

PRESS RELEASE

The Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the International Tropical Timber Organization Renew Partnership to 2029

- New memorandum of understanding (MoU) between the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO) and the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) will strengthen collaboration to support Parties to the CBD in addressing complex tropical landscape policy challenges.
- The collaboration will help ensure biodiversity conservation and livelihood improvement in sustainably managed tropical forests, including through landscape restoration and expansion of protected areas.

New York, 12 May 2026—Today the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO) and the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) renewed their longstanding collaboration for four years, with the aim of supporting Parties to the CBD and ITTO member countries in their efforts to implement sustainable forest management and restore degraded forest landscapes.

The memorandum of understanding (MoU), signed on Tuesday on the margins of the 21st session of the United Nations Forum on Forests, extends the collaboration to 2029. Its overarching aim is to strengthen joint efforts in support of the implementation of global commitments, from the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (the KMGBF) and the CBD Forest Biodiversity Programme of Work, to the upcoming United Nations Decade on Afforestation and Reforestation (2027-2036) and the Global Forest Goals.

ITTO and the CBD Secretariat have been collaborating closely for more than 15 years. The first MoU between the two institutions, signed in 2010 in the context of the International Year of Biodiversity, established 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 (COP 12) in Pyeongchang, Republic of Korea, in October 2014. A third MoU ran from 2021-2025.

“For decades, the ITTO has worked with member countries to advance sustainable tropical forest management practices that keep these crucial ecosystems healthy, productive, and biodiverse. This expertise is crucial for the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework,” said Astrid Schomaker, Executive Secretary of the CBD.

Sheam Satkuru, Executive Director of ITTO, said: “The MoU we are signing today is the continuation of a long-standing collaboration, including the Joint ITTO-CBD Collaborative Initiative on Tropical Forest Biodiversity that started in 2011. I look forward to the next years of

working together as we move towards 2030, the universally agreed deadline for achieving the Global Biodiversity Framework’s targets, including those relating to forests.”

NOTES TO EDITORS

(1) 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.

(2) 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, 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 141 Parties.

For more information visit: www.cbd.int.

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