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Natural solutions for climate change, IUCN

Bangkok, Thailand, 28 September, 2009 (IUCN) – Governments meeting in Bangkok at the UN Climate Change talks must recognize that managing nature better helps people adapt to climate change and can actually reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

“Nature can offer solutions that are available to the rural poor in particular, that are cost-effective and sustainable,” says IUCN’s Climate Change Coordinator, Ninni Ikkala. “The potential of forests in reducing emissions is well-known, whilst for example well-managed mangroves can reduce flood impacts in low-lying coastal areas.”

IUCN is calling on participants at the UN meeting to include ecosystem-based adaptation to climate change in the post-2012 adaptation framework, which should be finalized at the key UN Climate Change Summit in Copenhagen this December.

“Managing and conserving nature can increase resilience and reduce the vulnerability of people to the impacts of climate change,” says IUCN’s Head of Ecosystem Management Programme, Neville Ash. “Governments should promote the inclusion of ecosystem-based adaptation in the Copenhagen agreement.”

Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation (REDD) can be an immediate solution to reducing harmful emissions, and can also provide benefits to local people and biodiversity. IUCN is calling for an equitable and sustainable REDD mechanism to form part of the Copenhagen deal.

“We know how to use REDD, we don’t have to wait for the development of low carbon technologies,” says IUCN’s Director of Environment and Development, Stewart Maginnis. “New science shows it’s more urgent than ever to act now; we can’t wait to start reducing greenhouse gas emissions.”

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About IUCN

IUCN, the International Union for Conservation of Nature, helps the world find pragmatic solutions to our most pressing environment and development challenges by supporting scientific research; managing field projects all over the world; and bringing governments, NGOs, the UN, international conventions and companies together to develop policy, laws and best practice.

The world's oldest and largest global environmental network, IUCN is a democratic membership union with more than 1,000 government and NGO member organizations, and almost 11,000 volunteer scientists and experts in some 160 countries. IUCN's work is supported by over 1,000 professional staff in 60 offices and hundreds of partners in public, NGO and private sectors around the world. IUCN's headquarters are located in Gland, near Geneva, in Switzerland.

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