

New \$42.4 M fund to boost primary forest conservation in Asia's Indo-Malaya subregion

28 June 2023 | News

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A new programme, financed through the Global Environment Facility (GEF), and jointly implemented by IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), will help maintain and restore the integrity of Asia's Indo-Malaya primary forests to benefit nature, climate, and people.

The Indo-Malaya Critical Forest Biomes Integrated Programme will improve management of nearly 3.2 million hectares of protected areas, restore 8 500 hectares of ecosystems, improve practices on 7.1 million hectares of landscapes, and mitigate about 190 million tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions. An estimated 13 400 women and men will directly benefit from the programme.

The USD 42.4 million investment in this programme is expected to leverage more than USD 185 million in co-financing. The programme will improve management of primary forests by reinforcing effective and inclusive conservation and sustainable use of protected and conserved areas, including other effective area-based conservation measures. It will support sustainable management of buffer zones around protected and conserved areas, enhance connectivity, diversify and improve livelihoods of Indigenous Peoples and local communities, increasing their resilience to socio-ecological shocks. The programme will further aim to improve governance, develop pathways for land tenure recognition, scale up financing for primary forest conservation and sustainable use, and enhance partnerships, knowledge sharing, capacity, and communications to sustain

programme achievements.

“The programme is designed to holistically address drivers of deforestation and degradation, while seeking to support existing primary forest conservation efforts at multiple scales in the region. Through cross-sectoral partnerships, it will leverage the experiences and lessons learned from various stakeholders, including our Union constituents. IUCN will promote the use of its global knowledge products and field-tested tools in order to better plan, implement, and monitor primary forest conservation,” said Dindo Campilan, IUCN Regional Director for Asia and Hub Director for Oceania.

The Indo-Malaya Critical Forest Biomes Integrated Programme is one of five regional initiatives under the GEF’s Critical Forest Biomes Integrated Program that was approved at the 64th Global Environment Facility Council Meeting.