

December 17, 2008

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact:

Scott Sabin or Doug Satre
Floresta USA
(858) 274-3718
ssabin@floresta.org
doug@floresta.org

Global Charity Floresta Announces Milestone – Four Million Trees Planted Worldwide

- The universal Christmas pine tree is daily necessity for impoverished nations
- Reforestation efforts at work in 187 villages worldwide

SAN DIEGO, Calif. – The global charity [Floresta](#), that works to end poverty by halting deforestation, has reached a milestone this month by planting its four millionth tree, announced executive director Scott Sabin. “While it took us seven years to plant the first 500,000 trees, we now plant that many every year and our goal is to plant a million trees a year by 2012,” added Sabin, whose group works in Mexico, Haiti, Dominican Republic, Tanzania, Thailand, Kenya and Burundi.

Floresta has been planting trees since 1984, but the scope of its work has grown dramatically in recent years, fueled by a growing recognition about the role of the environment in poverty-stricken countries. “While pine trees have become a universal sign of Christmas, they are an everyday necessity for the hundreds of millions of poor who live with chronic deforestation and poverty,” explained Doug Satre, Floresta’s director of outreach and development. “Floresta not only plants trees, but works alongside the rural poor to teach sustainable agricultural and economic development, ensuring that the trees not only live but provide a lasting source of nourishment and restoration for rural communities.”

Sabin and Satre said their organization is showing a growth in donations – up 25% this year -- because of a greater urgency on the part of individuals and churches to seek ways to protect the environment. “Floresta works in some of the world’s poorest regions, making the land more productive and sustainable because God calls us to be good stewards of the earth.” said Sabin.

Floresta recently established its first endowment fund designed to perpetuate the organization's work in transforming the lives of the rural poor. With a goal of raising \$50 million by 2020, the Endow Floresta fund will be managed by the Rancho Santa Fe Foundation in Rancho Santa Fe, Calif. to provide an ongoing source of revenue for Floresta's core programs of reforestation, farming, animal husbandry and micro credit. In the past year, Floresta has expanded into Kenya and will soon start a program in Burundi. The following are highlights of its programs to date:

- Mexico -- 360,000 trees
- Dominican Republic -- 2,840,000 trees
- Haiti -- 440,000 trees
- Tanzania -- 360,000 trees
- Thailand -- 25,000 trees

About Floresta

An international Christian charity that works in areas where poverty is caused by deforestation, Floresta (www.floresta.org) restores the environment and empowers the poor. For 24 years, Floresta has provided solutions to meet the complex economic, environmental and spiritual needs of impoverished farmers in developing countries by planting 4 million trees, revitalizing thousands of small farms, and making over 5,600 small business loans.