

PRESS RELEASE

5th February 2009



PROJECT LAUNCH:

Community, forests and poverty alleviation in the DRC

The Minister for Environment, Nature Conservation and Tourism in the Democratic Republic of Congo and Forests Monitor are today launching the project 'Developing Community Forestry Management as a contribution to poverty reduction in the Democratic Republic of Congo' in Kinshasa. The launch follows the securing of £1.5 million to fund the project and the signature of a formal collaboration agreement between the DRC Ministry and Forests Monitor.

This project is funded by Congo Basin Forest Fund (CBFF) Start-up resources, being provided by the UK Department for International Development (DFID)¹. It will be implemented by Forests Monitor, a UK NGO based in Cambridge, in partnership with the Ministry of Environment, Nature Conservation and Tourism. The project will explore how to develop a community forestry sector that will contribute to the Congolese government's priorities of poverty reduction and the sustainable management and conservation of the country's forests. The project will operate in 3 pilot sites across the country including in conflict zones in the east of DRC – in the provinces of Bas-Congo, Ituri and Equateur.

"We will be working closely with local communities to investigate how they are currently using and managing forest resources, as well as their aspirations for the development of the forest sector", said Alison Hoare, project manager. The project will also explore the legislative and institutional framework that will be needed to enable the development of community forestry within the country.

Project partners include local organisation RRN - *Réseau Ressources Naturelles* / Natural Resources Network and CEPECO - *Centre pour la Promotion et l'Education des Communautés de base, as well as international research agencies, CIRAD - Centre International de Recherche Agronomique* / International Centre for Agronomic Research and Development and IIED - International Institute for Environment and Development.

This is an 18 month project, running until June 2010. One of the outputs will be a proposed 15 year programme that would facilitate the widespread adoption of community forestry in DRC.

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¹ These resources are additional to the £100 million main CBFF Fund being resourced by the UK and Norwegian Governments

Notes for editors

Further information on the project can be found at:

http://www.forestsmonitor.org/en/community_forestry_drc

For information on why industrial forest logging is not delivering on sustainable forest management or poverty alleviation please see: Concessions to Poverty

(<http://www.forestsmonitor.org/en/reports/551571>)

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