



Media only: Beth King (703) 487-3770, ext. 8216 or kingb@si.edu Sept. 23, 2009
Monica Alvarado (703) 487-3770, ext. 8023 or alvaradom@si.edu

Media Web site: www.stri.org

China's New Climate Center Welcomes Citizen Scientists

The China Regional Climate Center, the newest of five international sites where volunteers work with scientists to conduct the world's largest experiment on the effects of climate change on forests, opened Sept. 22 in Gutianshan National Nature Reserve in eastern China.

"It is extremely rewarding to collaborate with scientists in China and with HSBC bank volunteers as we begin to comprehend the effects of climate change on forest dynamics around the world," said Stuart Davies, director of the Center for Tropical Forest Science, a network of 34 independent long-term forest study sites coordinated by STRI and Harvard's Arnold Arboretum,

The HSBC Climate Partnership, a collaboration between HSBC bank, the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute, Earthwatch Institute, World Wildlife Fund and the Climate Group, now has regional climate centers in India, England, Brazil and the United States where citizen scientists experience the forest firsthand.

Earthwatch and the Institute of Botany at the Chinese Academy of Sciences host HSBC bank employees as they travel to Gutianshan National Nature Reserve in eastern China to measure trees using techniques developed by the Center for Tropical Forest Science. Tree growth is one of the best indicators of the quantity of carbon that trees absorb from the atmosphere.

The CTFS began as an experiment to understand tropical biodiversity nearly 30 years ago in Panama, and it is now the best tool available to understand on-the-ground effects of global change on forests. Scientists use a standard method to measure more than 3 million trees representing 8,000 species to see how the forest reacts to changes in temperature, carbon dioxide levels and other constantly changing environmental variables.

In 2005, Ma Keping and colleagues from the Institute of Botany at the Chinese Academy of Sciences set up a long-term forest monitoring site in Gutianshan National Nature Reserve in the Yangtze valley. Gutianshan's subtropical, evergreen trees grow on steeply sloping terrain. Relatively little is known about the response of subtropical forest to climate change.

The Climate Partnership aims to further scientific understanding of climate change as it inspires bank employees, their families and friends to become advocates for a healthy environment.

###

(1) back row, L to R: Ed Wilson (Earthwatch-CEO), Simon Martin (HSBC-Group Head of Corporate Sustainability), Helen Wong (HSBC-China), local government officials

kneeling: 12 Climate Champions from Australia, Brunei, Malaysia, Singapore, the Philippines, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Macau, and mainland China

(2) back row, L to R: Eve Carpenter (Earthwatch), Teresa Au (HSBC-Asia Head of Corporate Sustainability), Ed Wilson (Earthwatch-CEO), Simon Martin (HSBC-Group Head of Corporate Sustainability), Stuart Davies (STRI-CTFS), Helen Wong (HSBC-China), Dan Bebbler (Earthwatch), and local government officials

kneeling: 12 Climate Champions from Australia, Brunei, Malaysia, Singapore, the Philippines, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Macau, and mainland China

(3) Stuart Davies (STRI-CTFS) and Dan Bebbler (Earthwatch) talking before ceremony

(4) Ma Keping, Director, Institute of Botany, Chinese Academy of Sciences addresses scientists and volunteers at opening of the China Regional Climate Center at the Gutianshan National Nature Reserve. September 22, 2009.

(5) Dr. Ma Keping (Institute of Botany, Chinese Academy of Sciences-Director) delivering remarks during launch ceremony

(6) Simon Martin (HSBC-Group Head of Corporate Sustainability) delivering remarks during launch ceremony

(7) Ed Wilson (Earthwatch-CEO) delivering remarks during launch ceremony

(8) L to R: Dr. Ma Keping (IBCAS), Eve Carpenter (Earthwatch), Ed Wilson (Earthwatch), Simon Martin (HSBC), Teresa Au (HSBC), and Helen Wong (HSBC) pose with thermometer to symbolize the HSBC Climate Partnership's efforts to address climate change

Information about the forest dynamics plot site in Gutianshan, China

<http://www.ctfs.si.edu/site/Gutianshan>

Earthwatch Institute information about the China Regional Climate Center

http://www.earthwatch.org/europe/rcc_china