

Contacts:

Tawana Jacobs at 202-552-6534, tjacobs@interaction.org or 202-297-1696 (Cell)
Holly Cowan at 646-543-4772 or holly@prcollaborative.com

MEMBERS OF CONGRESS AND U.S. NGOS ANNOUNCE NEED TO INTEGRATE GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES

Washington, D.C. (June 15)—U.S. Representatives Russ Carnahan (D-MO) and Jeff Fortenberry (R-NE) joined with a former USAID Administrator, a current USAID official and NGO leaders to call for the integration of U.S. international conservation and development policies at an event today on Capitol Hill. The event premiered a new research paper on the subject, titled [*The Nature of Development*](#).

The new paper, written by InterAction—the largest alliance of U.S.-based international NGOs—concludes that integrating conservation and development policy could create jobs in the United States by increasing the number of exports. It would also improve security by tempering situations in the developing world where food price hikes and other resource shortages are creating full blown conflicts.

“Balancing U.S. global development and environmental policies is a new approach that makes sense. As *The Nature of Development* illustrates, integration would not place an additional burden on the federal budget, and it would allow us to protect gains in poverty alleviation, food security and other development assistance programs, ensuring that they are sustained over the long-term,” said *Samuel A. Worthington, InterAction president and CEO*.

Integration of policies will also aid our country’s economy. Last year, 48 percent of all U.S. exports went to developing countries and estimations are that the percentage will continue to rise as their economies grow and gain strength.

According to *former USAID administrator Henrietta Fore*, balancing conservation and development policies will also promote “human security” abroad. “Streamlining our programs that assist countries with securing better access to food and water, protection from disaster, and local stewardship of natural resources is critical if we want to see a decrease in the number of violent conflicts happening in the developing world,” remarked Fore. “The ongoing instability in Pakistan, for example, is exacerbated by land and water disputes. In Sudan, land, water, oil and natural gas issues have complicated the conflict. In Africa, South Asia and the Middle East, food prices and availability have also played a role in sparking conflict,” she concluded.

David Reed, senior vice president at the World Wildlife Fund agreed with Fore’s view. He stated, “The survival of the poor and vulnerable in developing countries depends directly on natural resource wealth. Managing those resources is critical to raising long-term living standards and escaping the numbing conditions of poverty.” Reed went on to say that the new paper “provides a rich analysis of the linkages between development and natural resource management and offers insightful examples of successes from around the world.”

The Nature of Development notes that because girls and women so often bear the burden of gathering resources and growing food to feed their families, they must play a larger role as stewards of their communities’ natural resources.

“The lives of girls and women become especially imperiled when resources disappear,” stated *Ritu Sharma, president and co-founder of Women Thrive Worldwide*. “Instead of pursuing economic and educational opportunities, women and girls often must spend more time collecting water or gathering wood. It is a lose-lose proposition on the individual, country and global level.

For example, without education and money, women will lack the ability to increase their legal ownership of titled land—which now sits at about 1 percent—and have some control over how

the resources are used and the financial well-being of their families,” continued Sharma.

For U.S. policy to have the greatest long-term benefit to families in the developing world, InterAction’s new paper recommends that U.S. policymakers, government agencies, foundations and NGOs move to more fully integrate global conservation and development policy and programming.

The Nature of Development is available online at <http://www.interaction.org/conservation-development>.

###

InterAction is the largest alliance of U.S.-based nongovernmental international organizations with more than 190 members. Our members operate in every developing country, working with local communities to overcome poverty and suffering by helping to improve their quality of life. Visit www.interaction.org

InterAction | 1400 16th St. NW, Suite 210, Washington D.C. 20036 | 202.667.8227 | ia@interaction.org