



**Britain invests \$100M to protect Congo rainforest**  
**Rhett A. Butler, mongabay.com**  
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Britain will invest nearly \$100 million (£50m) in a initiative to protect the Congo rainforest, the second largest tropical forest in the world. Ten other countries are also supporting the project.

Chancellor Gordon Brown said the funding will help fight deforestation while improving the livelihood for about 50 million people in Central Africa.

"The links between environment and development are clear," stated a release from Chancellor Brown yesterday. "The impacts of climate change fall most heavily on those in poorer countries who are least able to respond. The Government recognises the need to urgently do more both to mitigate climate change and to help developing countries adapt to its impact."

The Congo basin effort will be led by Nobel prize winner Wangari Maathai, a Kenyan environmental activist who launched a national tree-planting effort that has now gone global.

Chancellor Brown said that the £50m will come from the government's Environmental Transformation Fund, which will provide £800m over three years for a range of mitigation and adaptation measures in developing countries.

Britain is keen on mitigation strategies after pledging to cut carbon dioxide emissions by 60 percent by 2050. The

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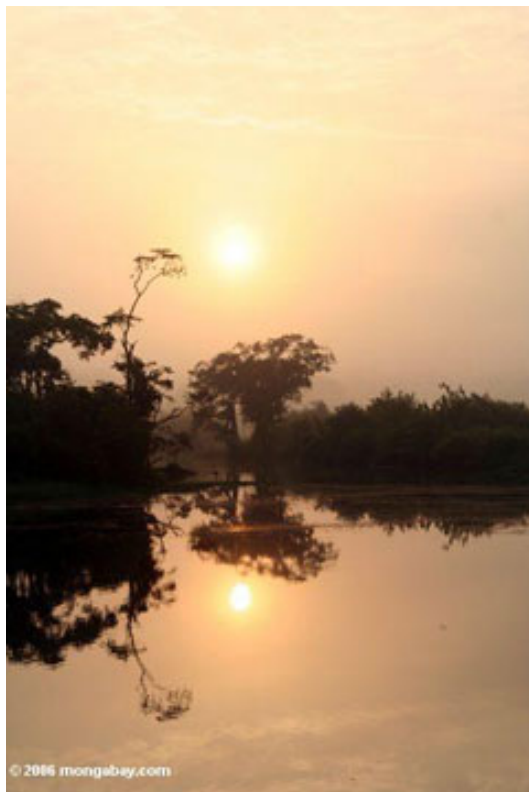
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Stern Review, a government-backed report on climate change published last year, estimated that deforestation is responsible for 18 per cent of global greenhouse gas emissions.

Britain's support comes as Africa's forests continue to disappear at a rate of more than 4 million hectares per year, according to figures release by the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). Deforestation rates in West Africa were among the highest in the world between 2000 and 2005.



Central African rainforest at daybreak. Photo by Rhett A. Butler

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