

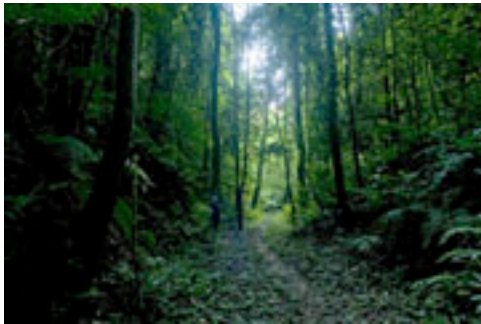


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## **Spending more on forests could reap enormous benefits – UN report**



Ensuring good governance of the world's forest resources is key to combating climate change

5 June 2011 –

Investing a relatively small amount each year in the forestry sector could halve deforestation, create millions of new jobs and help tackle the devastating effects of climate change, according to a United Nations report released today to mark World Environment Day.

The report, “Forests in a Green Economy: A Synthesis,” finds that an additional \$40 billion spent each year in the forestry sector – or just 0.034 per cent of global gross domestic product (GDP) – could result in substantial environmental improvements.

The rate of deforestation could be halved by 2030, the number of trees planted could rise by 140 per cent by 2050 and as many as 30 million new jobs could be created by that same year.

Achim Steiner, Executive Director of the UN Environment Programme ([UNEP](#)), which issued the report, said forestry is one of the key sectors capable of helping the world transition to a 'green economy' model that is resource-efficient and low in its use of carbon.

“There are already many encouraging signals; the annual net forest loss since 1990 has fallen from around eight million to around five million hectares and in some regions such as Asia, the Caribbean and Europe forest area has actually increased over those 20 years,” he said.

The area covered by freshly planted forests has also grown from 3.6 million hectares in 1990 to just below five million hectares last year.

Jan McAlpine, the Director of the Secretariat of the UN Forum on Forests, said the capacity of poorer countries to switch to green economies and protect their stocks of forests needs to be strengthened.

“Encouraging a transition to green economies will require a broad range of financial, regulatory, institutional and technological measures,” she said.

Forests and the benefits they provide represent the theme of this year's World Environment Day, which is marked every year on 5 June. This year is also the UN-declared International Year of the Forests.

Celebrations are being held across the globe, including in India, which is this year's designated host.

On Friday [Secretary-General](#) Ban Ki-moon described forests as central to economic development, poverty reduction and food security.

“By reducing deforestation and forest degradation we can make significant progress in addressing the combined threats of climate change, biodiversity loss and land degradation,” he said in a message to a forestry conservation meeting held in Brazzaville, Republic of Congo.

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