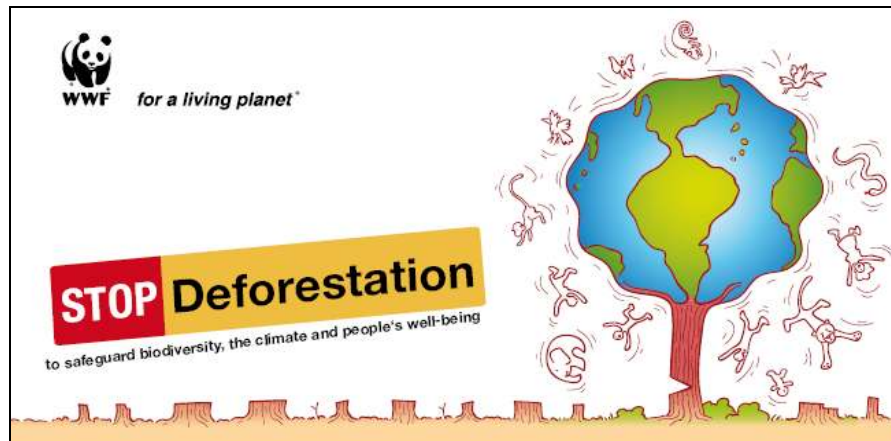



## Zero Net Deforestation by 2020 - A WWF Briefing Paper -

### 1. Introduction

At the Ninth Conference of Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD COP9) in May 2008 in Bonn, delegates of 67 countries pledged support for WWF's call for zero net deforestation by 2020. Led by the CBD Executive Secretary, Dr. Ahmed Djoghlaif, ministers, heads of delegation, the EU Commissioner for the Environment, and representatives of various international organizations made these pledges by signing postcards addressed to WWF International's Director-General, Mr. James Leape<sup>1</sup>. *See annex for list of signatories.*



<p>Dear Mr. James Leape,</p> <p>I share your concern at the dramatic consequences that deforestation of the planet is causing on biodiversity, global climate, and the health and security of millions of people. I agree we need to reverse and stop this trend.</p> <p>I offer my personal support to WWF's call for achieving zero net deforestation by 2020.</p> <p>Sincerely,</p> <p style="text-align: right;">_____ (name)</p> <p>Minister of _____ (country)</p> <p style="text-align: right;">_____ (place, date)</p> <p><small>NB: You can also drop your signed postcard at the WWF "Plaza of Diversity" Pavilion during the CBD COP9 Conference in Bonn.</small></p>	<div style="text-align: center;">  </div> <p><b>To</b>  <b>Mr. James Leape</b>          WWF International's          Director-General          Ave du Mt. Blanc          1196 Gland          Switzerland</p>
<small>WWF logo: a black and white panda silhouette</small> <small>FSC Trademark © 1996 Forest Stewardship Council A.C. Paper manufactured according to FSC Chain of Custody certified C0-COC-1088. All materials of the label are used in the manufacturing process in the same form. Forestall management is independently certified under the rules of the Forest Stewardship Council. Greenleaf FSC® label is made from 100% dematerialized. The manufacturing process is energy free of chlorine.</small>	

This briefing paper provides guidance and recommendations on implementation strategies to achieve the zero net deforestation target.

<sup>1</sup> For more information go to <http://www.panda.org/forests>

## 2. Why WWF proposed the target?

### 2.1 Deforestation has negative effects on biodiversity, the climate and people

Deforestation continues at an alarming rate – 13 million hectares per year, or 36 football fields a minute (7.3 million hectares per year “net” forest loss taking into account forest restoration and afforestation). Deforestation and degradation of forests, particularly in the tropics, have dramatic consequences for biodiversity, the global climate and people.

- Forests contain 50-90 per cent of the world's terrestrial biodiversity.
- Emissions from deforestation, and forest degradation, currently generate between 15-20 per cent of global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.
- Many people source food, medicine, building materials and fuelwood directly from forests, and depend on forest ecosystem services for water supply, flood prevention, and climate change mitigation. Some 1.6 billion people worldwide depend on forests for their livelihoods, with 60 million indigenous people depending on forests for their subsistence.

### 2.2 Enhance international efforts and processes linked to biodiversity conservation, climate change mitigation, and protection and sustainable management of forests

In proposing a target of zero net deforestation by 2020, WWF aims to help consolidate efforts to halt deforestation across various international initiatives and to set a global benchmark against which the success of these efforts can be measured. These initiatives include:

- The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which aim to ensure environmental sustainability (Goal 7) and to integrate the principles of sustainable development into national policies and programmes and reverse the loss of environmental resources. Progress towards achieving this goal is measured *inter alia* by the proportion of land area covered by forest. The UN Millennium Development Goals Report 2007 observed that deforestation continues, especially in biologically *diverse regions*. The UN 2006 Progress Chart drew the alarming picture that eight of ten regions showed no progress, with a deterioration or reversal against the target of reversing forest loss.
- The CBD Programme of Work on Forests, which aims to reduce the loss of forest biodiversity associated with forest loss and degradation. The expanded programme of work on forest biological diversity consists of three programme elements, 12 goals, 27 objectives and 130 activities related to Conservation, Sustainable Use, Benefit Sharing, Institutional and Socio-Economic Enabling Environment, Knowledge, Assessment and Monitoring. However, the programme lacks clear, time-bound targets for curbing deforestation.
- The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), which has acknowledged the need to reduce carbon emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD). Zero Net Deforestation should translate to zero net GHG emissions from deforestation and degradation. Achieving this by 2020 is recognized as a critical contribution to an early peak and decline in total global GHG emissions.
- The United Nations Forest Forum (UNFF), which has set a global objective to *reverse the loss of forest cover worldwide through sustainable forest management, including protection, restoration, afforestation and reforestation, and increase efforts to prevent forest degradation*. It has also committed to *work globally, regionally and nationally to achieve progress towards their achievement by 2015*. The 2020 target therefore is a natural next step to translate progress by 2015 into a final objective.
- The United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), which aims to maintain forests and tree cover to combat land degradation and desertification by stabilizing soils, reducing water and wind

erosion and maintaining nutrient cycling in soils. Deforestation often causes severe soil erosion and watershed depletion.

- Various other relevant organisations and partnerships, e.g. the World Bank's Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF) and the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF), are working to reduce forest loss.

### 3. What does "Zero NET Deforestation" mean?

- "Zero Net deforestation" can be distinguished from "zero deforestation", which means no deforestation anywhere.
- "Zero net deforestation" acknowledges that some forest loss could be offset by forest restoration. Zero net deforestation is not synonymous with a total prohibition on forest clearing. Rather, it leaves room for change in the configuration of the land-use mosaic, provided the net quantity, quality and carbon density of forests is maintained. It recognizes that, in some circumstances, conversion of forests in one site may contribute to the sustainable development and conservation of the wider landscape (e.g. reducing livestock grazing in a protected area may require conversion of forest areas in the buffer zone to provide farmland to local communities).
- However, zero net deforestation is not achieved through the conversion of primary or natural forests into fast growing plantations.<sup>2</sup> Such conversion would count as deforestation in assessing progress against the target.

#### **What about forest degradation?**

Although WWF's call for zero net deforestation focuses on the need to stop forest loss, avoiding forest degradation is equally important in reducing carbon emissions, preserving biodiversity, and maintaining critical services for people, particularly, local communities and indigenous groups. Often, forest degradation is a process whereby areas of natural forest are gradually transformed into degraded land or replaced by other land uses. Managing forests to avoid degradation is often a key strategy to prevent deforestation. WWF therefore works on both deforestation and forest degradation.

### 4. Why 2020?

- The 2020 target is a measurable milestone towards a longer term goal of improving forest cover and quality.
- The time-scale is feasible, given the relatively long planning periods associated with global political processes and the time needed to effectively address the underlying causes of deforestation in developing countries.
- With an annual reduction of 10% of the current global deforestation rate, the world can achieve zero deforestation by 2020.
- It is expected that a REDD mechanism will become operational with the start of the second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol in 2013. This will give a period of 8 years where the mechanism can contribute to the 2020 target.

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<sup>2</sup> Plantations, particularly intensively-managed, industrial plantations can contribute disproportionately to future demands. However, these fastwood plantations are controversial; much of their expansion has come from the conversion of natural forests and other areas of high conservation values such as grasslands and wetlands. Their establishment has in many cases also resulted in significant social consequences due to a disregard for the rights and interests of local communities. Key elements of sustainability in fastwood plantation can be found at [http://www.panda.org/about\\_wwf/what\\_we\\_do/forests/publications/position\\_papers/index.cfm?uNewsID=6003](http://www.panda.org/about_wwf/what_we_do/forests/publications/position_papers/index.cfm?uNewsID=6003).

- The UNFF is committed to achieving progress towards reversing global forest loss by 2015. The 2020 target therefore is a natural next step to translate progress by 2015 into a final objective.
- The 2020 target, however, is not intended to water down existing, yet more ambitious, targets or policies, whether at national or international levels. For example, Paraguay already has a Zero Deforestation Law in force, which prohibits the conversion of native forests.

## **5. How can the target be achieved?**

### **5.1 General strategies**

There is no single solution for tackling deforestation. Effective strategies will involve a range of measures. These include:

- REDD (reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation) initiatives;
- integrated land-use policies and planning processes;
- protection and sustainable management of forests;
- socially and environmentally responsible afforestation and reforestation; and
- promoting responsible consumption and production of forest-related goods and agricultural commodities.

The target can not be achieved by environmental and forest agencies alone. It requires integration of various cross-sectoral governmental policies such as agriculture, energy, finance and trade.

### **5.2 Key social and environmental safeguards**

To ensure the target is achieved in a manner consistent with the principles of sustainable development, WWF recommends that those supporting efforts to achieve zero net deforestation respect the following broad principles:

- Base land-use decisions affecting forests on transparent planning processes to achieve an optimal distribution of natural forests, plantations, agricultural areas, urban areas and other land-uses in a given landscape. Such processes should include well-informed negotiations among a wide range of stakeholders to balance ecological, social and economic dimensions of natural resource use across the landscape.
- Recognize and guarantee the legal and customary rights of indigenous peoples and rural populations to own, use and manage their lands, territories, and resources.
- Maintain and enhance High Conservation Values.<sup>3</sup>
- Prevent the use or release of Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) into the general environment until ecological interactions are fully researched and safeguards are put in place.
- Ensure that projects to reduce deforestation and related GHG emissions, address leakage (the displacement of deforestation elsewhere), additionality (ensuring the reduction goes beyond what would have happened anyway) and permanence (potential for loss of stored carbon due to fire, pests, disease, etc.).

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<sup>3</sup> WWF is opposed to the indiscriminate conversion of forests or other natural eco-systems that have high conservation values and/or critical carbon storage functions with plantations, croplands, pastures, urban settlements and other land-uses. However, the HCV approach, originally developed within a sustainable forest management approach (i.e. FSC certification), does not declare all forests containing high conservation values to 'no-go' zones. Rather it is designed as a tool to enable forest managers to develop conservation-based management plans.

### 5.3 All actors have a role to play

WWF recognizes that reversing forest loss can only be achieved collectively. It needs the support of public and private sector actors, all parts of the supply chain from producer to consumer and their financiers, and the local stakeholders in places threatened by deforestation. It will also require strong collaboration across relevant international processes e.g. UNFCCC, CBD and UNFF. In the following, we list examples of key measures governments and the private sector can undertake.

- **Government measures to address deforestation in their own countries:** Governments can develop and implement national programmes for reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD), with support from developed countries, to prepare for a post-2012 REDD mechanism. Such programmes should address the root causes of deforestation while contributing to biodiversity conservation and the well-being of people, especially indigenous and local communities. Planning should involve all relevant ministries and levels of government to avoid policy conflicts and clarify respective responsibilities. Pilots can build capacity on the ground and test methodologies for carbon monitoring and measurement. National programmes should also include climate change adaptation measures to reduce vulnerability of forest ecosystems and natural resources and integrate environmental and social safeguards into climate change mitigation and adaptation activities.
- **Government measures to support global efforts to address deforestation:** All governments can support the inclusion of a REDD mechanism as a credible and compensated form of emissions reductions within a post-2012 UN climate treaty. Developed countries can provide funds to contribute their fair global share to support developing countries in preparing for and implementing REDD as soon as possible. This can be achieved by providing funds, such as those announced by Norway. Governments can also adopt responsible public procurement policies for all products made from raw materials potentially linked to deforestation. Such policies can recognise credible voluntary certification schemes for wood and paper products, bio-energy and agricultural commodities such as palm-oil, soy and others. Governments can also take action to combat imports of products containing illegally-sourced timber including legislation to ensure that only wood and paper products from legal sources are traded.<sup>4</sup>
- **Private sector actions:** In forestry, agriculture and extractive industries, producers can develop and implement better management practices that are consistent with environmental and social safeguards and certification standards. Further down the supply chain, manufacturers, traders and end-users can procure responsibly from these sectors and reject products linked to deforestation. The financial sector can also apply investment screens based on these safeguards.

## 6. Conclusion

**WWF invites all stakeholders to support the call for a zero net deforestation by 2020, and stands ready to work with all stakeholders in making this target a reality.**

### **For further information please contact:**

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<sup>4</sup> Illegal logging is a pervasive problem of major international concern as it often leads to deforestation. Illegal logging and wood trading encompass the harvesting, transport, purchasing and sale of wood, where national or sub-national laws are violated. The share of illegal logging in global wood production is estimated at 20-40%, and the economic loss through lost receipts for the state, industry and forest owners is estimated at US\$ 15 billion (Euros 9.5 billion) per year. Illegal logging pushes wood prices down worldwide by 7-16%. (Illegal logging and the EU, WWF 2008 at [www.panda.org/forests](http://www.panda.org/forests))

**Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity who signed the WWF Postcard  
Calling for Zero Net Deforestation by 2020  
(As at 30 May 2008)**

- |                            |  |
|----------------------------|--|
| 29. Afghanistan            | 1. Nigeria   |
| 30. Australia              | 2. Oman  |
| 31. Austria                | 3. Pakistan  |
| 32. Benin                  | 4. Panama  |
| 33. Bosnia and Herzegovina | 5. Paraguay  |
| 34. Brazil                 | 6. Peru  |
| 35. Burkina Faso           | 7. Poland  |
| 36. Cambodia               | 8. Samoa   |
| 37. Colombia               | 9. Senegal   |
| 38. Congo-Brazzaville      | 10. Serbia   |
| 39. Costa Rica             | 11. Sierra Leone   |
| 40. Croatia                | 12. Slovenia   |
| 41. Cyprus                 | 13. South Africa   |
| 42. Czech Republic         | 14. St Vincent and Grenadines  |
| 43. Denmark                | 15. Sweden   |
| 44. Ecuador                | 16. Tajikistan   |
| 45. Ethiopia               | 17. Tanzania   |
| 46. Finland                | 18. Tchad  |
| 47. France                 | 19. Timor Leste  |
| 48. Gambia                 | 20. Turkmenistan   |
| 49. Germany                | 21. Uganda   |
| 50. Guatemala              | 22. Ukraine  |
| 51. Guinea-Bissau          | 23. UK   |
| 52. Guinea (West Africa)   | 24. Vietnam  |
| 53. Hungary                | 25. Yemen  |
| 54. India                  | 26. Zambia   |
| 55. Indonesia              | 27. Zimbabwe   |
| 56. Iran                   | 28. European Commission  |
| 57. Japan                  |  |
| 58. Kenya                  | <b>Others:</b>   |
| 59. Latvia                 | • CBD Secretariat  |
| 60. Lesotho                | • Commission of Forestry in Central Africa<br>(COMIFAC)  |
| 61. Liberia                | • IUFRO  |
| 62. Madagascar             | • Ramsar   |
| 63. Mauritania             | • UNEP   |
| 64. Mexico                 | • Subregional Programme for the Conservation<br>of Marine and Coastal Areas in West Africa<br>(PRCM) |
| 65. Namibia                |  |
| 66. Nepal                  |  |
| 67. Netherlands            |  |
| 68. New Zealand            |  |

Note:

Contact Gerald Steindlegger ([gerald.steindlegger@wwf.at](mailto:gerald.steindlegger@wwf.at)) if you are interested to join in the call for a zero net deforestation by 2020.