



## Conservation International Applauds U.S.-Indonesia Talks on Illegal Logging

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**April 4, 2006 (Washington, DC)** - Conservation International (CI) welcomes today's announcement that U.S. Trade Representative Rob Portman and Indonesian Minister of Trade Mari Pangestu have launched negotiations of the first-ever U.S. agreement to facilitate bilateral cooperation to combat illegal logging in Indonesia. This agreement will be part of a broader Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (TIFA) with Indonesia.

Illegal logging is unquestionably a shared concern that compromises the economic, environmental, and social objectives of sustainable forestry and biodiversity conservation and poses a considerable threat to the interests of governments, businesses, NGOs and local communities. Illegal logging operations increase poverty by providing benefits to a small minority at the expense of the poorest majority in a country.

“From providing raw materials to mitigating the harmful effects of climate change, the world’s forests provide incalculable benefits to mankind,” said Peter Seligmann, Chairman and CEO of Conservation International. “Stopping illegal logging requires innovative partnerships to ensure that all major stakeholders recognize the environmental, social and economic value in protecting our natural resources.”

Indonesia is a megadiversity country -- one of the world’s most biologically rich nations. CI started work there in 1990 and has a long history of working with partners to address illegal logging, including using remote sensing technology to assess illegal logging, supporting environmentally friendly alternative economic activities, and identifying and strengthening weaknesses in enforcement systems.

In 2003, CI joined with the U.S. Department of State, the World Wildlife Fund and the American Forest & Paper Association (AF&PA) to announce the launch of the President’s Initiative Against Illegal Logging. The negotiations announced today are a part of that initiative. And in 2005, CI joined with AF&PA to create the Alliance to Combat Illegal Logging, a partnership designed to put a halt to timber operations in national parks and other protected areas.

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*Conservation International (CI) applies innovations in science, economics, policy and community participation to protect the Earth's richest regions of plant and animal diversity in the biodiversity hotspots, high-biodiversity wilderness areas and key marine ecosystems. With headquarters in Washington, D.C., CI works in more than 40 countries on four continents. For more information about CI, visit [www.conservation.org](http://www.conservation.org)*

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