



## Resolution 919 (1989)<sup>1</sup>

# Destruction of tropical forests - Causes and remedies

Parliamentary Assembly

The Assembly,

1. Recalling [Recommendation 978 \(1984\)](#) on forestry in Europe and the world, and [Recommendation 1095 \(1989\)](#) on the European Public Campaign on North-South Interdependence and Solidarity ;
2. Concerned that the destruction of tropical forests, and also forests in the North, will have the gravest consequences for the earth's climate, genetic diversity and hence for humanity itself ;
3. Conscious that this process is caused not only by the need of a rapidly growing population in developing countries for increased agricultural production, firewood, other wood products and income from exports, but also by ill-conceived and short-sighted development policies and excessive emphasis on monetary objectives on the part of governments, enterprises and individuals in the North as well as in the South ;
4. Aware that the preservation of existing forests is far more economic than reforestation ;
5. Aware also that conservation of forests and reforestation as a strategy for the binding of excess carbon dioxide emissions resulting from the burning of fossil fuels (the main cause of global temperature increase) can only be practised once in the next decade, and that conservation of forests will, at the same time, prevent pollution resulting from their uncontrolled burning ;
6. Believing that present deforestation can only be stopped and reversed through the fostering of a global awareness of its potential, multiple and disastrous effects, and by a firm international political commitment to the preservation of the world's tropical forests and also of forests in the North ;
7. Considering that Council of Europe member states have a crucial role to play in launching and monitoring initiatives and in co-operating with other nations to this effect ;
8. Recalling that efforts have been made by individuals, organisations and governments to reverse the present destruction of the world's tropical forests ;
9. Believing that efforts to preserve this vital resource should not be to the disadvantage of the poor populations of the countries concerned, nor the South itself, but that they should be the expression of a global responsibility in which all countries must share ;
10. Concerned that present energy-use patterns and energy technologies contribute to an aggravation of the world climate and the deforestation of tropical forests ;
11. Recognising that sustainable results can only be obtained if the private sector and lending establishments adapt their policies, when exploiting resources in tropical regions, to include a firm commitment to preserve tropical forests in a way which links preservation of tropical forests to their economical exploitation,

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1. Assembly debate on 11 May 1989 (6th Sitting) (see [Doc. 6037](#), report of the Committee on Agriculture, Rapporteurs : Mrs Ugalde and Mr Scheer). Text adopted by the Assembly on 11 May 1989 (6th Sitting).



12. Calls on the governments of member states and the European Communities :
  - 12.1. to include, in their co-operative agreements with countries possessing tropical forests, tropical forest preservation or rehabilitation programmes, with priority given to the maintenance of existing forests ;
  - 12.2. to make the preservation of tropical forests and their bio-diversity a political priority, and to work towards an international agreement to this effect ;
  - 12.3. to ensure that financial support for the preservation of tropical forests, which is in the interest of all mankind, will be additional to existing development co-operation budgets, which aim at improving the living conditions of the poor in less-developed countries ;
  - 12.4. to give increased emphasis, in their development co-operation programmes with tropical countries, to the maintenance of healthy tropical forests and to projects aimed at reversing the present trend of deforestation, in particular projects which demonstrate that tropical forests can be developed, and can yield economic returns, without being destroyed, and which illustrate that land-use reforms can be an important tool for increasing food production per unit land and in stopping deforestation ;
  - 12.5. to ensure that environmental reviews form an integral part of project evaluation ;
  - 12.6. to give special attention to the strengthening of forestry services and institutions in tropical countries, in particular by offering increased scientific and manpower development assistance ;
  - 12.7. to promote research and training on the ecosystems of tropical forests and self-sustainable tropical forestry, in order to improve decisions taken, assistance given and work done in this sector, in particular in fields such as management of natural forests, genetic improvements, agro-forestry and socio-economic relations ;
  - 12.8. to assist tropical countries in the use and development of alternative, renewable, locally available energies and of more energy-efficient technologies ;
  - 12.9. to engage more actively in making public opinion in the North and in the South aware of the crucial role of tropical forests in preserving the earth's biogenetic diversity and in maintaining a balanced climate ;
  - 12.10. to pay particular attention to co-operation policies and programmes which focus on the interests of the indigenous peoples of the regions concerned, and especially on the living conditions of the poor ;
  - 12.11. to convert the debt of heavily indebted or the poorest developing countries possessing tropical forests into forest conservation or rehabilitation programmes ;
  - 12.12. to increase co-ordination and co-operation in bilateral and multilateral development programmes with a view to achieving the above ;
  - 12.13. to work for the coming into force of an international convention with motivating measures for the preservation of the world's climate, by levying taxes for example on the emission of gases (carbon dioxide, etc.), the proceeds of which could be used for the projects referred to above and for the strengthening of the Tropical Forest Action Plan run by the FAO which should be given general support.