

set out in the strategy according to their policies, plans, priorities, and fiscal capabilities and have prepared or are preparing their own biodiversity strategies and action plans. These strategies and action plans are helping Canada to make progress in meeting its international biodiversity commitments. Moreover, Canadian commitments toward forest biodiversity are an integral part of the new National Forest Strategy.

Various activities have been initiated following the adoption of the Canadian Biodiversity Strategy. Some of these activities focus on capacity building and information dissemination. Examples include the Canadian Biodiversity Information Initiative, which facilitates communication on biodiversity data management, and the Forest Stewardship Recognition Program, sponsored by many groups and associations. In addition, national efforts are under way to improve the scientific knowledge for protecting Canada's forests from alien forest pests.

Global Dialogue on Forests

Forest issues transcend political and sectoral boundaries. They are interconnected with policies on the environment, agriculture, trade, energy, science and technology, economic growth, and development assistance. Moreover, the line often becomes blurred between issues that can be resolved at home and those that require international action.

Human needs, cultural activities, and socioeconomic priorities vary widely between countries and communities. In addition, forest types vary greatly throughout the world, and definitions of ecologically sound forest practices are at least as numerous as the forest types to which they apply.

After the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development endorsed the proposals for action by the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests (IPF), heads of state at the United Nations General Assembly agreed on the need to continue the forest policy dialogue and decided to establish the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests (IFF) in 1997. Over its two-year mandate, the IFF undertook a program of work that covered three areas: promoting and facilitating implementation, monitoring, and review of the IPF's proposals for action; considering matters left pending from the IPF; and identifying possible elements of future international arrangements and mechanisms, such as a legally binding instrument on forests, and building global consensus. It reports to the eighth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development in April 2000 when a

Helping Developing Countries

Collaborative efforts to alleviate poverty in the developing world and to protect the environment benefit all countries by contributing to global health, prosperity, and stability. A fundamental goal of forest development assistance is to strengthen the developing country's capacity to manage its forests sustainably. For more than 30 years, through the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), Canada has been helping developing countries find sustainable solutions. Projects typically incorporate a range of activities, including forest resource assessment, community forestry, local industry development, the conservation of genetic diversity, and the halting of desertification. Training and education are core activities in every CIDA forest project. Since its forest development program was established in 1967, CIDA has helped more than 90 countries increase their people's forestry knowledge and their ability to develop solutions to local forest issues.