

American

NEWS & VIEWS

A Weekly Newsletter from Public Affairs, American Embassy

July 12, 2013

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China, U.S. Launch New EcoPartnerships for Sustainability

By Charlene Porter | Staff Writer | 11 July 2013

Washington — Pairs of U.S. and Chinese companies and institutions are joining ventures in which they seize shared problems to find solutions that prevent pollution, mitigate greenhouse gases, protect water and preserve the environment.

The six binational pairs are new participants in the U.S.-China EcoPartnerships Program, and they signed their cooperative agreements at a ceremony July 11 at the U.S. State Department in Washington. The event was among the highlights of the U.S.-China Strategic and Economic Dialogue, underway since July 10.

U.S. Ambassador to China Gary Locke was in Washington for the ceremony. Among the best elements of the partnerships, he said, are cooperation “and recognition that businesses, nongovernment organizations and educational institutions, as well as our two governments, can apply their power of innovation and creativity to benefit society.”

In the last few years, 18 partnerships between U.S. and Chinese entities have been created to work on clean energy and sustainable development projects. They have worked “to foster the innovation that will produce a sustainable way of life for our people and for our planet,” said Deputy Secretary of State William Burns, who also spoke at the ceremony.

Speaking through an interpreter, Chinese State Councilor Yang Jiechi said the partnerships serve multiple interests. “To step up policy coordination and practical cooperation between our two countries in these fields not only serves our own interest, but also helps to advance global sustainable development.”

Yang said the meetings between U.S. and Chinese representatives at the U.S.-China Strategic and Economic Dialogue have expressed “our shared resolve to strengthen cooperation in the fields of climate change, energy and the environment.”

The 18 existing EcoPartnerships have made “forward-looking efforts” in energy efficiency, clean energy and environmental protection, Yang said.

The U.S. government joins the partners themselves to make investments in the partnerships. They are formed with expressed intentions to address particular environmental problems with working-level solutions and shared expertise. These are among the partnerships forged July 11 and their goals:

- Coca-Cola and the Yangtze River Delta Circular Economy of Technology plan to develop a way to use agricultural waste to make bottles for the world-famous beverage.
- The New York Institute of Technology and Peking University are teaming up to help arid communities situate wells so they will use groundwater resources in safe and sustainable ways.
- Raven Ridge Resources and Guizhou International Cooperation Center for Environmental Protection aim to make use of methane gas that is released by coal extraction in mining. In doing so, the partnership would tap a new energy source, reduce a greenhouse gas emission and improve mine safety.

U.S. and Chinese partners signed the EcoPartnership agreements in the formal atmosphere of a diplomatic meeting room. Switching to English as he closed his remarks, Yang challenged the partners “to make the Earth greener, make this a more beautiful planet for all of us and for generations to come.”

Africa Business Campaign Helps Spur U.S. Investment on Continent

11 July 2013

Washington — A new U.S. government effort is helping U.S. businesses take advantage of the many export and investment opportunities in sub-Saharan Africa.

The U.S. Department of Commerce outlined the Doing Business in Africa Campaign, launched in November 2012 in Johannesburg, South Africa, in a July 8 fact sheet.

“President Obama believes that sub-Saharan Africa is poised to be the world’s next major economic success story,” the fact sheet said, noting that in June 2012, Obama issued the U.S. Strategy Toward Sub-Saharan Africa, committing the United States to elevate U.S. efforts to spur economic growth, trade and investment on the continent.

ONE OF FASTEST-GROWING REGIONS

Sub-Saharan Africa is one of the fastest-growing regions on the globe and is home to seven of the 10 fastest-growing markets in the world, according to the fact sheet. The International Monetary Fund has estimated economic growth in sub-Saharan Africa will be 5.6 percent in 2013 and 6.1 percent in 2014.

U.S. trade to and from Africa has tripled over the past decade, the fact sheet said.

The Doing Business in Africa Campaign “reflects an

unprecedented, whole-of-government approach” to increasing U.S. trade with Africa, the fact sheet said. Spearheaded by the Department of Commerce, it entails broad collaboration across the U.S. government and with related trade agencies.

The campaign will take “a holistic approach” and employ a number of new trade promotion, financing and communication efforts, the fact sheet said. These will include expanded trade promotion programs tailored toward Africa, such as trade missions and International Buyer Program events to bring more African buyer delegations to the United States. There will also be “targeted sector plans” for high-growth industries such as construction, electricity, transportation, information/communication technology, water, consumer goods, agribusiness and agriculture, and health.

The fact sheet noted that U.S. financing agencies, including the U.S. Export-Import Bank, the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC) and the U.S. Trade and Development Agency (USTDA), have dramatically increased their support for investment and activities in Africa in recent years.

BUILDING ON CURRENT EFFORTS

Under the Doing Business in Africa Campaign, these agencies are building upon current efforts, specifically by doing these things:

- Supporting the U.S.-Africa Clean Energy Development and Finance Center in Johannesburg, South Africa, (launched on March 20, 2013) to provide the U.S. private sector and its sub-Saharan African partners with a centralized means to identify and access U.S. government support for clean-energy export and investment needs.
- Advancing the U.S.-Africa Clean Energy Finance Initiative, a \$20 million collaborative financing mechanism developed by the State Department, OPIC and USTDA to increase support for U.S. businesses and exporters in sub-Saharan Africa’s clean-energy sector.
- Enhancing Export-Import Bank initiatives, including the South African Renewable Initiative, in which the bank will finance up to \$2 billion for U.S. energy-sector technologies, products and services.

IMPROVING PERCEPTIONS

The Doing Business in Africa Campaign is also working to address issues such as trade facilitation, infrastructure, corruption and poor communication that are influencing U.S. business perceptions about sub-Saharan Africa. It is working with U.S. companies to help them share their

stories and lessons learned with other businesses looking for success and guidance in the African market.

The Campaign is coordinating closely with other initiatives outlined in the U.S. Strategy Toward Sub-Saharan Africa, including Trade Africa, which seeks to increase Africa’s internal, regional and global trade, and Power Africa, which seeks to double access to power in sub-Saharan Africa.

At its core, the fact sheet said, the Campaign is about creating a long-term, sustainable approach to increasing U.S. economic engagement in Africa, in the belief that American products, technology and best practices are essential to sub-Saharan Africa’s progress.

Energy Secretary: Moving Toward Peaceful Nuclear Future

11 July 2013

This op-ed by U.S. Energy Secretary Ernest Moniz originally appeared on the U.S. Department of Energy website. There are no republication restrictions for use by U.S. embassies.

Moving Toward a Peaceful Nuclear Future

By Ernest Moniz

During his historic Prague speech in 2009, President Obama challenged the international community to create a world free from the threat of nuclear weapons. Nations took notice, and already we have seen great strides towards that goal. The United States and Russia signed and ratified the New START Treaty, and around the globe, 11 countries have removed all highly enriched uranium with the most recent, Vietnam, occurring just this last week. There have also been challenges, which is why we need to continue to bring scientific tools to bear on addressing this critical problem.

Last week in Vienna, I had the opportunity to visit one of the tools the world is using to work toward a nuclear weapons-free world. Along with my colleague and Ambassador to the United States Mission to International Organizations in Vienna, Joseph MacManus, I toured the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Organization (CTBTO), an organization responsible for monitoring globally for underground testing of nuclear explosions. This state-of-the-art facility represents the global cooperation necessary to succeed at this important mission, and the Department of Energy plays an integral role in its success through our National Laboratories.

For example, Pacific Northwest National Laboratory (PNNL) is supporting projects that reinforce the effectiveness of the International Monitoring System, which utilizes 337 facilities worldwide to monitor for

nuclear explosions. By serving as one of 16 CTBTO radionuclide laboratories, PNNL certifies the makeup of materials detected by the CTBTO sensors, a process the lab received an "A" grade for in a 2012 Proficiency Test Exercise. Additionally, the Idaho National Laboratory is recognized as a world leader in producing reference standards to calibrate noble gas measurements for the detection of nuclear explosions.

The labs are also critical partners in maintaining the 170 CTBTO seismic monitors. Lawrence Livermore, Los Alamos and Sandia National Laboratories are providing advanced seismic analysis methods to improve operator efficiency. This includes techniques that allow efficient, rapid, and accurate detection and location of repeating seismic events, with application to large aftershock sequences, as well as to general global monitoring.

Just last month in Berlin, President Obama reiterated his call to action for the world to move away from nuclear weapons and toward a peaceful nuclear future. While there is still much to do, I am pleased to see that from providing calibration of equipment to redesigning analysis software, the national labs are working to answer President Obama's call.

(Ernest Moniz is the U.S. secretary of energy.)

China's Dialogue with U.S. Builds Trust, Vice President Biden Says

By Stephen Kaufman | Staff Writer | 10 July 2013

Washington — Vice President Biden says the relationship between the United States and China, the world's two largest economic powers, is one of "competition and cooperation."

Speaking at the opening of the 5th U.S.-China Strategic and Economic Dialogue in Washington July 10, Biden said the annual dialogue between officials in both countries is essential because there is "no more important relationship," and it serves to build trust between the two countries.

"The dynamic that emerges between our nations will affect not just our peoples but, quite frankly, have a significant impact on the entire world," Biden said.

"We will have our disagreements. We have them now. But if we are straightforward, clear and predictable with one another, we can find solutions that work for both of us," he said.

The vice president said the continued growth of China's economy is good news, but China's desire to play a greater role in setting global rules must come with new international responsibilities and burdens.

"In 2013, the world's environment, a rule-based economic order, cannot sustain an exception the size of China. Your country is simply too immense and too important," he told Chinese leaders.

He said China and the United States will benefit when China frees its exchange rate, shifts to a consumption-led economy, enforces intellectual property rights and encourages innovation.

"History shows that prosperity is greatest when governments allow not just a free exchange of goods but the free exchange of ideas," Biden said, emphasizing that innovation thrives in open economies and societies. China "will be stronger and more stable and more innovative if it represents and respects international human rights norms," he said.

Biden said China and the United States have shared security concerns over North Korea and agree that it is important to end the threat from a North Korea armed with nuclear weapons. He said the United States is determined to intensify its cooperation with China to eliminate nuclear weapons from the country.

Secretary of State John Kerry said officials from both sides have gathered in Washington to find common ground and to look for "honest, wide-ranging conversations and ways of cooperating."

He said it is important for the two leading nations of the world to set an example for success and collaboration between governments.

"When we find ways to strengthen our economic ties, it spurs innovation; it spurs growth; it creates jobs in both of our countries. When we deepen our cooperation on regional and global security issues, it helps all of our people to be safer, and it projects stability across the world," Kerry said.

In his remarks, Secretary of the Treasury Jacob Lew said that cooperation on common challenges such as climate change, energy, food security and conduct in cyberspace "is absolutely critical to our futures and the world's future as well."

China's economy is undergoing "a systematic transition" that will require fundamental policy shifts to sustain its economic growth, he said.

"These reforms recognize the imperative of shifting to domestic consumption, greater private sector innovation, an economy that's more open to competition with more flexible prices, including the exchange rate and interest rates, and a more flexible financial system," Lew said.

The United States has also made reforms to its own economy in the wake of the global recession.

“Five years ago, after the worst crisis in a generation, the United States promised the world that we would address the vulnerabilities in our economy. And we did. We recapitalized and repaired our banks, overhauled our system of financial regulation and jump-started a recovery and private demand,” Lew said.

That has resulted in 40 straight months of economic growth, a recovering housing market and more than 7 million new jobs, and Lew said the United States is “poised for continued strong and broad-based growth.”

Next Mars Mission Will Seek Traces of Ancient Life

By Charlene Porter | Staff Writer | 10 July 2013

Washington – The Curiosity rover that landed on Mars in 2012 has accomplished its mission to document the geologic remains of what once was a watery, temperate climate that might have supported some form of life. A select scientific panel now advises NASA that another rover like Curiosity should return to Mars with equipment to detect signs of past life.

“This rover will get us that next step,” said John Grunsfeld, NASA’s associate administrator for science, explaining the conclusions of the Mars 2020 Science Definition Team. “Do we see any evidence of that past life in those habitable environments?”

Deciding on a mission’s objectives is a key step forward because those goals help scientists and engineers think about the type of instruments and equipment the spacecraft must carry. Then, NASA will conduct an open competition among aerospace firms for proposals on building the desired instruments.

Between now and 2020, when Curiosity’s successor is scheduled for launch, several other planetary science missions are in development to further expand our understanding of this neighboring planet.

“What we have over these next 10 years is a very comprehensive set of international missions to Mars,” said Jim Green, director of NASA’s Planetary Science Division. “Some we lead, some ESA [European Space Agency] leads, and it’s really quite the climax in the 2020 mission.”

The question of whether life exists somewhere else in this solar system is one of the most compelling in science. But, as they briefed reporters July 9, scientists cautioned that answering the question must be approached in a methodical way. Jack Mustard, a professor of geological science who was on the advisory panel, said the 2020

rover should look for evidence of past life in the geologic record, just as fossil discovery on Earth has helped scientists understand the evolution of life on this planet.

“Had life been there? Did it leave a mark?” are the questions to be assigned to the next rover, Mustard said.

Whatever the 2020 rover finds, it won’t send a “eureka” message back to NASA. “Those carefully identified sites with potential biosignatures would need to be returned to Earth,” Mustard said. Designing rover-borne instruments that could make definitive identification of ancient life forms from a geologic sample is currently impossible, the committee found.

But the panel does recommend methods for collecting specific samples with potential value, extracting those samples from the Martian surface and storing them in a protective manner. Grunsfeld says each of those is a distinct technological problem and another step forward.

How that box of samples would be returned to Earth-bound scientists – with what means and technology – is a problem for the future. Grunsfeld said the samples might even wait until a human crew arrives on Mars to collect them.

“That’s an eventual goal, to put astrobiologists and planetary scientists on the surface of Mars,” Grunsfeld said.

Release of this plan for Mars exploration in 2020 has set the aerospace community abuzz with ideas and sketches for how to overcome the technological challenges ahead. For those plans to move anywhere, U.S. lawmakers must agree to make a long-term funding commitment. Representative Donna Edwards of Maryland is urging her colleagues to commit the resources to what she calls the “21st-century space innovation agenda.”

In a Washington appearance July 8, Edwards said public enthusiasm over the Curiosity mission should convince lawmakers that return visits to Mars should be NASA’s goal in the decades ahead.

“This is our moment to unite behind a truly audacious vision. It is time to unite the American public where it already is,” Edwards said. “The American public is already on Mars.”

As a member of the House Committee on Science, Space and Technology, Edwards said, she will urge Congress to approve a 15-year funding commitment to make human exploration of Mars by 2030 a reality.

Health Heroes Honored for Responses to Climate Change

By Charlene Porter | Staff Writer | 09 July 2013

Washington – The Obama administration recognized 11 community health leaders from around the United States July 9 for their work to raise awareness of climate change and the ill effects it can have on public health. The recognition event also served to spotlight the warming climate as one of the greatest health threats of the 21st century.

Department of Health and Human Services Assistant Secretary for Health Howard Koh deals each day with a range of health problems, including HIV/AIDS and other infectious diseases, vaccines and bioethics, but climate change, he said, has a place all its own: “There is no challenge that is greater, more broad-based, more all-encompassing, more important for leaving a legacy than this issue of climate change.”

The Obama administration has outlined a multistep plan to set the nation on a course to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, slow climate change and adapt to changes already occurring in a warmer world. That plan, Koh said, is an investment in a better future.

“We believe in building a healthier planet for our children and for our children’s children,” said Koh, who also serves as the senior public health adviser to the secretary of health and human services. Koh saluted the “Champions of Change” who have shown courage, he said, by stepping into the difficult public policy debate over climate change.

Laura Anderko, a nurse and an educator in environmental health, was named a champion. She said climate change is an “enormous” 21st-century public health threat. “Climate regulates life on Earth, and how do we help curb some of this change that is going on through mitigation efforts, but also how do we adapt to it,” she said.

Anderko works to raise public awareness of the health risks inherent in climate change, especially to vulnerable populations such as children and the elderly.

The potential public health risks that can be linked to climate change are worrisome. Greenhouse gas emissions are contributing to higher levels of atmospheric ozone, which can cause respiratory problems for greater numbers of people. Record-breaking summer temperatures in the Northern Hemisphere cause soaring numbers of deaths from heat stroke and exhaustion.

Milder winters can promote greater proliferation of disease-carrying insects such as ticks and mosquitoes.

More frequent storms and violent weather events are expected to cause greater numbers of injuries and deaths and increased emotional distress.

Supersized tropical storm Sandy struck the east coast of the United States in 2012 with a sea surge and flooding beyond what was predicted, an event that is likened to the types of storms climate change might bring. Another climate champion, Dr. William Rom, was caught up in Sandy as a practicing physician in New York City, where many hospitals were closed as a result of flood damage. He calls that storm “the sentinel event of climate change,” which taught the region that adaptation to climate change may be brutal. Hospitals spent months, he said, restructuring their operations so that mission-critical equipment was moved to higher levels where flooding would be unlikely in the future.

Koh said the Obama Climate Change Action Plan aims to learn from that 2012 experience to build “the most sustainable and resilient health care facilities possible.” He said the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has developed a plan to help local health agencies analyze how weather and health might be affected by climate change projections and is now working to deploy that strategy nationwide.

Koh said U.S. health officials are also working with their global counterparts to develop adaptation strategies for coming health threats. A key element of the Obama action plan is that the United States will lead international efforts to prepare for the consequences of climate change that are already putting other nations and their citizens at risk.

In his announcement of the plan in June, Obama said the United States must help other nations adopt cleaner energy technologies and reduce carbon emissions at the same time those actions are taken domestically.

U.S. Program Champions Middle East Pluralism

By Kathryn McConnell | Staff Writer | 09 July 2013

This is one in a series of articles about people who have participated in the U.S. Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI). In 2013, MEPI marks its 10-year anniversary.

Washington – Nazanin Ash champions citizens who push for political, social and economic reform.

“We see great strength in the diversity of political participants and local parties,” said the deputy assistant secretary of state for Near Eastern affairs, who leads the U.S.-Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI).

The State Department program, in its 10th year of operation, works in partnership with reformers in the

Middle East and North Africa – people “looking to solve problems in their communities,” Ash said.

MEPI is active in every country in the Middle East and North Africa in which the United States has a diplomatic presence.

Ash said the advantage of working with those partners is that “they deeply understand their country’s dynamics,” what the citizens of their country want and how citizens and government together can identify solutions to a host of challenges. Those challenges range from ensuring women’s rights and the freedom of expression, association and assembly to achieving government accountability and transparency.

“We’re seen as a source of collaboration and a source of support for efforts they’re leading,” Ash said.

“Those are important goals,” said Stephen McInerney, executive director of the advocacy group Project on Middle East Democracy. MEPI has “shown to be even more important by the change in developments in the region ... with the emergence of the Arab Spring,” he said.

Ash pointed to one of MEPI's organizational partners working in the region. Washington-based nonprofit Education for Employment (EFE) works with governments, nongovernmental groups and businesses to create training courses for jobs that “the private sector calls for,” giving hope for a better future to unemployed youth.

“Increasingly, governments are taking notice of the value of that approach and are looking for ways they can support it,” she said.

EFE’s work also has caught the attention of members of a leading international group committed to improving the world by engaging business, political, academic and other leaders to help shape global and regional agendas. At its 2013 annual meeting in Switzerland in January, the World Economic Forum featured the innovative training group as a case study in social enterprise.

Ash said that while its core mission of supporting the Middle East’s future leaders has remained the same over its 10 years, MEPI has gained knowledge from its partners about how to most effectively promote the principles of pluralism, participation and prosperity in the region.

She noted that MEPI has also surveyed its constituents, who have helped it learn how each group’s concerns differ from the others.

Ash added that some of MEPI’s most significant support

came in the aftermath of transitions in the region spurred by the Arab Spring. “We were an essential source of support” for governments and citizens as they navigated “new challenges and opportunities” for expanded political and economic change, she said.

Recently, MEPI supported a series of nationally televised “town hall” meetings in Yemen where representatives of the country’s major political parties talked about their concerns and political leaders explained how they would respond to the concerns.

Ash said that the meetings have been essential in bringing legitimacy to Yemen’s political process and in broadening citizen communication with their political representatives in the run-up to national elections later in 2013.

Similarly, Ashe said, in Tunisia and Libya MEPI is helping to build citizens’ capacity to be involved in their countries' political processes.

“Everyone understands that to be an essential aspect of stability, governments need to be more responsive to their citizens,” Ash concluded.

WHO Considers Emergency Status for New Virus

By Charlene Porter | Staff Writer | 08 July 2013

Washington – The World Health Organization (WHO) is convening a committee that will decide whether the appearance of a new disease in the Middle East has become a “public health emergency of international concern.”

Known as Middle East respiratory syndrome coronavirus (MERS-CoV), the virus has appeared in several countries of the region, with 80 laboratory-confirmed cases reported to WHO, resulting in 44 deaths as of July 7.

The first cases of the disease appeared in September 2012, according to an account published in a June edition of the *Mortality and Morbidity Weekly Report*, an authoritative medical journal from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Saudi Arabia has reported the most cases, but patients have also been identified in Qatar, Jordan and the United Arab Emirates. The United Kingdom, Italy, France and Tunisia have reported cases in travelers returning home from the source countries and their close contacts.

The WHO emergency advisory committee to convene in Geneva July 9 and 11 will decide whether MERS-CoV should be considered an international health emergency. If the committee advises WHO's executive director that an emergency health situation exists, WHO will advise its member nations on responses and precautions.

So far, neither the WHO nor the CDC has issued any

warnings against travel to the affected countries. Both agencies, however, have spread an alert among health care providers about the signs of the disease, especially if recent travelers show up with respiratory symptoms.

Most people who've been diagnosed so far are adult males. All patients had respiratory symptoms during their illness, and in the majority of cases those symptoms became severe and required hospitalization. Some patients have had gastrointestinal symptoms at the same time, such as stomach cramping and diarrhea.

CDC has devoted a special Web page to centralizing information on MERS-CoV and has produced advisories on how medical practitioners should respond to patients appearing with fever, cough and shortness of breath.

"CDC is working with partners to better understand the risks of this virus, including the source, how it spreads, and how infections might be prevented," the agency website reports. "CDC has provided information for travelers and is working with health departments, hospitals, and other partners to prepare for possible cases in the United States."

MERS-CoV has never been seen before, but as a coronavirus, it is related to SARS, an illness that caused an international health panic in 2003. Severe acute respiratory syndrome is a severe form of pneumonia that was first identified by the medical profession in a man who had traveled from China to several other countries in Southeast Asia. In a matter of weeks, travelers had spread the disease through Asia, Australia, Europe, Africa, and North and South America.

The disease passed easily from person to person, and in months 8,200 cases had appeared, resulting in about 750 deaths. Quarantine of patients and testing of airline passengers coming from infected areas helped quell the rapid spread of the 2003 outbreak.

The SARS outbreak "changed the way that the world responds to infectious diseases during a time of widespread international travel," according to an account of the outbreak from the U.S. National Library of Medicine. Cases of the new disease were seen in China as early as 2002, but authorities did not inform WHO so that other countries might be on the lookout for the illness.

Today, health authorities in the member nations of the WHO have developed cooperative protocols on joint action to contain diseases that threaten to become pandemic.

In keeping with that enhanced cooperation among health authorities, the CDC has developed tests to allow practitioners to identify MERS-CoV and made those

widely available. CDC has also been involved in international public health investigations of MERS cases in Saudi Arabia and Jordan. CDC reports that it "continues to provide advice and laboratory diagnostic support to countries in the Arabian Peninsula and surrounding region."

Public-Private Partnership to Address Tropical Deforestation

05 July 2013

Washington — The Tropical Forest Alliance (TFA) 2020, a whole-of-government initiative led by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and the U.S. Department of State, welcomed three global civil society groups as new partners in the public-private partnership to address tropical deforestation.

Conservation International, the Dutch Sustainability Initiative and the World Resources Institute are the first civil society groups to partner with TFA 2020 to take actions to curb deforestation linked to commodities such as palm oil, soy, beef, and paper and pulp. Current partners are the United States, the Consumer Goods Forum, Norway, Netherlands and the United Kingdom.

"We are delighted to welcome our new partners, who bring decades of experience in tropical deforestation and help ensure we have collaboration from the many important actors all across the supply chain," said Kit Batten, who leads U.S. engagement in TFA 2020 as USAID's global climate change coordinator.

President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono of Indonesia spoke at the opening event, pledging to increase cooperation with governments and businesses to ensure production of commodities like paper and palm oil does not destroy forests and respects customary lands and forest rights.

USAID said it will contribute \$5.5 million to a related initiative supporting the World Resources Institute in developing a tropical forest monitoring tool called Global Forest Watch 2.0 (GFW 2.0). GFW 2.0 will bring together satellite imagery and monitoring systems, multiple tree cover loss alert systems, overlay maps and mobile technology to provide detailed, near-real time information on tropical forests. It also will include crowd-sourcing capability so people on the ground can report deforestation when it takes place.

The GFW 2.0 initiative will support TFA 2020 goals and receive support from several government, business and civil society partners including Google, the government of Norway, Staples Inc. and the University of Maryland. The World Resources Institute will lead development of the new tool, and USAID will support all aspects of development, including working with developing

country partners to ensure they have the capacity to access and use GFW 2.0.

TFA 2020 was initiated in 2012 by the U.S. government and the Consumer Goods Forum, a business network of more than 400 retailers and producers from 70 countries with more than \$3 trillion in annual sales.

(This is a product of the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://iipdigital.usembassy.gov>)