



CIFOR-ICRAF Biodiversity Platform

# Reducing poverty, conserving biodiversity: Finding the right balance

'Joint Biodiversity Platform' from CIFOR and ICRAF to research poverty-biodiversity links in tropical landscape mosaics.



One of the world's greatest challenges today is how to balance the need to feed people with the need to preserve the environment. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the world's tropical forests and the mosaic landscape of agricultural, livelihood and urban activities that surround them.

Forests provide 1.6 billion people with food, medicines, fuel and other life-essentials. 350 million people live in or near forests and rely heavily on them for subsistence and income. Another 60 million are almost entirely dependent on forests.

At the same time, forests are essential for the well-being of the surrounding environment. They conserve and nurture soil, plants and animals, and filter water. They provide the chemical compounds for many of the world's medicines.

Yet each year forests get more fragmented and 13 million hectares disappear. And each year the gap between the well-fed and the underfed grows wider.

Protecting the rich biodiversity of the tropical landscape mosaics and ensuring the livelihoods of those who live in them is at the very core of a new CIFOR and ICRAF research partnership, the **Joint Biodiversity Platform**.

# Reducing poverty, conserving biodiversity

## Reducing poverty while conserving biodiversity

Poverty alleviation and biodiversity conservation almost always involve tradeoffs. The Joint Biodiversity Platform will help ensure these tradeoff decisions are based on sound knowledge. To achieve this, ICRAF and CIFOR researchers will examine the sustainable use of natural resources, biodiversity conservation, and equitable benefit-sharing. The research will be carried out in **multifunctional landscape mosaics** – areas supporting a range of forest, agricultural, livelihood and urban activities – and which are recognized for their high biodiversity value.

## Joint Biodiversity Platform's goals

CIFOR and ICRAF's experience in multidisciplinary forestry research will significantly enhance the Platform's efforts to provide the science needed to make land use choices that improve biodiversity conservation.

The research on multifunctional landscape mosaics will generate a range of global public goods by examining:

- Relationships between biodiversity and livelihood security.
- Ecological processes and spatial dynamics of biodiversity.
- Incentives for conservation, sustainable use and equitable benefit sharing.
- Opportunities for harmonizing customary and statutory rules and laws.

The Platform will study landscape level issues from a multi-scale perspective. This will require cross-sectoral initiatives and partnerships with a range of local players.

The Platform will implement new research initiatives, as well as benefit from engaging with several ongoing CIFOR and ICRAF activities in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

## Perspectives

The Platform will foster a new approach to rural planning by allowing land use to be evaluated at a much broader scale. Applying this approach to other regions will help develop a global picture and deliver international public goods. Ultimately, better understanding of the biodiversity-poverty linkages at the landscape level will benefit a range of policy makers and development agencies.

## Further information

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[www.cifor.cgiar.org/docs/\\_ref/research/environment/bio\\_platform.htm](http://www.cifor.cgiar.org/docs/_ref/research/environment/bio_platform.htm)



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