



UNFCCC COP18/CMP 8 High Level Segment

Doha, Qatar, 7 December 2012

Statement by Emmanuel Ze Meka, Executive Director International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO)

Mr. Chairman, Honourable Ministers, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is indeed a great honour and privilege for me to address the High Level Segment of the Eighteenth Conference of Parties to UNFCCC here in Doha, Qatar. Tropical forests provide the world with important global services by sustaining a large proportion of the world's biodiversity, and by helping to mitigate the consequences of global climate change. However, deforestation and forest degradation in the tropics have affected the quality of many environmental services being produced by tropical forests. Restoration, conservation, sustainable management and sustainable use of tropical forests can play an important role in restoring and enhancing environmental services and reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation.

ITTO, an intergovernmental organization headquartered in Yokohama, Japan has actively been promoting sustainable forest management (SFM) in the tropics for the past 26 years as a means of promoting the conservation and sustainable management of tropical forests and thereby reducing the rate of deforestation in the tropics.

As a response to the Bali Action Plan adopted at UNFCCC COP 13, ITTO's governing Council established a thematic programme on Reducing Deforestation and Forest Degradation and Enhancing Environmental Services in Tropical Forests (REDDES). Under this strategic priority, ITTO will assist its member countries to, *inter alia*, develop capacity for monitoring, reporting and verification of REDD+ in the context of SFM, including implementing social and environmental safeguards.

Mr. Chairman,

ITTO believes that a regular and predictable system for mobilizing financial resources from various sources, including the private sector, is urgently required to stimulate and pay for REDD+. Financing should focus on scaling up

REDD+ activities in the field, including the payments for actions (including SFM) that result in reduced greenhouse gas emissions. ITTO looks forward to working closely with UNFCCC, and other relevant international and national organizations and civil society groups, in our shared mission of substantially reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation and enhancing forest carbon stocks in the tropics.

Thank you.