



**Executive Office**

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Dear Evan Kersnar and California Air Resources Board Members,

California is a beacon of hope in the global battle to prevent the most dangerous impacts of climate change. California's bold leadership on climate change solutions is a critical part of the response that is needed to face down this existential threat to human civilization.

Tropical forests are an essential piece of a global strategy to win this battle. In no other sector can emissions be reduced or carbon be removed from the atmosphere as rapidly or at such a low cost. Unfortunately, the important steps taken by Brazil and many other tropical forest nations, states and provinces to reduce deforestation and increase carbon uptake by recovering forests have received far too little recognition and tangible benefits.

To unlock the potential of tropical forests as a climate change solution, we must find better ways to recognize and reward progress on the ground in building forest-friendly development models that also protect the rights of indigenous peoples and other forest-dependent communities.

California's Draft Tropical Forest Standard would send just this signal to tropical forest regions. Even if the Standard is not followed immediately by the full implementation of California's important international offset provision, and even if the Standard is later further refined, the positive impact of allowing verified emissions reductions from tropical forest jurisdictions into California's carbon market will be substantial. The approval of the Standard with its social and environmental safeguards will inform the many other mechanisms under development to recognize and reward tropical forest regions' progress in slowing emissions.

I was particularly pleased to see that the Guiding Principles for Collaboration and Partnerships between Subnational Governments, Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities, which were one of the highlights of the recent Global Climate Action Summit in San Francisco, are now incorporated into the Standard. The elected leaders of indigenous peoples around the world have shaped these Principles, deepening the relevance of the Standard for land rights.

I hereby encourage the California Air Resources Board to endorse the California Tropical Forest Standard.

Best wishes,

Erik Solheim  
Executive Director

**Evan Kersnar**  
**Board liaison**  
**California Air Resources Board**

**Cc: Jason Gray, Chief of the Climate Change Program Evaluation Branch, California Air Resources Board**