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Geneva

To celebrate the International Year of Forests, UNECE and FAO have constructed a “temporary forest” inside the Palais des Nations building, in the “Salle des pas perdus” gallery. Some 70 living trees from 27 different species from Europe and North America, with heights ranging from 2 to 6 meters, create a stunning atmosphere.

The trees provide the background to an artwork exhibition of the American painter Monte Dolack, whose work has been inspired throughout the years by North American forests and outdoor living. The exhibition, entitled “The Art of Trees – A forest gallery”, also includes innovative wood products and materials, as well as art and design pieces made of wood.

The exhibition reflects on the contribution of forests to economic, environmental and social wellbeing. Forests are the lungs of the earth. Trees take in CO2 from the air and turn it into wood, using energy from the sun. They then “breathe out” the oxygen that is essential for life.

Millions of us, in every country of the world, use wood in one form or another: to build and furnish our homes; to give us warmth; to cook our food; to wrap our gifts; or to pass on news. Wood is a remarkably versatile natural material: it can be recycled over and over again and when it can no longer be recycled, it can give us energy.

Twenty-one of the trees on display will be planted in the park of the Palais des Nations after the exhibition, further enriching the biodiversity of the park.

The exhibition is organized by the UNECE/FAO Forestry and Timber Section, in partnership with the United States of America Permanent Mission to the United Nations and with the United Nations Office in Geneva. It is open from 11 to 25 February.

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Note to editors
The General Assembly of the United Nations declared 2011 as the International Year of Forests to raise awareness on sustainable management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests.

The UNECE/FAO Forestry and Timber Section works to ensure that pan-European forests continue to be managed sustainably, and that threats are identified and adequately addressed. It provides advice on prevention, legislation and long-term strategies to countries and supports regional collaboration in dealing with forest threats.

All species on display in the exhibition come from Europe and North America. These include Chamaecyparis lawsoniana, Ilex koehneana, Quercus ilex, Alnus cordata, Corylus colurna, Fagus sylvatica. Also displayed, Quercus schumardii, native to the Eastern North American coast, is one of the largest oak species in the red oak group. Finally, Acer pensylvanicum also known as Moosewood and Moose Maple is the only species of Snakebark maples native to North America.

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