



# Forests and climate protection

## Why we are working to protect tropical forests

Forests have a vital role to play in the earth's ecosystem: they are the "green lungs of the world", producing oxygen, binding CO<sub>2</sub> and stabilising the world's climate. Without forests, we will not be able to achieve the goal of halting global warming at between 1.5 and 2.0 degrees Celsius. Furthermore, forests are home to numerous plant and animal species: a very large proportion of the world's known land creatures and plants are to be found in forests, with an extremely large proportion of them in tropical forests. Forests are also a source of work and income; about 1.6 billion people are directly dependent on them. Moreover, for a very large number of people, forests have a cultural, often even spiritual, significance. This is particularly so for indigenous peoples.

Forests provide high-quality foodstuffs such as wild game and wild fowl, fish, fruits, nuts and edible mushrooms – thus supplementing the foods provided by agriculture. They also provide clean water, building materials and food for animals. Forests have an especially important role to play as sources of energy: around one third of the world's population is dependent on firewood or wood charcoal as fuel for cooking or heating, for example.

And yet, despite their supreme importance, the forests of the world are in danger. Over the last 25 years about 129 million hectares of forest have been lost. Despite the many successes made in protecting forests, each year roughly another 7.6 million hectares of tropical forests are lost – an area slightly larger than the German federal state of Bavaria. A further result of forest clearances is the release of huge amounts of CO<sub>2</sub>, accounting for eleven per cent of global emissions of this greenhouse gas.

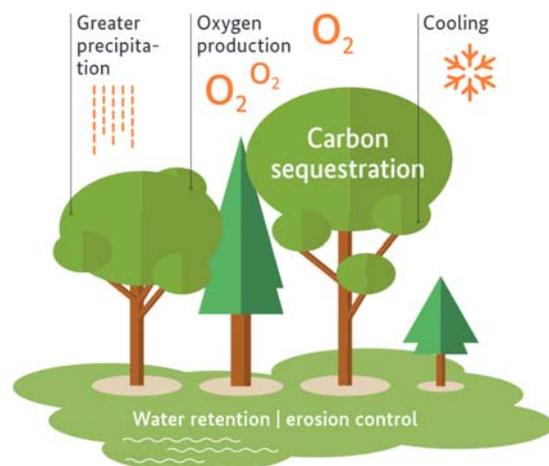
## What we are doing

Because forests are so important for people and for nature, for many years now the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) has been actively engaged in measures concerned with the preservation and sustainable management of forests.

Worldwide, the BMZ provides some 2 billion euros in funding for forest-related projects. Thanks to the work being done as part of German development cooperation, in recent years more than 60 million hectares of forest has been safeguarded. That is an area 40 times as big as all Germany's nature reserves put together.

Germany is supporting measures concerned with reducing emissions from forest destruction (REDD+), restoring forests, boosting "deforestation-free" supply chains, and fostering forest certification and legal trade in timber. Together with Norway and the United Kingdom, Germany will provide 5 billion US dollars between now and 2020 to fund a number of measures for the protection and restoration of tropical forests.

### *How forests help protect the climate*



This is part of Germany's contribution towards the implementation of the international forest protection and afforestation goals of the *New York Declaration on Forests* adopted in 2014. Its goal is to end the loss of natural forests by 2030 and to restore 350 million hectares of forest.

### REDD+

REDD stands for Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation. REDD+ is an integral part of the Paris climate agreement. The basic idea behind its novel approach to forest and climate protection is to compensate governments and local communities for avoided deforestation and verifiable efforts to reduce emissions. Thus, in the Brazilian state of Acre for example, compensation payments have been made for emission reductions of over 6.5 million metric tons, an amount equivalent to the annual CO<sub>2</sub> emissions of 3.5 million motor cars. Afforestation and more sustainable forest management are also rewarded, because they improve the forest's carbon storage function. Activities supported by Germany range from small-scale stand-alone projects to full-blown national programmes.

### AFR100

The African Forest Landscape Restoration Initiative (AFR100) was launched at the 2015 Paris Climate Conference by the BMZ, the African Union's development programme NEPAD (New Partnership for Africa's Development), the World Bank and the World Resources Institute (WRI). The aim of the AFR100 initiative is to restore 100 million hectares of forest and tree-rich, productive landscapes in Africa by 2030. This is an area almost as big as Ethiopia. With its support for this initiative, the BMZ is contributing towards the implementation of the *Bonn Challenge*, an international forest restoration initiative. The aim of the *Bonn Challenge* is to restore 350 million hectares of forest worldwide in accordance with the *New York Declaration on Forests*.

The *Forest Landscape Restoration* (FLR) approach goes beyond mere afforestation. Successful FLR projects take into account the causes of deforestation and are based on integrated land use plans. And the projects require the relevant government departments and civil society to work together closely. The projects also help to strengthen local institutions so that they are able to resolve conflicts regarding land use rights. To achieve all this, it is crucial that representatives of different sectors are included in jointly planning and prioritising the project activities.

Besides the natural regeneration of forest landscapes through efficient pasture management, the *Forest Landscape Restoration* methods also include afforestation, sustainable forest management and agroforestry, as well as the restoration of gallery forests, mangroves and protective planting.

In Ethiopia, various measures such as new protected areas or water-spreading weirs have already produced some remarkable successes. The more abundant vegetation protects the soil, increases its capacity to hold water, and raises agricultural production and – with it – people's incomes.

The BMZ is promoting the AFR100 initiative by supporting its Secretariat, which has its offices at the NEPAD Agency. Support is also being provided for analyses of the potential and strategies for forest landscape restoration in Ethiopia, Madagascar, Cameroon and Togo, amongst other countries.

The initiative now has 24 African countries as members. These countries have made commitments to restore nearly 80 million hectares of forest landscape. The World Bank and individual private investors are likewise interested in cooperating with the initiative. The AFR100 initiative is open to other donors and to private companies.

The second AFR100 conference took place in September 2017. It provided a forum for the various partners involved to exchange information about the progress they have made in restoring forests.