

# Forests in a Changing Environment

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# Forests in a changing environment: → 3 Key issues

- Forests and climate change
- Reversing the loss of forest cover, preventing forest degradation in all types of forests and combating desertification, including low forest cover countries
- Forests and biodiversity conservation, including protected areas



# Forests and climate change:

→ Climate change impacts on forests

- Increasing evidence that climate change is seriously affecting forests (changes in temperature and rainfall = changes in forest physiology, structure, species composition and health)
- Forests as a microcosm of sustainable development: livelihoods, societal well-being and key environmental services
- Climate change places additional stresses on people who depend on forests



# Forests and climate change:

## → Forest-based climate change strategies

- Large amounts of carbon in forest ecosystems - 638 billion tons (2005) - more carbon in forests than in the atmosphere
- Deforestation and forest degradation are primary drivers of carbon emissions from forests, 17.4 % of total human-generated CO<sub>2</sub> emissions (2004)
- Climate Change negotiations & REDD
  - emissions from deforestation and forest degradation account for 35% of emissions in developing countries and 65 per cent in LDCs
  - Bali Action Plan
  - UNFCCC COP 15



# Forests and climate change: → Opportunities & Challenges

- Consider the full scope – forests are much more than “carbon sticks”, they provide a wide range of goods and services
- UNFF and its member States have an opportunity to contribute to the global climate change agenda is through the promotion of SFM, including mitigation and adaptation measures related to climate change
- Outcome of UNFF negotiations on financing SFM could contribute substantively to the ongoing climate change negotiations
- CPF provides a unique strategic approach to addressing SFM including climate change



# Deforestation, forest degradation and desertification

- Deforestation, forest degradation and desertification affects over one billion people, principally in developing countries
- Deforestation = approximately 13 million hectares/ year, net loss of forest cover = 7.3 million hectares ('00 –'05)
- 3 % of the global forest cover lost ('90 – '05)
- Deforestation took place mostly in South America & Africa ('00 to '05)
- 25% of land degradation associated with broad-leaved forests, 17 % with boreal forests, and 18 % with agricultural lands



# Deforestation, forest degradation & desertification → Underlying Causes

- Some progress in identifying causes, but have not been effectively addressed
- These include the need for institutional capacity for SFM; strengthening forest law enforcement; broader participation; recognition of multiple values of forests
- Importance of coordinated cross-sectoral policy approach
- Impact of armed conflict on forests has emerged in recent years
- Drylands particularly vulnerable to land degradation leading to desertification
- By 2020, 135 million people at risk of being driven from their lands because of desertification, nearly half of them (60 million) are in sub-Saharan Africa



# Combating deforestation, forest degradation and desertification

- Afforestation, reforestation and the establishment of planted forests among most effective ways, as seen in several **LFCCs**
- Financial resources and transfer of environmentally sound technologies needed
- Global forests were being addressed in a fragmented and uncoordinated manner
- Strengthen implementation of the forest instrument - strengthen collaboration





# Forests and biodiversity

- 80 % of terrestrial biodiversity found in forests, mostly in tropical forests
- Deforestation, mainly conversion of forests to agricultural land, and other types of forest degradation are main drivers of forest biodiversity loss
- Climate change, natural disasters, forest fires, airborne pollution, forest fragmentation, invasive alien species also play a role in loss of forest biodiversity
- Over 11% of global forest area is designated mainly for biodiversity conservation



# SFM and Biodiversity Conservation

- Conservation of forest biodiversity - widely recognized as an important SFM objective
- Effective management of protected areas is of critical importance
- Institutional options and improved policy measures required to promote the fair and equitable sharing of costs and benefits of protected areas
- Designation of a forest area as protected is not enough to ensure effective conservation



# Forests and biodiversity

## → Challenges and Opportunities

- Further analysis and capacity-building, particularly related to forests important for biodiversity conservation, such as tropical montane cloud forests, mangrove forests and riparian forests
- Addressing emerging issues for forests such as climate change and biofuels
- Increased cooperation with relevant processes and NGOs
- The International Year of Biodiversity in 2010 and the International Year of Forests in 2011 -an excellent opportunity for cooperation



# Forests in a changing environment: → Cross-cutting issues

- International donors have focused on few large countries with large areas of forest cover, and less attention has been paid to LFCCs, SIDS and high and medium forest cover countries
  - LFCCs in arid and semi-arid areas are particularly susceptible to land degradation and desertification (deforestation and forest degradation combined with global warming)
  - Like LFCCs, SIDS are highly vulnerable to climate change impacts (land-use changes combined with global warming)
  - High and medium forest cover countries possess high biodiversity but also face severe deforestation (climate change interacting with deforestation and fires)



# Forests in a changing environment: → Recommendations

- Inextricable links among the three issues contained in forests in a changing environment
- The forest instrument is an effective tool for integrating these three issues in a holistic and coordinated manner within the framework of SFM
- Provides a set of recommendations on these issues



# Forests in a changing environment: → Recommendations (Member States)

- Encourage use of NFPs in national sustainable development strategies
- Establish national coordination mechanisms comprised of national focal points for UNFF, CBD, UNCCD, UNFCCC and others to address the aggregate impact of the these three issues
- Use the forest instrument to reinforce national measures to integrate forests more closely with other policies
- Encourage development of national finance strategies for SFM
- Improve analytical and reporting capacities to better assess how SFM contributes to responding to these three issues
- Give priority to reforestation, afforestation and the expansion of forest plantations in national development policies and programmes and NFPs in **LFCCs** & SIDS



Thank you!

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