

The cash raises the total in the Carbon Fund to almost \$200 million, with other cash from countries including Britain, Australia and the United States.

Norwegian Environment Minister Erik Solheim said the \$50 million would add to Norway's bilateral programs including \$1 billion each for Brazil and Indonesia.

"We need to start rewarding the best performers," Solheim said of the cash. The World Bank Carbon Fund plans to start paying money to five countries this year for results in slowing deforestation.

Among the other candidates are Nepal, Democratic Republic of Congo, Mexico and Costa Rica.

Deforestation accounts for up to 20 percent of greenhouse gas emissions from human activities. Trees soak up carbon as they grow and release it when they rot or get burnt down, often to clear land for farms.

The money is part of UN-led plans meant to help the poor cut emissions, mainly from burning fossil fuels, and to adapt to impacts such as droughts, heat-waves, floods, desertification and rising sea levels.

The World Bank welcomed the new cash but said it was concerned that funds for green aid, due to reach \$100 billion a year from 2020, were appearing too slowly.

"We are very concerned about the gap that is already emerging," Andrew Steer, World Bank special envoy for climate change, told a news conference.

He said that all the \$6.5 billion in a World Bank climate change investment funds had been allocated to 45 nations. "

In the meantime, other countries with very good plans, are coming forward," he said. "Unfortunately those funds are not there."

Reuters