

Forest Day and the global perspective on forests and climate change



Photo by Neil Palmer/SIAT

At Copenhagen in December last year, the third Forest Day fully achieved its promise. The day of events was organised by CIFOR, the Government of Denmark and members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests. More than 1500 stakeholders attended, including government representatives, 88 journalists, 500 NGO representatives, indigenous leaders, 188 private sector representatives, 34 donors, and hundreds of scientists and forestry experts. Their goal was to ensure that the design and implementation of forest-related climate mitigation and adaptation measures under consideration in the climate change agreement would be effective, efficient and equitable – and more than 250 negotiators were there to listen.

Moreover, one of the indicators of the relevance of Forest Day became clear at Copenhagen – its ability to attract world leaders. Key speakers at the event included Rajendra K. Pachauri, chair of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change; Wangari Maathai, founder of the Green Belt Movement and

‘I have seen [the CPF] do incredibly important work over the years.... Whilst the focus of the politicians is on the big ticket issues, you make sure that [we] keep focused on environmental and ecological integrity, and on the protection of people’s rights. The overall result [of the climate negotiations] relies on the integrity of the architecture that is put in place here. Please continue to be the conscience of this process.’

Yvo De Boer, executive secretary of the UNFCCC addressing Forest Day 3

Nobel laureate; and former US President Bill Clinton, who appeared via video.

Much of the discussion focused on REDD+, or reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation and enhancing carbon stocks. The thinking is simple enough. At present, forest loss and degradation is responsible for a fifth of carbon emissions. Reducing these emissions, and encouraging land-use activities that sequester carbon, should be a priority.

Gro Harlem Brundtland, the UN Special Envoy on Climate Change, pointed out that if we continue to destroy forests at the present rate, it will be impossible to reach the target of keeping the increase in global mean temperature under 2 degrees Celsius. ‘Paradoxically,’ she said, ‘the climate crisis not only can, but indeed must, catalyse a salvage operation for the world’s forests.’

Former World Bank chief economist Lord Nicholas Stern argued that one of the most cost-effective ways of reducing the risk of climate change is to halt deforestation. He estimated that we could halve the rate of deforestation for around US\$15 billion yearly. ‘One clear lesson when we start to think of how to bring the cost down is that we have to act across the world at the same time,’ he said.

Several speakers stressed the need to respect the rights of local communities. ‘If local users and indigenous peoples in the developing world are not recognised and assigned clear rights, REDD could lead to more deforestation,’ asserted Elinor Ostrom, who had received the Nobel Prize for Economics in Stockholm the week before the Copenhagen conference.

A summary of Forest Day 3, presented to the UN climate change secretariat, stated that two key commitments are needed to get REDD+ off the ground. First, developed nations must provide financial compensation to developing nations for reducing emissions from deforestation and degradation. Second, the latter must commit to doing so in ways that are environmentally, socially and economically sustainable.

Donors

CIFOR’s work in 2009 would not have been possible without the generous support of the following organisations.

Association Interooperation Madagascar	Department for International Development	International Development Research Centre	Rights and Resources Institute
Australia	European Commission	International Food Policy Research Institute	The Samdhana Institute Sweden
Australian Agency for International Development	Federal Office for the Environment, Switzerland	International Network for Bamboo and Rattan	Swedish International Biodiversity Programme
Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research	Fidelity Charitable Gift Fund Finland	International Tropical Timber Organization	Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences
Australian National University	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	International Union for Conservation of Nature	Swiss Agency for Environment, Forests and Landscape
Austrian Development Agency	Ford Foundation	Iran	Switzerland
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China	International Fund for Agricultural Research	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation	United States Department of Agriculture, Forest Service
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The David and Lucile Packard Foundation		Regional Community Forestry Training Center for Asia and the Pacific	Wageningen University and Research Centre
		Remote Sensing Solutions	World Agroforestry Centre World Bank

Statements of financial position

As at 31 December 2009 and 2008
(in thousands of US dollars)

Assets	2009	2008
Current assets		
Cash and cash equivalents	17,474	6,704
Short-term time deposits	7,525	8,250
Account receivables:		
- Donors, net	3,700	2,512
- Employees	305	274
- Others	1,184	881
Prepaid expenses	427	522
Total current assets	30,615	19,143
Non-current assets		
Property, plant and equipment, net	1,945	1,897
Other assets	1,387	1,035
Total non-current assets	3,332	2,932
Total assets	33,947	22,075
Liabilities and net assets		
Current liabilities		
Account payables:		
- Donors	15,404	6,085
- Others	23	77
Accrued expenses	2,150	1,427
Total current liabilities	17,577	7,589
Non-current liabilities		
Employee benefits obligations	3,515	3,007
Accrued expenses – non-current portion	319	150
Total non-current liabilities	3,834	3,157
Net assets		
Unrestricted:		
- Undesignated	9,533	8,326
- Designated	3,003	3,003
Total net assets	12,536	11,329
Total liabilities and net assets	33,947	22,075

Statements of activities

For the years ended 31 December 2009 and 2008
(in thousands of US dollars)

	2009	2008
Revenues		
- Grant revenues	9,709	13,882
- Other revenues	261	261
Total revenues	9,970	13,882
Expenses		
- Program related expenses	5,155	13,882
- Management and general expenses	5,093	5,093
Indirect expense recovery	10,248	24,130
Total expenses	8,763	13,882
Changes in net assets	1,207	1,207
Supplementary schedule of expenses – classified by nature of expenses		
Personnel costs	4,809	4,620
Supplies and services	3,378	3,593
Partnership activities	707	4,739
Operational travel	864	834
Depreciation of property, plant and equipment	490	96
Indirect expense recovery	(1,485)	-(1,485)
Total expenses	8,763	13,882

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Photo cover by Eko Prianto



Center for International Forestry Research

CIFOR advances human wellbeing, environmental conservation and equity by conducting research to inform policies and practices that affect forests in developing countries. CIFOR is one of 15 centres within the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR). CIFOR’s headquarters are in Bogor, Indonesia. It also has offices in Asia, Africa and South America.



The turning point ...

Annual report 2009

Thinking beyond the canopy

CIFOR offsets its carbon emissions through the CarbonFree® partner programme. CarbonFree supports third-party validated renewable energy, energy efficiency, and reforestation projects worldwide. This report is printed on recycled paper.



Message from the Director General

2009 was a pivotal year for CIFOR and the world’s forests. At CIFOR we laid the foundations for a new generation of forest research and worked to inform policy arenas and practitioner communities with the results of research already in hand.

We dedicated considerable energy this year to building global comparative research agendas for each of our 6 research themes. For example, we embarked on the Global Comparative Study on REDD, which will generate rigorous answers to the question, ‘What works?’ being asked by the more than 40 governments and 100 pilot project proponents currently initiating REDD+ activities. Preparing for this ambitious 4 year research effort has involved developing the methods, recruiting partners and selecting REDD project sites in the first 6 countries.

Through our publications and convening role, CIFOR has been able to inform the policy debate regarding forests and climate change at national and global levels. At the UNFCCC COP15 in Copenhagen, we launched ‘Realising REDD+: National strategy and policy options’, the third book in a seminal series that, along with dozens of CIFOR papers and articles on REDD+, is now considered by many partners and stakeholders to be essential reading.

Forest Day 3, held in Copenhagen alongside COP15 in cooperation with the Government of Denmark and members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests, was attended by more than 1500 participants, including 250 UNFCCC negotiators.

While the international focus on climate change has raised the profile of 2 of our 6 research themes – the role of forests in mitigation and adaptation – CIFOR’s strength continues to be the breadth of our research, both scientifically and geographically. Indeed, it is the interconnectedness across all our areas of research that enables CIFOR to make contributions towards addressing a wide variety of challenges. Exemplifying the diversity and impact of our work are the stories in this Annual Report. The case studies here, which range from strengthening the position of forest communities in Guatemala and informing plantation policy in Indonesia to influencing certification guidelines for small-scale timber producers, show how CIFOR’s

research is valued – and used – by a wide range of actors at local, national and international levels.

Despite the competing demands on staff time, CIFOR scientists have maintained their scientific research productivity, and continue to publish in more than 20 top-ranked journals. 2009 saw the production of several edited volumes, embracing such topics as rights-based approaches to conservation (in collaboration with IUCN), forest tenure reform, and decentralisation. With partners in the African Forests of Observatory project, CIFOR also produced the ‘2008 State of the Forest’ report for the Congo Basin. A particularly gratifying part of our outreach efforts were capacity-building activities for developing country journalists who have limited access to training opportunities and resources. This included 4 media workshops held alongside major events where we had a strong presence, including the World Congress of Agroforestry in Nairobi and the World Forestry Congress in Buenos Aires.

Supporting this level of output is the fact that CIFOR is growing. In 2009, we recruited 23 staff members, the largest number of new recruits in 11 years. This brings our total to nearly 100 scientists and associates working on issues critical to the future of forests in Asia, Africa and Latin America. This injection of new people, with fresh ideas and fresh energy, both at our headquarters in Indonesia and at offices elsewhere, makes for an exciting time to be at CIFOR.

The year also saw several transitions on the senior management team, as some of our good people were plucked away to lead newly created institutions. To ensure a stream of ‘home-grown’ talent, in 2009 CIFOR inaugurated a high-potential staff development programme, with a first cohort of 6 nationally and regionally recruited staff.

Looking back on the hard work of 2009, with the parallel achievements of leveraging our existing strengths and laying the groundwork for the future, I am confident that CIFOR is poised to make an even greater contribution to advancing human well-being, environmental conservation and equity through high-quality research focused on impact.

Frances Seymour

Frances Seymour
Director General

Counting carbon to make carbon count



The Kyoto Protocol's Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) enables industrial countries to meet emission targets by financing projects in developing countries that help to reduce the amount of carbon in the atmosphere. One way of doing this is by planting trees. However, designing forestry projects for the CDM has proved ferociously complicated but not impossible, as research in Latin America has shown.

The FORMA project helped managers of 10 forest-carbon projects acquire the skills and knowledge needed to negotiate their way through the complex process of joining the CDM. The project, 'Strengthening CDM Projects in Forestry and Bioenergy Sectors in Ibero-America' is funded by the Spanish government, and managed by CIFOR and the Tropical Agriculture Research and Higher Education Centre (CATIE).

'It's a measure of how successful FORMA was that 6 of the projects are now well on the way to being recognised, or already have been recognised, by the CDM or by voluntary carbon markets,' says Zenia Salinas, who managed the FORMA project before moving to the World Bank's BioCarbon Fund.

Under the FORMA project, scientists developed a tool to calculate the amount of carbon that would be saved or sequestered by forestry projects. The Tool for Afforestation and Reforestation Approved Methodologies (TARAM) has been used and refined by the BioCarbon Fund. 'TARAM has helped us to estimate emission reductions for our whole portfolio,' explains fund analyst Mirko Serkovic, 'and we have had feedback from our projects that TARAM is useful.'

REDD+: Location, location, location ...

When it comes to providing payments to reduce emissions from deforestation, what sort of projects will work best? Research in Sumatra suggests that scale and location could be crucial in determining their success. Here, scientists from the UK, the US and CIFOR examined the likely impact of Indonesia's first emissions reduction initiative, which focuses on a protected area in the uplands.

'We wanted to compare the benefits of this initiative with an alternative scenario of a RED project covering a much larger area in northern Sumatra,' explains David Gaveau of the UK-based Durrell Institute of Conservation and Ecology. The second area contains large expanses of lowland peat forest, rich in orangutans, and already subject to widespread forest clearance.

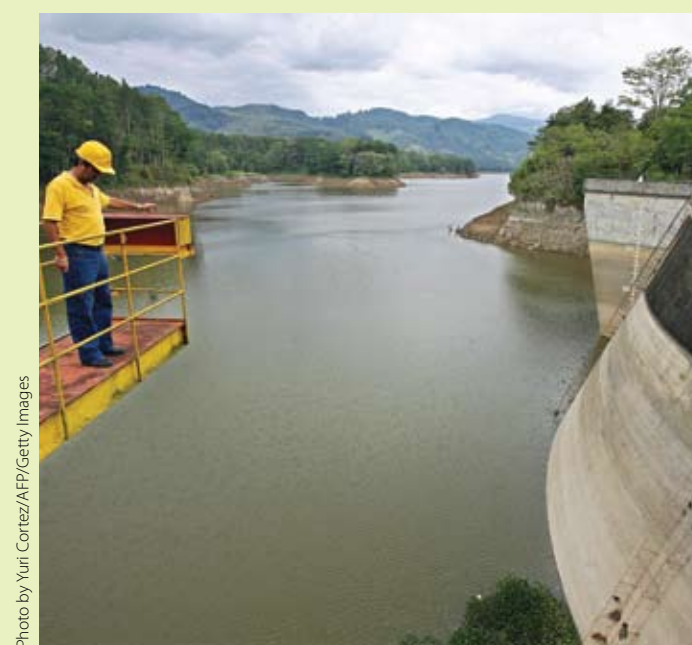
Using spatial modeling, the scientists predicted that the existing initiative will save 1313 square kilometres of forest from clearance by 2030. However, 7913 square kilometres of forest will be lost outside the protected area. Since the vast majority of orangutans live in the lowlands, the existing initiative will do little to help them. Indeed, a quarter of the population could be lost by 2030 if the status quo prevails.



'If we really want to save forests and orangutans, carbon payment projects in northern Sumatra should focus on the lowlands, rather than the upland protected area,' explains CIFOR scientist Markku Kanninen. The authors concluded that reducing emissions from deforestation would have a greater conservation impact if payments were extended to all remaining carbon-rich tropical forests in northern Sumatra.

Coping with climate change in Costa Rica

The Tropical Forest and Climate Change Adaptation (TroFCCA) project has increased our knowledge about how to assess vulnerability to climate change, and how to devise adaptation measures. In Costa Rica, one of the countries where TroFCCA conducted research, CIFOR collaborated with the Tropical Agriculture Research and Higher Education Centre (CATIE). The researchers focused on a vulnerable area within the Reventazón watershed, whose dams provide 27 per cent of Costa Rica's hydropower.



During recent years, the increase in frequency and intensity of extreme precipitation events has led to serious soil erosion, resulting in an increase in sedimentation which threatens the dams' potential to generate power. Trying to counter this has cost the National Institute for Hydroelectricity (ICE), which has a state monopoly on energy supply, millions of dollars.

The research investigated what would happen if extreme precipitation events continued to increase; how different land-use options might help communities and the environment adapt to climate change; and the sort of incentives that could encourage farmers to adopt land-use practices which reduce erosion, and therefore sedimentation in the dams.

'The project improved our knowledge about soil conservation and gave us a better understanding of how to improve soil management on agricultural land,' says ICE engineer Gustavo Calvo Domingo. 'We are now promoting activities which will be beneficial both to farmers and to the company. These activities will help reduce erosion and the costs associated with removing sediment from the dams.'

Transforming tenure in Guatemala

It is estimated that 27 per cent of forests in developing countries are owned or controlled by communities. But what does this mean in practice? A global research project, coordinated by CIFOR with the support of the Right and Resources Initiative, is providing some of the answers.

One particular study, funded by the World Bank, the Ford Foundation and the International Development Research Centre, looked at two very different regions in Guatemala, one in the lowlands, the other in the highlands. The researchers studied the nature of tenure reforms, the role communities played in making the reforms happen, and the problems they face in establishing and managing community forests.

'One of the clear messages to come out of our research, here and elsewhere in Latin America,' explains CIFOR associate scientist Anne Larson, 'is that collective action by community organisations and networks has been essential in gaining and maintaining tenure rights and access to forest resources.'

A series of workshops, attended by representatives of 427 community organisations, led to the creation of a national platform in July 2009. The platform campaigns for the reform of forest regulations that fail to take into account the needs and aspirations of local communities. It also seeks to ensure that communities have a strong say in decision making. And the government is certainly listening. It is financing some of the platform's activities and has appointed an official to liaise with its members.



There's more to conservation than wildlife



Conservation activities can benefit local people, but they can also do them serious harm. In Peru, for example, the creation of a national park to conserve local crop varieties benefited the local indigenous people, who help to manage the park, as well as biodiversity. This is in sharp contrast to the fate of the San people in South Africa. Their human rights have frequently been ignored and many have been driven from their ancestral lands to make way for protected areas.

A major study published by CIFOR and the International Union for Nature Conservation (IUCN), 'Rights-based approaches: Exploring issues and opportunities for conservation,' suggests that conservation-related conflicts need not, and should not, happen.

The book includes an eclectic range of case studies, examining everything from water rights in Jordan to the rights of Sherpa communities in Nepal and forest dwellers in Bolivia. 'The case studies help shed light on the way in which rights holders, such as indigenous people, and duty bearers, which might include government agencies, can work constructively together,' says co-editor Terry Sunderland, a CIFOR scientist and member of IUCN's Commission on Environmental, Economic and Social Policy.

The book helped to shape IUCN's first comprehensive resolution on rights-based approaches to conservation. It calls on IUCN's 1000-plus members to develop rights-based approaches to conservation. It encourages government agencies and civil society organisations to monitor the impact of conservation activities on human rights. And it encourages its members to establish mechanisms to ensure that private sector interests respect human rights and take responsibility for the environmental and social damage their activities cause.

Indonesia's lessons for REDD+

Over the coming years countries with large expanses of tropical forests could receive funding worth billions of US dollars for projects that reduce emissions from deforestation and degradation (REDD). But will they be used wisely? CIFOR research, funded by the World Bank and the Australian Agency for International Development, looked at the lessons learned from Indonesia's experience with its Reforestation Fund.

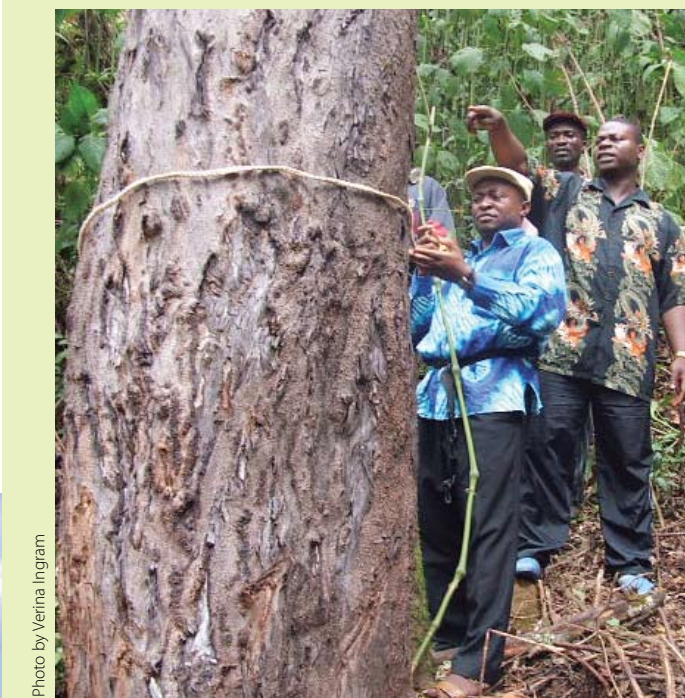
Financed by a levy on harvested timber, the fund has provided Indonesia with a multibillion dollar pot of money to support reforestation. It was frequently misused during the Soeharto era. Since the fall of Soeharto in 1998, there have been significant reforms, and the fund is now subject to periodic audits. Yet problems remain, says Chris Barr, co-author of Financial Governance and Indonesia's Reforestation Fund. 'Although the government has taken some impressive steps to improve financial management, the administration of the fund still suffers from a lack of transparency and accountability,' he says.



The report suggests that the Ministry of Forestry needs to improve its financial management; there needs to be greater transparency and accountability among key institutions involved in administering REDD funds; financial monitoring, reporting and verification need to be strengthened; and efforts should be made to ensure that REDD funds are not used as a subsidy for big business, in the way the Reforestation Fund frequently has been. 'We have accepted the report's conclusions,' said Tachrir Fathoni, director general of the Forestry Research and Development Agency at the Ministry of Forestry. 'However, we have been in the process of developing and improving all aspects of financial governance. We can and will change.'

Cameroon's foresters align rules with reality

Cameroon's experience with community forestry is instructive. Although many villages have been able to raise a substantial income from timber sales, community forests have failed to realise their true potential. This is largely because the procedures for establishing and managing community forests were, until recently, far too complicated.



'In the past, many communities realised that if they rigidly followed the Manual of Procedures they would make very little money,' explains CIFOR scientist Guillaume Lescuyer. So they failed to abide by the letter of the law and in 2006 over 50 community forestry associations lost their harvesting licences. Undeterred, many continued to harvest timber – illegally.

The first attempt to revise the Manual of Procedures was undertaken by a network of civil society groups. The process accelerated in 2006 when a number of organisations, including CIFOR, took a fresh look at the manual. In December 2008, the Ministry of Forests and Fauna held a workshop in the capital, Yaoundé, convening some 80 people who had been involved in the discussions. This led to a revised manual, which came into force in 2009. The Ministry said they appreciated CIFOR's guidance and suggestions through the revision process, and lauded the science-policy collaboration moving forward.

The new manual simplifies the regulations governing community forestry and ensures that the financial affairs of the associations managing community forests are more transparent.

Setting the standards for small-scale forestry

Some 117 millions hectares of the world's forests, 15 per cent of them tropical forests, are currently certified as sustainably managed by organisations like the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC). However, companies, communities and individuals managing small blocks of forest, or exploiting forests at low intensity, have found it hard to join certification schemes. This is set to change.

A research project funded by the Global Environment Facility and managed by CIFOR has devised tools and incentives that will enable forest managers and local communities to identify and manage biodiversity on small-scale forestry operations, or where the intensity of management is low. The research tested these tools and incentives at 6 sites in Brazil, Cameroon and Mexico.

New standards for small-scale and low-intensity operations were submitted for approval to the Council in late 2009. Frank Katto, who manages the accreditation programme, said they would make a significant difference. 'The standards will reduce many of the barriers which prevented small operators from joining certification schemes in the past,' he says. 'They are relatively simple to use, and less costly than the standards they replace, without reducing any of the rigour required by FSC certification.'

The project enabled CIFOR to have an impact both locally and globally and to build on previous research findings. 'It was a good example of collaboration between a research centre, a global forest certification organisation and various national initiatives,' says CIFOR scientist Robert Nasi.



Message from the Chair of the Board

2009 was a turning point for forests and forestry research, as global recognition of the central role of forests in mitigating and adapting to climate change began to affect decisions in national and international policy arenas and actions on the ground.

The international community now agrees that reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation and enhancing carbon stocks (REDD+) is an essential element of the climate protection agenda, and, crucially, forests were included in the accord that came out of the UNFCCC negotiations in Copenhagen.

CIFOR can make a significant contribution to ensure that new sources of finance and political will now being focused on forests will be translated into meaningful changes in policy and practices. The investment we have made in research and in building outreach capacity in recent years means we are ideally positioned as a credible source of analysis and advice on forest-related issues.

One indication of CIFOR's growing profile is our ability to raise funds, contributing to our sound financial health. Grants to CIFOR in 2009 totalled US \$23.6 million, a 15 per cent increase on 2008. 2009 also marked the award of one of the largest project grants CIFOR has ever received: US \$3.2 million from the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation for the first year of a 4-year global comparative study of the effectiveness of first-generation REDD+ activities.

2009 was also the first full year in which our new strategy was operational, and we are beginning to reap the benefits. The greater emphasis on interdisciplinary research has helped to create vibrant new partnerships, both within CIFOR and beyond. Our new approach helps leverage important synergies across CIFOR's research programmes to inform and influence diverse policy arenas, drawing on expertise related to livelihoods, governance and sustainable forest management.

The Board of Trustees believes that the new strategy has strengthened CIFOR's position as a leading international research institute by ensuring attention to the quality of our science as well as to the significance of its potential impact.

As CIFOR cannot hope to influence the way the world's forests are managed by working in isolation, we have concentrated on working in partnership with other organisations and policy processes to influence the global forestry agenda.

Our position within the Consultative Group for International Agricultural Research remains strong. At its September 2009 meeting, the CGIAR Science Council gave CIFOR's Medium Term Plan a strong endorsement, highlighting in particular our efforts to mainstream gender and capacity building into our research programme.

CIFOR's relationships with our host country governments also ran smoothly in 2009. This was the first full year of having a full-time host country liaison officer in place in Indonesia, which has greatly benefited our relations with the Indonesian Ministry of Forestry. A Ministry review team gave CIFOR a satisfactory rating in a March 2009 assessment of CIFOR's benefits to the host country. In Cameroon, the Ministry of Forests and Fauna sent a formal letter commending CIFOR on our performance.

CIFOR now offsets carbon emissions through the CarbonFree® partner programme, and we are committed to reducing the amount of printed material we produce. This streamlined annual report, designed to provide a valuable overview of CIFOR's position and activities in 2009 without excessive use of materials, is an example of these efforts.

Despite the changes the future will inevitably bring, we are determined that some things will never change. Wherever the global debate on forests leads, CIFOR will continue to provide sound science to keep that debate grounded in reality, and ensure that it reflects the interests and perspectives of people who depend on forests for their livelihood.

Dr Andrew J. Bennett
Chair, Board of Trustees

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* Juan Mayr, International Consultant, regularly represents the World Agroforestry Centre at our Board meetings.

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