



## Questions and Answers

### United Nations International Year of Forests 2011

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#### **Q1. What is the International Year of Forests?**

**A1.** The United Nations (UN) General Assembly has declared 2011 as the International Year of Forests to bolster efforts to promote sustainable management, conservation, and development of forests worldwide.

The International Year of Forests will raise awareness and promote global action to sustainably manage, conserve, and develop all types of forests, as well promote growth of healthy trees outside of forests. Every day, some 350 square kilometers of forest cover are lost worldwide. Conversion to agricultural land, unsustainable harvesting of timber, unsound land management practices, and creation of human settlements are the most common reasons for this loss of forested areas.

For more information, please visit <http://www.un.org/en/events/iyof2011/>.

#### **Q2. What role will the U.S. Forest Service play in supporting the IYOF?**

**A2.** The U.S. Forest Service will develop a variety of activities and events for IYOF 2011. The Forest Service will collaborate with its interagency and other partners to host/coordinate various activities to celebrate the Year of Forests and foster knowledge exchange on practical strategies to promote sustainable forest management. Information about the Forest Service and IYOF can be found at <http://www.fs.fed.us/>

#### **Q3. Are there any specific events or activities planned?**

**A3.** The United Nations Forum on Forests (<http://www.un.org/esa/forests/>) at UN Headquarters in New York City will host the official start of IYOF in late January and early February. Forest Service participation in those events will showcase how we are working with a wide variety of partners to foster the exchange of knowledge on practical strategies to promote sustainable forest management.

Forest Service celebrations of Earth Day (April) and special annual recognition days such as National Get Outdoors Day (June) and National Public Lands Day (Sept.) will highlight special IYOF messages and activities. Forest Service units also are encouraged to host specific IYOF events and collaborate with other organizations to highlight sustained forestry programs.

Technical forums such as the Society of American Foresters' Meetings, both local and national meetings, will also offer opportunities to spotlight sustainable forest management issues that support IYOF.

**Q4. How can individuals participate in IYOF activities?**

**A4.** Individuals can volunteer to help at an IYOF event, develop events themselves, or get their organization to develop an event. IYOF events can be listed on the UN website.

**Q5. How will this IYOF observance help international and our nation's forests?**

**A5.** Awareness of how our lives are linked to forests will help encourage people to support sustainable forestry programs in the US and globally. "We are engaging Americans from across the country to look for new approaches to protect our natural treasure," Secretary Vilsack said about the President's conservation strategy. "This highlight's the importance of working across ownership boundaries to restore and conserve both private and public lands in a way that recognizes that conservation and economic vitality are inextricably linked."