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Indonesia, UN sign program to tackle deforestation, climate change

JAKARTA, Nov. 23 (Xinhua) -- Indonesia's Ministry of Environment and the United Nations' agencies on Monday signed the UN-REDD (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation) program, just in time for the upcoming Copenhagen Climate Change Conference in December, in an effort to address climate change by stopping the destruction of Indonesia's vast forests.

The UN-REDD program was signed at the National Dialog on Climate Change, a high level meeting organized by the ministry and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP).

Indonesia is one of nine UN-REDD pilot countries and part of a global effort, the UN Collaborative Program on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries, which was launched in September 2008 by the UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon and the prime minister of Norway.

"Globally, almost 20 percent of the world's green house gas emissions come from deforestation and forest degradation. Therefore, Norway is committed to supporting developing countries like Indonesia to stop the devastating destruction of the forest," said the Norwegian Minister of the Environment and International Development Erik Solheim at the signing ceremony.

REDD has become an eminent priority for Indonesia and the global community since deforestation and forest degradation represent a major source of green house gas emission, in addition to hindering human development and threatening biodiversity.

Indeed, according to the Second National Communication also launched on Monday, more than half of Indonesia's green house gas emissions are related to forestry peat land sector (except 2003).

"Most of Indonesia's green house gas emissions come from deforestation and forest degradation," said Hakan Bjorkman, the UNDP's Country Director

Man Ho So, the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization Representative in Indonesia said that a key challenge will be to ensure monitoring, reporting and verification.

"This will be the priority for the UN-REDD," said Man.

The UN-REDD is funded by the government of Norway, bringing together

the comparative strengths of FAO, UNDP and UNEP as partners to work together with the Ministry of Forestry. The objective is to support Indonesia in developing a fair, equitable, and transparent REDD architecture.

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