

3. THE FOREST RESOURCE

Venezuela's forestry resource base consists of:

- approximately 50 million hectares of natural forests, and,
- 510,000 hectares of plantations.

3.1. Forestry Land

Land classified as **Forestry Land** covers around 54.82% of Venezuela's total surface. In round numbers,

- Total land surface (Venezuela): 91.2 million ha.
- Forestry surface: 50.0 million ha.

This resource is not evenly distributed throughout the total territory. South of the Orinoco River, Venezuela has some 37 million hectares (74% of the total Forestry Land) while north of the Orinoco (where more than 94% of the population lives) there are 13 million hectares of Forestry Land. Almost all the Forestry Land south of the Orinoco River is public land, made up of tropical humid forests.

In the last 25 years, Venezuela has planted mainly *Pinus caribaea* and, in very small proportion, *Eucaliptus camaldulensis* with the idea of: soil and water conservation; production to satisfy pulp demand for the paper industry; and, round wood for the mills.