

# MAKING FORESTS FIT FOR CLIMATE CHANGE

## Key messages of the Global Forest Expert Panel on Adaptation of Forests to Climate Change

UNFF-8 Plenary Session, New York, April 21, 2009

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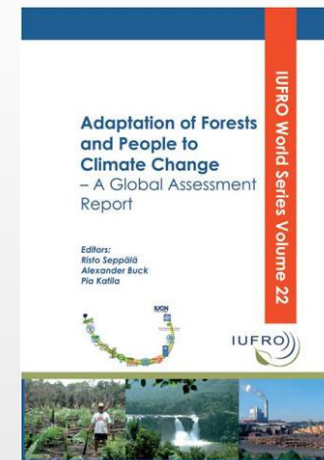
# BACKGROUND

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- First thematic assessment carried out in the frame of CPF Global Forest Expert Panels (GFEP) initiative, led by IUFRO
- Most comprehensive assessment to date of climate change impacts on forests, implications for human wellbeing, and options for adaptation; no new research
- Almost 100 experts; several IPCC scientists

# PRODUCTS

- Peer reviewed scientific report “Adaptation of Forests and People to Climate Change – A Global Assessment”
- Policy brief “Making Forests Fit for Climate Change” (available in all official UN languages)





A photograph of a pine tree in a forest. The tree is the central focus, with its trunk and branches clearly visible. The background is a dense forest of similar trees, slightly out of focus. The text "EIGHT KEY MESSAGES" is overlaid in the center of the image in a bold, white, sans-serif font.

# EIGHT KEY MESSAGES



## KEY MESSAGE 1

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- Climate change has already affected forest ecosystems and will have increasing effects on them in the future
- The carbon-regulating services of forests are at risk of being lost entirely
- The loss of carbon-regulating services of forests would accelerate climate change

## KEY MESSAGE 2

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- Climate change can also have positive effects on forest ecosystem services
- Climate change will **increase the supply of timber** in some regions and even globally due to increased tree growth

## KEY MESSAGE 3

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- The impacts of climate change will have far-reaching social and economic consequences for forest-dependent people, particularly the forest-dependent poor
- Adaptation measures must go beyond single technical measures and address also the human-institutional dimension of the problem

## KEY MESSAGE 4

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- Sustainable forest management (SFM) is an efficient tool for reducing the vulnerability of forests to climate change
- The current failure to implement SFM limits the capacity of forests and people to adapt to climate change
- Commitment to achieving the goals of SFM must be strengthened at both the international and national levels



## KEY MESSAGE 5

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- Given the diversity of forests and the uncertainty about how climate change will affect different forests, **no single management approach** will suit all situations
- Forest managers should have sufficient flexibility to deploy the adaptation measures most appropriate for their **local situations**

## KEY MESSAGE 6

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- New modes of governance are required to enable stakeholder participation, and provide secure land tenure and user rights and sufficient financial incentives



## KEY MESSAGE 7

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- More research is required to reduce uncertainties about climate change impacts and to improve knowledge about measures for adaptation
- Despite the limitations of current knowledge, **climate change is progressing too quickly to postpone adaptation action pending the outcomes of future studies**

## KEY MESSAGE 8

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- Even if adaptation measures are fully implemented, **unmitigated climate change would exceed the adaptive capacity of many forests**
- Therefore, large emissions reductions are needed to ensure that forests retain their mitigative and adaptive capacities



# ITEMS FOR POSSIBLE CONSIDERATION BY THE FORUM

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- Implications of the adaptation report for decisions by UNFF
- Implications for the message of the UNFF to UNFCCC
- How to make use of GFEP (Global Forest Expert Panels) as scientific advisory mechanism for the Forum



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**Thank you for your attention !**