



## Sustainable Forest Development

At the Second Ministerial Conference on Sustainable Forestry, held in Rome from 8–9 March 1999, by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), agriculture and environment ministers from 100 countries signed the Rome Declaration on Forestry, in which they pledge to promote sustainable forestry into the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The current situation regarding forest resources and forest management trends are outlined in the “State of the World’s Forests” report, published to coincide with the 1–5 March Meeting of the FAO’s Committee on Forestry. The report covers national forestry policy, the global outlook for timber product supply and demand, and

progress on the sustainable management of the world’s forests.

At the Ministerial session, delegates outlined a series of general criteria to be included in future international agreements and designed to safeguard forests and prevent their destruction by fire. Delegates also reviewed forestry policy in a number of countries, notably Mexico and Brazil, which suffer from a high incidence of forest fires.

The Declaration adopted by the Ministers contains a pledge to pursue dialogue at the global level with a view to coordinating future action on forests, improve the co-ordination of and step up the fight against forest fires, and promote sustainable forest management. □