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# International Day of Forests (21 March)

“Forests and Water” is the theme of the International Day of Forests 2016. The UNECE/FAO Forestry and Timber Section, jointly with the UNECE Secretariat of the Water Convention and its Protocol on Water and Health, the Housing and Land Management Unit and the Secretariat of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, with the support of the Government of Finland and the Swiss Confederation is organising the celebrations of the International Day of Forests in 2016 at the Palais des Nations (room VII) in Geneva on 21 March 2016.



Forests and water are closely connected and mutually interdependent. Forests and woodlands depend on water sources. At the same time, forests maintain water quality, regulate surface and ground water flows, and help to mitigate the risks of water-related disasters. The way we manage our forests is therefore key to the quality of the water we drink, to protect us from natural hazards such as landslides, floods and droughts and to ensure the productivity of our lands. As global demand for freshwater rises and water grows scarcer, land managers and policy-makers need to balance the trade-offs between the benefits provided by forests and forest-induced changes in water availability. In view of the climate agreement, we further need to look at implications of REDD+ for wetland ecosystems. Substantial carbon emissions occur through the draining of wet forests and forested peatlands, hence in addition to afforestation measures, REDD+ should also take into account the need for the rewetting of these types of forest ecosystems.

This half-day special event will raise awareness on the multiple links between forests and water through concrete examples and implemented solutions.

## Provisional programme:

15:00 – 15:30	Forest and water linkages - conceptual background
15:30 – 16:00	Forests, water and ecosystems
16:00 – 16:30	Forests, water and disaster risk reduction
16:30 – 17:00	Discussion
17:00 - 17:45	Forests and drinking water
17:45 - 18:00	Discussion

The event is addressed to everybody interested in the topic. For more information please visit our website (<http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=41874#/>), where you can register online to the event (necessary for those who don't have an access badge to the Palais des Nations).

For more information please contact Ms Alicja Kacprzak [alicja.kacprzak@unece.org](mailto:alicja.kacprzak@unece.org) at the UNECE/FAO Forestry and Timber Section.