

## **SHARP – supporting smallholders by supporting companies**

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Smallholders play a crucial role in agricultural production and are likely to become increasingly important as global demand for agricultural product grows. There are many potential advantages to smallholder production including better livelihoods for farmers and more secure supply to companies. However, there are also many challenges, including smallholders having limited access to information and training on agricultural practices, and companies lacking resources and capacity to support sustainable production among their smallholders.

The SHARP Partnership has brought together a wide range of organisations committed to supporting smallholders in addressing these challenges and bringing a wide range of expertise and experience to the initiative. SHARP will focus specifically on working with companies – both producers and those in the supply chain – to build on their existing relationships with smallholders to support smallholder development.

SHARP is now in a development phase, with The Proforest Initiative providing an interim secretariat for 2012. One of the key goals is to develop pilot projects for the implementation of the SHARP objectives. For this pilot phase, SHARP has prioritised activities on four key issues:

- Smallholder development in areas of new planting
- Integrating smallholder production into responsible supply chains
- Supporting reduced deforestation
- Increasing smallholder yields

The SHARP Partnership is currently working with two participating companies and their smallholder supply base. This presentation will provide an overview of the organisation's activities undertaken to date and those planned for the future.