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Hessischer Waldbesitzer Verband e.V.

ots.Audio: "Convention on Biodiversity" in Bonn, Germany: Rolling Stones Keyboardist Chuck Leavell supports Sustainable Management of German Forests

19.05.2008 - 14:00 Uhr, Hessischer Waldbesitzer Verband e.V.

Friedrichsdorf (ots) -

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German Forest Owners Association (AGDW) drives sustainable forest management / Protection of species and habitat to maintain biodiversity has been integrated in German forestry making German wood an environment-friendly resource

"Use it or lose it" - that's the credo of Rolling Stones keyboardist and forest owner Chuck Leavell, who has been promoting sustainable forest management around the globe for years. The musician will convey his belief that only sustainably managed forests maintain biodiversity to the delegates of the UN Convention on Biological Diversity at a concert on 18 May 2008 in Bonn, Germany. He supports the German Forest Owners Association (AGDW). This organisation has been driving the integration of the protection of species and habitats in sustainable forest management for years. By now, there is no forest in Germany that is not managed according to the principles of sustainability which makes wood from Germany an environment-friendly resource.

The objective of Chuck Leavell's global commitment is to reconcile environmentalists and forest owners. He is convinced that both parties are actually trying to achieve the same aim: to maintain and protect the natural diversity of species and ecosystems. Chuck Leavell explains the forest owner's point of view: "I think it is important for all of us to realize the true diversity we have in our different forest systems, whether it is in Germany or in America or in Canada. If we begin to lose just one or some of the many different insect species, animal species and plant species then we're taking things out of balance and I think we're in danger losing the system itself. So it is important to do all we can to maintain this wonderful diversity in our forests."

And that is why environmentalists and forest owners should focus their energies and pool their resources rather than fight about how to reach the common objective. Especially since surveys confirm that sustainably managed deciduous and mixed forests are the habitat for a similar number of species as forest that are strictly protected. Furthermore, responsibly managed forests have the distinct advantage that they are significantly more robust and healthy.

"I think it is important to watch natural processes in the forests and try to integrate as much as possible into an ecological forest management plan," says Chuck Leavell. "Economy and ecology are two sides of the same coin. And they go hand in hand together. I think we need to give our forest landowners the tools that they need to maintain this wonderful biodiversity within our forest systems."

In Germany, environmental protection has successfully been integrated in forest management for years as the owners also have a commercial interest in healthy forests. Without exception, all forests are managed according to the principles of sustainable development which were defined 200 years ago by a German forester. This means diverse, stable mixed forests with tree species native to the region are grown and that only the amount of wood which can grow back again under the regional climate and soil conditions is harvested. Environmental protection principles and state-of-the-art technology are also employed when it comes to harvesting - the responsible and cautious treatment of the ecosystem has top priority. Wood produced in Germany is therefore always environment-friendly and

sustainable.

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