

TROPICAL FOREST FOUNDATION

Balancing Forests with Futures

Our mission:

To promote sustainable tropical forest management by gathering and disseminating information about its benefits and by demonstrating and teaching proper management practices.

There are a variety of motivations behind forest protection, but over the past several decades the world community has come to regard tropical forest conservation as integral to our own self-preservation.

The tropical forests of South America, Africa and Southeast Asia are inextricably linked to the health of our global environment — and are one of the last great storehouses of plant and animal biodiversity. People living in the tropical forests depend on timber harvesting and the economic vitality it creates.

The Tropical Forest Foundation believes that in seeking to preserve complex tropical forest ecosystems, solutions must involve the people who live in and near the forest and their socio-economic systems. Partnerships are critical to success.

Maintaining a coexistence between forest protection and forest harvesting requires that we: **Partner • Teach • Sustain**

Partner

Our success is rooted in partnership.

The Tropical Forest Foundation is unique in bringing together leaders of the wood products and allied industries, conservation organizations, governments and the scientific and academic communities — including representatives from the world's major tropical forest and consuming regions. The Board of Directors is made up of 50% industry members; the remaining 50% hail from the scientific, academic, conservation and government fields.

The uniqueness is further manifested in its dedication to achieving tangible and positive change through sustainable management in the world's tropical forests.

By working with — not against — timber companies, local citizens and conservationists, TFF has been able to demonstrate that good forest management can result not only in protection of forests for the use and enjoyment of future generations, but in economic rewards as well. Such efforts have led to partnerships with a number of major U.N., foreign aid and philanthropic organizations worldwide.



RIL training site in Indonesia



Directional felling practiced in Gabon



Teach

Education is the cornerstone of our approach. The primary focus of TFF is to teach and demonstrate sustainable forest management through Reduced Impact Logging (RIL), a system that ensures that timber is harvested in a way that does not permanently damage the forest.

Today, we have project directors with trained personnel in the tropical forests of:

- South America (Brazil and Guyana)
- Africa (Gabon)
- Southeast Asia (Indonesia)

We conduct training in reduced-impact logging, run demonstration projects, and assist with forest management planning in the countries and regions in which we operate. More than 3,000 students have been trained “on the ground” — from forest managers qualified to train others, to government officials, forestry students and operators of equipment. The hands-on nature of our approach to training often leads to quick implementation on the ground. Change is being affected now, and a cadre of leaders is being developed to lead in the future. Demand for training is at a high — and often beyond our capacities.



Class in Guyana



Sustain

Sustaining the forests is our foundation.

While we recognize the value of forest services, we realize that attempts to restrict or eliminate economic use of forests on a broad scale will lead to devaluation of the forest and its resources. Inappropriate zeal in pursuit of forest protection can result in forests becoming valued for the land — not what grows upon it. Demonstrating that the tropical forests are valuable as well as precious will maintain their economic value and stop deforestation, and the use of forest land for other purposes.

Forest regeneration costs very little, yet when applied correctly it’s possible to protect soil, water, wildlife and timber resources forever.

Reduced Impact Logging (RIL) is fundamental in sustaining forest management. Through prior planning, careful selection of trees and special equipment designed for minimal impact, the trees are removed with the forest left intact for future use. Products carry a label that indicates the wood product has been legally sourced from an area practicing RIL, and then tracked from forest to market. Advantages to RIL include:

- Up to 50% reduction of soil disruption from roads, landings and skid trails
- Significantly smaller canopy openings
- Faster recovery; shorter cutting cycles
- Up to 15% lower costs
- 20% reduction in wastes



Forester in Brazil selects trees for current harvest, protecting others for the future.