



MEDIA RELEASE

Senator Penny Wong
Minister for Climate Change and Water

The Hon Stephen Smith MP
Minister for Foreign Affairs

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\$3 MILLION TO HELP REDUCE DEFORESTATION IN PAPUA NEW GUINEA

The Rudd Government will provide \$3 million for joint activities with Papua New Guinea to help reduce greenhouse emissions from deforestation under the Papua New Guinea-Australia Forest Carbon Partnership.

At the Australia-Papua New Guinea Ministerial Forum in Madang, Minister for Climate Change and Water, Penny Wong, and Minister for Foreign Affairs, Stephen Smith, said Australia would assist Papua New Guinea in improving its capacity to monitor forest carbon.

“This is a key first step in enabling Papua New Guinea to participate in future international forest carbon markets, with a view to reducing deforestation. We know deforestation contributes around 20 per cent of total global emissions,” Senator Wong said.

“The \$3 million funding is part of Australia’s support for finding a global solution on climate change.”

Mr Smith said Australia’s financial support would be used to strengthen engagement on forest carbon between Australia and PNG. One element of this is providing Australian technical, scientific and analytical support for the design of Papua New Guinea’s carbon monitoring and accounting systems.

“Papua New Guinea has the world’s third-largest tropical forest area. Developing market-based incentives to preserve forests is designed to provide options for supporting the development of local communities while helping to reduce global greenhouse emissions,” Mr Smith said.

The \$3 million is from the Government’s \$200 million International Forest Carbon Initiative.

“At the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Bali, representatives agreed for the first time that addressing deforestation and forest degradation should be part of international climate negotiations,” Senator Wong said.

“Funds available under the International Forest Carbon Initiative are being used to support Australia’s aims in ongoing international negotiations on climate change.”

Senator Wong said Australia’s collaboration with Papua New Guinea and also Indonesia on reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation would provide valuable input into these negotiations.

“The first act of the Rudd Labor Government was to ratify the Kyoto Protocol, and now we are playing an active and constructive role in developing a global solution to this global challenge.”