

Joint ITTO–CBD Collaborative Initiative for Tropical Forest Biodiversity

An estimated 300 million people depend on forests directly for their survival, including about 60 million people in indigenous and local communities. Forests play key roles in the economies of many countries, yet they continue to be lost or degraded at a high rate resulting in the loss of valuable biodiversity and potentially serious consequences for human support systems.

The Joint ITTO–CBD Collaborative Initiative for Tropical Forest Biodiversity unites two organizations—the International Tropical Timber Organization and the Convention on Biological Diversity—to enhance biodiversity conservation in tropical forests with the direct participation of local stakeholders.



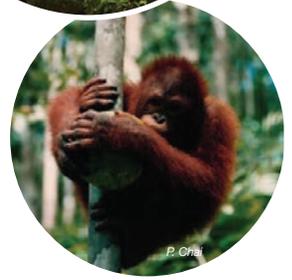
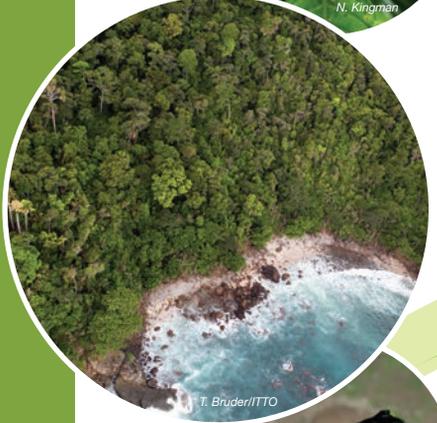
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The Joint ITTO-CBD Collaborative Initiative for Tropical Forest Biodiversity has four key objectives:

1. To enhance local capacity for biodiversity conservation in production forests and the rehabilitation of degraded and secondary forests.
2. To improve the conservation and management of protected forest areas, especially with respect to buffer zones and transboundary conservation.
3. To safeguard tropical forest biodiversity in forestry interventions, including in REDD+ projects.
4. To improve the welfare of indigenous and local communities through biodiversity conservation and the sustainable use of natural resources.

The Initiative identifies, develops and implements joint activities in production and protection forests, with the assistance of donors and in close collaboration with partner organizations in ITTO producer member countries.



In its first four years (2010–2014), the Joint ITTO-CBD Collaborative Initiative for Tropical Forest Biodiversity has funded eleven projects covering 26 countries in the three tropical regions. Financial contributions have been made by the governments of Japan, Switzerland and the USA, among others, for a total investment of about US\$15 million.

Project highlights

- In Latin America, the Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization and its eight member countries are working to enhance biodiversity conservation and strengthen environmental guidelines for forest management in the Amazon Basin. Specifically, the project is establishing an interdisciplinary process for building and delivering the technical capacity necessary for implementing ecologically responsible forest management in public and private production forests in the Amazon.
- Several projects—such as in the Emerald Triangle Protected Forests complex involving Cambodia, Thailand and the Lao People’s Democratic Republic—are providing stakeholders with training in various aspects of forest management, such as mapping using geographic information systems; land-use planning; wildlife assessment; and forest management planning.
- Projects are working to identify, in a participatory manner, areas appropriate for forest restoration and conservation, such as in the Tacaná Volcano transboundary conservation area between Guatemala and Mexico.
- Most projects involve the development of alternative improved local livelihoods, such as for mangrove-dwelling communities in the Rewa Delta, Viti Levu, Fiji.
- Several projects have outreach programs: one, for example, is providing environmental education for local schools and communities in and near the transboundary biodiversity conservation area between Sarawak, Malaysia, and South Kalimantan, Indonesia.
- In a project in Central Africa, the Network of Central African Forestry Environment Training Institutions (RIFFEAC), the University of Laval and the CERFOR Technical Forestry Centre of Canada have finalized twelve draft training modules and associated university teaching methodologies for the sustainable management of tropical forests and biodiversity conservation. The project aims to increase expertise in the Congo Basin through RIFFEAC training institutions.



The Joint ITTO–CBD Collaborative Initiative for Tropical Forest Biodiversity is seeking additional donors as well as project proposal submissions.

Project proposals should be submitted using the guidance provided in the program document, which is available in English, French and Spanish at:

www.itto.int/cbd and

www.cbd.int/forest/tropical-forest.shtml



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