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## Environment and Ecology

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# The National Urban and Community Forestry Advisory Council (NUCFAC) Hosts Public Forum on A Comprehensive Look at Tropical Forestry

Edited by Carly Zander

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### Seeks Input from Every U.S. State to Secretary of Agriculture

RIO GRANDE, P.R., July 15 (SEND2PRESS NEWSWIRE) -- The National Urban & Community Forestry Advisory Council (NUCFAC) hosted a groundbreaking public forum in Puerto Rico on June 18, 2008 at the Gran Melia Hotel. "We gathered more than 40 experts and citizens from Guam, Hawaii, Puerto Rico and other tropical islands to share ideas, best practices and research to help us advise the Secretary of Agriculture on urgent issues facing tropical urban forests," said Joe Wilson, NUCFAC Council Chair.

"Despite the efforts of more than 20 state, federal, and private agencies, unwanted alien pests are entering Hawaii at an alarming rate - about 2 million times more rapid than the natural rate. In 1993, the federal Office of Technology Assessment declared Hawaii's alien pest species problem the worst in the nation," said Teresa Trueman-Madriaga, Kaulunani Urban & Community Forestry Program Coordinator.

### Protecting the Value of Tropical Urban Forests

With fifty-three percent of the U.S. population living in coastal areas, this land mass represents 17% of the total U.S. land mass and is vital to our country economically and for environmental sustainability.

"Our climate and lush green infrastructure requires the type of collective research and best management practices that comes from this type of collaborative exchange to insure we preserve our tropical urban forests," said Magaly Figueroa, U.S. Forest Service International Institute of Tropical Forestry.

This collaborative public forum set the stage for a cross-section of leaders to share issues impacting coastal areas, island ecosystems, effective public policy reform, and potentially increased funding ideas that address the complex issues impacting tropical forestry.

The Forum featured seven roundtable discussions on topics specifically impacting tropical forestry:

1. Invasive Species - Prevention & Control
2. Coastal Readiness & Shoreline Protection
3. Climate Change & Ecosystem Impacts
4. Ecco Tourism & Tropical Forests
5. Nurseries Standards & Production
6. Cultural practice, Assessment of Tropical Urban & Community Forestry Program
7. Accessing Research and Technology Transfer

This is a call to action and public input will continue to be recorded until September 1, 2008 as part of NUCFAC's 2008 recommendations to the Secretary of Agriculture.

### About NUCFAC

NUCFAC was created by Congress through the 1990 Farm Bill as an advisory council to the Secretary of Agriculture. The enabling legislation requires NUCFAC to develop a national urban and community forestry action plan, make recommendations regarding a challenge cost share program, produce annual reports, and make recommendations to the Secretary of Agriculture regarding urban and community forestry.

For more information on the public forum or how to give input, visit the NUCFAC website at [www.treelink.org/nucfac](http://www.treelink.org/nucfac) or contact:  
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