



## **Forest conservation and restoration could combat climate change**

8 December 2015



**A new report released today by IUCN, Climate Advisers and WWF reveals the huge potential that more effective and ambitious forest conservation and restoration could make in the fight to combat climate change.**

This report has found that if just 12 forest countries, including Brazil and Indonesia, meet their existing forest goals this would cut annual global climate emissions by 3.5 gigatonnes in 2020 – equivalent to the total annual emissions from India and Australia put together. With additional ambition on top of these goals, achieving near zero forest loss in these countries by 2020 would save nearly 5 gigatonnes a year - as much as India, Australia plus Japan's annual emissions.

But even current national plans to reduce deforestation and restore forest landscapes might not be realised without stronger international support, as most are conditional on international finance.

It is important to note, though, partnerships to protect forests should not be used to avoid national emission reductions in donor countries, but instead be on top of national action. This is all the more important as, in Paris, governments need to find ways to increase the ambition of climate pledges currently on the table. They are also considering including an overall goal of limiting average global temperature rise to 1.5C. This would raise the overall ambition from the existing UN goal of keeping the temperature rise to below 2C, which is already a major challenge given that estimates have put the current pledges at a 2.7C rise (at best) by end of the century. More emissions savings are needed.

In the run up to the Paris climate change talks, dozens of countries included action on forests in the national plans they submitted - so called Intended Nationally Determined Contributions. Today's report analyses the targets of 12 countries - Brazil, Colombia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guatemala, Indonesia, Mexico, Nepal, Paraguay, Peru, Tanzania - that are home to nearly half the world's tropical forests.

This report will be discussed at an IUCN event in Paris today at the UN climate conference. IUCN, WWF and Climate Advisers will be highlighting the vital nature of emission reductions from the land sector and climate finance pledges for new partnerships to deliver them. It is also very important that the final agreement reached in Paris includes the land sector to give forest nations the necessary long-term signal to press ahead with, and extend, their conservation and restoration plans.

At the Forest Day in Paris last week, 17 leaders endorsed a declaration on forests and a number of new public and private sector partnerships were announced – for example, in support of forest targets in Brazil, Colombia and Paraguay. This report highlights the potential impact that many more partnerships like these between forest nations, donor nations, and businesses can achieve.

**Source:** [http://www.wwf.org.uk/wwf\\_articles.cfm?unewsid=7743](http://www.wwf.org.uk/wwf_articles.cfm?unewsid=7743)