



news release

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IMPLEMENTATION OF CANADA-MEXICO MODEL FOREST PROJECTS

Foreign Affairs Minister André Ouellet and Natural Resources Minister Anne McLellan today announced the twinning of two model forest projects in Mexico with the Canadian Model Forest network. The twinning is part of Canada's International Model Forests Program announced by Canada at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in June 1992. Mexico was the first to join Canada as a partner in this program, followed by Russia.

"International forest issues are an environmental foreign policy priority for Canada. The twinning of projects between Canada and Mexico is a clear indication that co-operation between countries on difficult sustainable development issues is key to their resolution," Mr. Ouellet said.

"The search for models of sustainable forest management is a common goal of many countries. By working together on the definition of practical, working level approaches to sustainable forest management, both our countries will benefit," Ms. McLellan added.

The Calakmul Model Forest, with an area of approximately 600 000 ha, is located in the southwest of Campeche State and includes the largest remaining area of tropical rainforest in Mexico. This project will be twinned with the Eastern Ontario Model Forest, which stretches from Ottawa to Cornwall and Brockville. The Forêt habitée project in the Lower Saint Lawrence region of Quebec will also provide technical expertise to the twinning. The three sites share common interest in the relationship between agriculture and forestry, conservation of wildlife habitat, and development of rural economy.

The second project is a 105 000 ha model forest located in the state of Chihuahua, in the northern part of the Western Sierra Madre Mountains. This project will be twinned with the Foothills Forest located in west-central Alberta, adjacent to Jasper National Park. Both of these model forests share a mountainous terrain covered with forests of pine, a critical focus on

watershed management, ecotourism, wildlife conservation, and application of new information technologies to forest management.

Funding for the International Model Forests Program was provided for in the February 1994 federal budget, under the Green Plan International Partnerships Fund. The Mexican model forest projects will receive an annual contribution of approximately \$500 000 each, for the next three years. The Mexican government will provide matching funds for the two model forest projects.

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