

Int'l conference to save forests opens in Oslo

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(AP) -- Last December, an international conference on climate change approved global plans prevent deforestation. But those plans have not been implemented, and now a smaller meeting of nations in Oslo will try Thursday to find ways to start to put them in place - even if on a smaller scale.

Deforestation, the burning of woodlands or the rotting of felled trees, is thought to account for up to 20 percent of [carbon dioxide](#) released into the atmosphere - as much as is emitted by all the world's cars, trucks, trains, planes and ships combined.

Slated to attend the one-day conference are heads of state from eight countries, including Denmark, Indonesia and Kenya, and senior officials from eighteen others. Twenty-six other countries are represented by lower-ranking representatives.

The 52 countries hope to enact on a small scale a forest-preservation program approved - but not implemented - at the U.N. [climate talks](#) in Copenhagen, Denmark, in December. Member nations see this as a stopgap measure while details of a full-scale program are hashed out - a process likely to take several years.

Those attending include representatives of wealthy donor nations as well as [developing countries](#) in need of foreign aid to reduce levels of [deforestation](#).

The program - called REDD Plus, for Reducing Emissions from

Deforestation and Degradation - is intended to encourage wealthy nations to voluntarily finance projects that help poor nations protect their forests. It will do so, in part, by creating a central monitoring agency to make the flow of aid more transparent and coordinate and streamline the distribution of aid to avoid redundancy.

The financing of forest-saving projects - such as Norway's pay-per-result plan, unveiled Wednesday, to defray Indonesia's cost of curbing deforestation - will still be made by bilateral or multilateral agreements.

The conference will be opened by Norwegian Prime Minister Jens Stoltenberg.

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