon forest canopy in Brazil on 10th September, where Amazonas State Secretary for the Environment Virgílio Viana added the first of over 300 high-level signatures to the document. Since then, it has made its way across the world's major carbon trading centres and tropical forests, amassing widespread support on its way to this week's critical climate change summit.

10th September - Forests NOW Launch in Brazil.

Amazonas Secretary of State for Environment Virgílio Viana and Association of Indigenous Organisations of the Brazilian Amazon representative Pedro Garcia sign the declaration alongside prominent scientists in the groundbreaking Large-scale Biosphere-Atmosphere Experiment in Amazonia Dr Flavio Luizão and Dr Antonio Manzi

12th September - Forests NOW Launch in London

Andrew Mitchell is interviewed on the Today programme, and members of the Ape Alliance, including Chairman Ian Redmond (OBE), sign the declaration

12th September - Forests NOW in the Arctic Ocean

His All Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew endorses the declaration in a historic letter before embarking on his environmental symposium "Arctic: Mirror of Life". There, in a ceremony on the Arctic Ocean, the Declaration is signed by Former Head of UN Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission Dr Hans Blix.

26th September - Forests NOW Launch in New York

Papua New Guinea Prime Minister Sir Michael Somare and UN Messenger of Peace Dr Jane Goodall sign the declaration at the Clinton Global Initiative and UN Climate meetings.

26th October – Forests NOW Launch in Paris

2004 Nobel Peace Prize Winner and Goodwill Ambassador to the Congo Basin Professor Wangari Maathai and Democratic Republic of Congo Environment Minister Pembe Didace Bokiaga sign the declaration at the annual meeting of the Congo Basin Forest Partnership.

FORESTS NOW IN BALI

Side event and Governors' signing ceremony, Sep 8, 12pm



The Forests Now Declaration:
Side Event, Bali 07
Why the World's Tropical Forests Need Markets Now

12.00 - 13.30
Saturday 8th December
Grand Ball Room A
Ayodya Hotel, Nusa Dua

Hear why over 300 politicians, forest leaders, scientists, conservationists, NGOs and business leaders, are calling on the world's governments to include tropical forests in the world's carbon markets now.

Deforestation causes 18-25% of global carbon emissions, second only to the energy sector. If we lose forests we lose the fight against climate change.

Speakers:

From Brazil to Bali: A Global Call to Action
Andrew Mitchell, Executive Director, Global Canopy Programme

The Political Imperative
Governor Eduardo Braga, Amazonas State Brazil
Governor Barnabas Suebu, Papua Province, Indonesia
Governor Irwandi Yusuf, Aceh Province, Indonesia
Democratic Republic of Congo (tbc)
Kevin Conrad, Executive Director Coalition for Rainforest Nations

The Economic Imperative - 'Why Forests Need Markets Now'
Eric Bettelheim, Sustainable Forestry Management

'Practical Implementation: Early Action on REDD'
Dorjee Sun, Carbon Conservation

Endorser Statements & Panel Discussion: Forests and the Carbon Markets: Understanding the Risks. Maximising the Benefits

The Forests Now Declaration is sponsored by the Global Canopy Programme

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Film and Evening Reception, September 10, 6.30 pm



Forests NOW - an Evening Reception

6.30 pm, Monday 10th December 2007
The Conrad Bali Resort, Nusa Dua

Andrew Mitchell, Director of the Global Canopy Programme,
Sir Ghilleen Prance, former Director of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, and
Eric Bettelheim, Executive Chairman of Sustainable Forestry Management

invite you to a screening of "Forests Now, a Global Call to Action"

followed by a discussion with your hosts on **Why Forests Need Markets Now**

Afterwards, there will be a reception and the opportunity to meet with some of the world's leading experts in sustainable development, conservation and sustainable forestry management.

RSVP: forestsnowbali@gmail.com

This event is generously sponsored by 

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