

PRESS RELEASE

Biodiversity Convention and International Tropical Timber Organization renew collaboration to 2025

- *New memorandum of understanding between the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO) and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) will help facilitate collaboration with bilateral and multilateral funding sources, including the Global Environment Facility and Green Climate Fund.*
- *The collaboration will help ensure biodiversity conservation and livelihood improvement in sustainably managed tropical forests through landscape restoration and expansion of natural protected areas.*
- *Opportunities to be explored for harmonized reporting on sustainable use, restoration, and conservation of tropical forests in context of post-2020 global biodiversity framework.*

5 February 2021: The International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO) and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) have renewed their longstanding collaboration for another five years, with the aim of supporting CBD Parties and ITTO member countries in the tropics in their efforts to conserve biodiversity, implement sustainable forest management (SFM), restore degraded forest landscapes, and encourage the sustainable use of forest resources.

The collaboration to 2025 was formalized with the signing last Monday of a memorandum of understanding (MoU).

ITTO and CBD have been collaborating closely for a decade. The first MoU between the two bodies, signed in 2010 in the framework of the International Year of Biodiversity, gave birth to the [ITTO/CBD Collaborative Initiative for Tropical Forest Biodiversity](#). A second MoU spanning 2015–2020 was signed at the 12th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the CBD in Pyeongchang, Republic of Korea, in October 2014.

To date, the Collaborative Initiative has encompassed 16 projects in 23 tropical countries, all of which had experienced biodiversity losses and declines in forest area and have large numbers of forest-dependent people. At USD 13 million, the total budget of the 16 projects is modest, but a recent technical review found that they have achieved extraordinary success in improving local livelihoods and forest management, restoring degraded forest landscapes and conserving biodiversity.

Examples of the Collaborative Initiative's achievement include increasing the size of a mangrove protected area in Peru by more than 700 000 ha; providing more than 400 foresters and technicians in Central Africa with education and training on SFM; enabling previously difficult transboundary cooperation on the management of the Emerald Triangle between Cambodia and Thailand; and restoring 130 ha of mangroves in Fiji.

The renewed collaboration between the CBD and ITTO will include:

- Assisting countries to recognize and enhance the values of forest landscapes, including their biodiversity and ecosystem services
- Assisting countries to collect and use ecological and biological data that contribute to sustainable management and use and the restoration of tropical forests
- Promoting innovative practices, technologies and approaches, and developing technical expertise, to enhance tropical biodiversity and the provision of ecosystem services in forest landscapes
- Building capacity for implementing the [ITTO/IUCN Guidelines for the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biodiversity in Tropical Timber Production Forests](#) and other relevant guidelines and policies of the CBD and ITTO
- Cooperating with other international organizations and partners to strengthen capacity for achieving global biodiversity goals, including the conservation and sustainable use of tropical tree species listed in the Appendixes of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora
- Identifying, developing and implementing targeted joint activities on tropical forests and tropical forest biodiversity.

The new MoU will also help facilitate collaboration with, and access to, bilateral and multilateral funding sources such as the Global Environment Facility and the Green Climate Fund on emerging issues related to biodiversity conservation, climate-change mitigation and adaptation, and sustainable development.

Innovative aspects of the collaboration between ITTO and the CBD include exploring opportunities for harmonized reporting on the sustainable use, restoration and conservation of tropical forests in the context of the [post-2020 global biodiversity framework](#), which is being developed under the CBD, and supporting regional and South–South cooperation, thus contributing to and leveraging the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration (2021–2030).

The collaboration between ITTO and the CBD has contributed to several Aichi Biodiversity Targets, specifically Target 1, on awareness-raising, Target 5, on reducing habitat loss, Target 7, on SFM, Target 11, on protected area management, Target 12, on the protection of endangered species, and Target 14, on restoring and safeguarding ecosystem services, as well as to many of the Sustainable Development Goals.

NOTES TO EDITORS

The International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO) is an intergovernmental organization promoting the sustainable management and conservation of tropical forests and the expansion and diversification of international trade in tropical timber from sustainably managed and legally harvested forests. For more information contact itto@itto.int or visit www.itto.int.

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 196 Parties so far, 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 the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit Sharing are supplementary agreements to the Convention. The Cartagena Protocol, which entered into force on 11 September 2003, seeks to protect biological diversity from the potential risks posed by living modified organisms resulting from modern biotechnology. To date, 173 Parties 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 to date has been ratified by 129 Parties.

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A Javanese eagle, in the Cibodas Biosphere Reserve, Indonesia, an area of work of the ITTO/CBD Collaborative Initiative for Tropical Forest Biodiversity. Photo: Hardi, Project PD 777/15 Rev.3 (F)