



Association for Tropical Biology and Conservation

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF EFFORTS TO USE CARBON TRADING TO PROMOTE TROPICAL FOREST CONSERVATION

WHEREAS, the rapid destruction of tropical forests is a major source of anthropogenic carbon emissions, accounting for up to a quarter of all greenhouse gases produced by humankind each year, and is therefore an important cause of global warming and other alarming atmospheric changes; and

WHEREAS, rapid deforestation also causes severe losses of biodiversity, increased flooding, and regional climate changes; threatens many indigenous cultures; and greatly damages the livelihoods of some of the world's poorest people; and

WHEREAS, many land uses in the tropics are unsustainable and only marginally viable economically, allowing rural residents to eke out a desperate living but little else; and

WHEREAS, tropical deforestation is being promoted by the failure of international markets to recognize the true value of forests in terms of their carbon storage and other important global benefits; and

WHEREAS, recognizing the true value of undisturbed forests, and rewarding the governments of developing countries for retaining those forests, could radically alter the flawed economic logic that is promoting rapid deforestation; and

WHEREAS, carbon trading provides a potentially powerful tool by which industrial nations and other purchasers of carbon credits could provide direct financial incentives to tropical developing countries to reduce forest destruction; and

WHEREAS, the Coalition for Rainforest Nations, an alliance of developing countries led by Papua New Guinea and Costa Rica, is attempting to promote rainforest-carbon trading as a viable mechanism to reduce tropical deforestation and related greenhouse-gas emissions, while providing economic incentives to the governments and rural populaces of developing nations, to ensure that such reductions are long term in nature; and

WHEREAS, rigorous scientific, economic, and policy analyses have been conducted that establish the practical mechanics and viability of carbon trading as a means to promote forest conservation;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Association for Tropical Biology and Conservation, the world's largest scientific organization devoted to the study, protection, and wise utilization of tropical ecosystems:

- 1) Advises tropical nations to give serious consideration to carbon trading as a means to promote forest conservation, and to make all possible efforts to achieve permanent or long-term reductions in forest loss; and
- 2) Urges the Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to develop and implement meaningful instruments to reduce carbon emissions from deforestation in developing countries as part of its formal policies for the Second Commitment Period (2013-2017) of the Kyoto Protocol, including incentives to stimulate early action; and
- 3) Strongly recommends that international lenders and donors, such as the World Bank, International Monetary Fund, and aid organizations, provide initial financial assistance to developing nations that are striving to establish critical compliance and monitoring systems that will be used to regulate and control land-use activities within their national borders; and
- 4) Urges the international community, including national governments and non-governmental organizations, to recognize and support current initiatives, such as that of the Coalition for Rainforest Nations, to promote carbon trading as a practical economic mechanism to reduce tropical deforestation and global warming; and
- 5) Strongly recommends that the Coalition for Rainforest Nations strive to create carbon-trading mechanisms that benefit nations with high deforestation rates that reduce forest conversion, as well as nations with low deforestation rates that maintain those low rates in the future.