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CIFOR Statement

To be delivered by

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Let me begin by extending CIFOR's appreciation to the President of the COP and the UNFCCC Executive Secretary for their leadership, and to the Parties for their hard work over the last two weeks.

Last Sunday, Forest Day 4 brought together more than 1,500 stakeholders to discuss and debate how to accelerate the integration of forests into climate mitigation and adaptation strategies.

His Excellency President Felipe Calderon Hinojosa, in his Opening Speech, stated that "...it's time for all of us to push, and push hard for the full incorporation of REDD+ into a long-term international climate change agreement."

Speakers, panelists, and participants agreed that it is time to act. While recognizing the flourishing of REDD+ initiatives at all levels, Forest Day participants identified the lack of a global agreement as a major barrier to further progress.

Governments of a number of forest-rich countries, including CIFOR's host country, Indonesia, have made bold commitments to reducing emissions from deforestation and degradation. Their leadership deserves support from the international community.

There is broad political consensus -- supported by research findings -- that well-designed REDD+ initiatives can conserve biodiversity and other ecosystem services, improve local livelihoods, promote adaptation, and provide incentives to reform forest governance.

Mexico offers a wealth of examples demonstrating how community management of forests can simultaneously serve rights, livelihoods, and sustainability objectives.

A REDD+ agreement with adequate financing and capacity-building can help us capture these opportunities.

There are legitimate concerns about possible risks to vulnerable human and ecological communities.

A REDD+ agreement with robust safeguards is the best way to manage these risks.

Should an agreement be concluded here in Cancun, we don't have the luxury of waiting five more years for SBSTA to agree on modalities. With standards from SBSTA in place, we can proceed quickly through existing operational processes to promote innovation and learning.

The risk of no action is surely greater than any risks of moving ahead.

CIFOR and other members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests, whose members co-hosted Forest Day 4, stand ready to be of assistance.