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Communiqué

Renewing Partnership between the International Tropical Timber Organization and the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity

Pyeongchang, 15 October 2014 – The secretariats of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO) renewed an agreement today to continue to closely collaborate over the coming six years. The first Memorandum of Understanding, signed in 2010 in the framework of the International Year of Biodiversity, was renewed after the successful implementation of its original five-year agreement, with an extended six year period of 2015-2020.

The initial agreement gave birth to the ITTO–CBD Joint Collaborative Initiative for Tropical Forest Biodiversity, which unites the two organizations to enhance biodiversity conservation in tropical forests, with the direct participation of local stakeholders. In its first five years (2010-2014), the ITTO – CBD Joint Collaborative Initiative funded eleven projects covering 26 countries in the three tropical forest basin regions. Financial contributions have been made by the governments of Japan, Switzerland and the USA, among others, for a total investment of about USD 15 million.

“ITTO has been closely involved in the work of CBD since the turn of this century and we look forward to a second phase of the initiative,” stated Emmanuel Ze Meka, Executive Director of the International Tropical Timber Organization at the signing ceremony.

Mr. Ze Meka further noted that “the initiative is contributing toward the achievement of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, and in particular the forestry-related Aichi Biodiversity Targets, such as targets 5, 7, 11 and 15.”

Braulio Ferreira de Souza Dias, Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity stated “the initiative is a concrete example of carrying out actions on the ground bringing forth the different components of the Pyeongchang Roadmap” and proceed to summarize highlights from the 11 projects.

The RIFFEAC, Network of Central African Forestry Environment Training Institutions, have finalized, in collaboration with the University of Laval and the CEFOR Technical Forestry Center of Canada, twelve draft training modules and associated university teaching methodologies for the sustainable management of tropical forests and biodiversity conservation.

The beneficiary countries (Cambodia and Thailand) of the Emerald Triangle Protected Forests Complex Project between Cambodia, Thailand and the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, are collecting and exchanging



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information on wildlife distribution between them and are planning joint research activities on regional biodiversity in the transboundary conservation area.

In the Integrated Management of Natural Resources and Biodiversity in the Tacaná Volcano transboundary conservation area between Guatemala and Mexico, actions are being taken to identify and establish pilot projects with target communities, including for ecotourism, agro-forestry and livestock-forestry systems.

Notes for Editors

The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)

Opened for signature at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, and entering into force in December 1993, the Convention on Biological Diversity is an international treaty for the conservation of biodiversity, the sustainable use of the components of biodiversity and the equitable sharing of the benefits derived from the use of genetic resources. With 194 Parties up to now, the Convention has near universal participation among countries. The Convention seeks to address all threats to biodiversity and ecosystem services, including threats from climate change, through scientific assessments, the development of tools, incentives and processes, the transfer of technologies and good practices and the full and active involvement of relevant stakeholders including indigenous and local communities, youth, NGOs, women and the business community. The Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety and Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit Sharing are supplementary agreements to the Convention. The Cartagena Protocol seeks to protect biological diversity from the potential risks posed by living modified organisms resulting from modern biotechnology. To date, 167 countries plus the European Union have ratified the Cartagena Protocol. The Nagoya Protocol aims at sharing the benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources in a fair and equitable way, including by appropriate access to genetic resources and by appropriate transfer of relevant technologies. It entered into force on 12 October 2014 and has been ratified by 54 countries to date. For more information visit: www.cbd.int.

International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO)

The International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO) is an intergovernmental organization promoting the conservation and sustainable management, use and trade of tropical forest resources. It was established in 1986 under the auspices of the United Nations, and has its headquarters in Yokohama, Japan. Its 69 members are signatories of the International Tropical Timber Agreement (ITTA) – the only legally binding, UN-based instrument on tropical forests. They represent about 80% of the world's tropical forests and over 90% of the global tropical timber trade. ITTO promotes sustainable forest management and forest conservation and assists tropical member countries to adapt such policies to local circumstances and to implement them in the field through projects.

This communique has been posted on the website of the CBD and the website of the ITTO – further information on the ITTO – CBD Joint Collaborative Initiative for Tropical Forest Biodiversity is available at:

<http://www.cbd.int/forest/tropical-forest.shtml>

www.itto.int/cbd

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