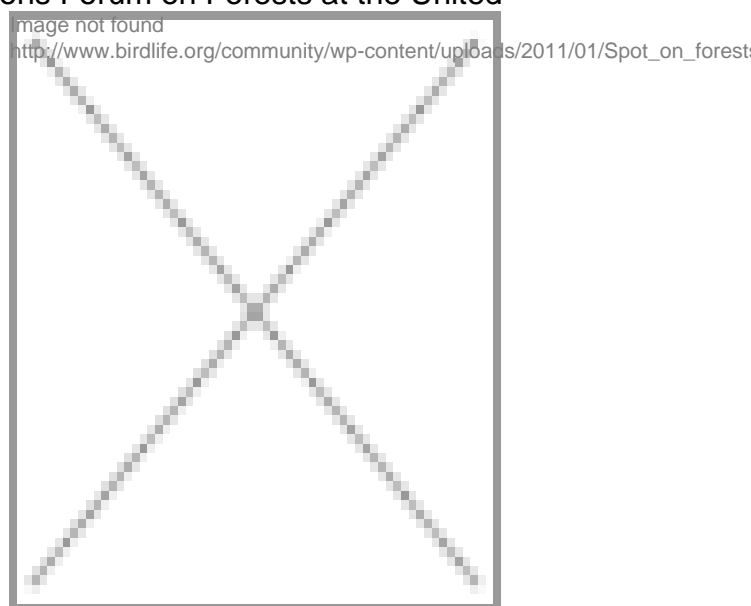




Save forests. Save ourselves

Title

It's now official - 2011 is the UN International year of the forests. "BirdLife welcomes the spotlight this year falling on the lungs of our planet and home to the majority of the World's biodiversity", said Dr Marco Lambertini, BirdLife International's Chief Executive. "The world's forests are not only essential to life in all its diversity but also to achieving mankind's biggest goals, such as reducing poverty, combating climate change and attaining sustainable development." Deforestation of tropical rainforests continues to be the highest threat to species. Estimates put the current losses of forest at over 10 million hectares per year, which is about the land area of a medium-sized country like Egypt, Bolivia or Tanzania. As things now stand, few tropical forests will survive to the end of the 21st century. The BirdLife Partnership has numerous projects to conserve and restore degraded forest ecosystems and promote sustainable forest use. BirdLife's work is at the centre of global efforts to conserve and restore forests so that the profusion of life they contain and the vital services they provide are not lost to the world forever. An exciting new initiative is BirdLife's Forests of Hope programme which aims to prevent deforestation or promote restoration of natural forest at up to 20 sites covering at least five million hectares of tropical forest by 2015. The fundamental belief being that threatened biodiversity is not lost and can be saved, and degraded forests can be restored. Conserved or restored forests can continue to provide the services that local communities and society world-wide need. "The BirdLife Global Partnership has been deeply engaged in forest conservation across the tropics for years, and is achieving significant successes on the ground. BirdLife's Forests of Hope programme is building on this wealth of experience, and expanding this work across the globe", said Dr Lambertini. As part of International Year of the Forests we have a [new online resource](#) showcasing numerous examples of forest conservation. The official launch of the International Year of Forests 2011 takes place at the Ninth Session of the United Nations Forum on Forests at the United



Nations Headquarters, New York on 24th January.