



still represent only about 10 percent of the global forest estate in the tropics,” said Mr. Emmanuel Ze Meka, Executive Director of The International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO) and member of the jury panel. “More efforts are required from every single man and women interested and related to forests, to promote sustainable forest management as a way to conserve forest ecosystems while guaranteeing the provision of forest goods and services to the current and future generations, including carbon sequestration to mitigate climate change”.

Ninety nominations from forty-one different countries were submitted. The regional breakdown: Asia (24); Africa (20); Latin America and the Caribbean (18); Europe (15) and North America (13). Three finalists from each region are in the running for one prestigious award in each region.

The range of experience for each hero varies, with some having life-long experience with forests, including an 84-year old, and 15 and 16 year old, who are just starting out. The impact of some of the heroes is far reaching, with their projects being duplicated on national and global levels.

“The finalists for the Forest Heroes award demonstrate the many different ways individual initiative and innovation can lead to change: organizing communities to protect or restore forest ecosystems, teaching children the importance of forests, or advocating for reform of public policies or corporate practices – all are important,” said Ms. Frances Seymour, Director General of the Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR) and member of the jury panel.

Winners will be announced and awarded at the Forests 2011 closing ceremony at the United Nations in New York in January 2012. The UNFF will feature the stories and work of all five winners on the International Year of the Forest 2011 website to inspire and influence all of us.

Short-listed finalists are listed in alphabetical order

Africa: Million Belay (Ethiopia), Mphatheleni Makaulule (South Africa) and Paul Nzegha Mzeka (Cameroon)

Asia: Panut Hadisiswoyo (Indonesia), Shigeatsu Hatakeyama (Japan) and Sulaymonbek Saidbekov (Tajikistan)

Europe: Karl Peter Hasenkamp (Germany), Anatoly Lebedev (Russia) and Mika Vanhanen (Finland)

Latin America and Caribbean: Paulo Adario (Brazil), Monica Hinojosa (Ecuador) and Felipe Milanez (Brazil)

North America: Fred Pinto (Canada), Rhiannon Tomtishen (USA) and Madison Vorva (USA)

For more information, please contact Mita Sen, UN Forum on Forests Secretariat, sen@un.org.



Notes to Editors

The International Year of Forests

The United Nations General Assembly declared 2011 as the International Year of Forests to raise awareness of management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests. The theme of the Year is “Forests for People” celebrating the central role of people in sustainable forest management. The Secretariat of the United Nations Forum on Forests of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, based in NY, serves as the focal point for the implementation of the International Year of Forests. The Secretariat works in cooperation with governments, the Collaborative Partnership on Forests and international, regional and sub-regional organizations and processes, as well as relevant major groups.

The United Nations Forum on Forests

The United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) is an intergovernmental policy forum which promotes the “management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests and strengthens long-term political commitment to this end”. The Forum was established in 2000 by the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations (ECOSOC) and is composed of all Member States of the United Nations. In 2007, UNFF adopted the Non-Legally Binding Instrument on All Types of Forests (Forest Instrument). The instrument provides a comprehensive framework for national action and international cooperation to reduce deforestation, prevent forest degradation, promote sustainable livelihoods and reduce poverty for all forest-dependent peoples. The Secretariat of the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) is located at United Nations Headquarters in New York. For more information, visit www.un.org/esa/forests/.