



HELVETIA WEALTH

PRESS RELEASE  
Helvetia Wealth AG  
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## **Bertie Ahern to become Chairman of the International Forestry Fund**

Three-time Irish Prime Minister joins fund investing in sustainable forestry

Dublin / Zurich: The International Forestry Fund – a joint venture of the Irish Forestry Fund and Helvetia Wealth AG of Switzerland – today announced that the former Irish Prime Minister Bertie Ahern will become Chairman of the fund as of January 1, 2010.

The International Forestry Fund, created in March 2009, is offering the opportunity of direct forestry investment to institutional investors. The Fund invests in forestry in Ireland, the UK, and Central America, growing a mixture of species ranging from spruce and pine in Europe to tropical timbers such as teak, mahogany, and rosewood.

The fund buys existing forests, or land which is then afforested. Key to its strategy is that it will acquire the title to all properties for the benefit and protection of its investors. All lands and forestry will be subjected to strict independent assessment prior to purchase; this external monitoring will remain in place throughout the Fund's ownership of its forestry and land.

A forest certification process ensures that the forests are managed sustainably; the production of timber is subject to strict forestry and environmental protection standards throughout the timber production cycle, including tree planting and observing biodiversity. The certification process also defines standards for labour, transportation, and for guaranteeing property rights.

Commenting on today's announcement Bertie Ahern said: "I am delighted and honoured to be joining the International Forestry Fund at this very exciting time for this sector. The stewardship and use of forests and forest lands in a way that is productive and progressive is vitally important today and for future generations. Much work is still required to achieve balance between society's increasing demands for forest products and benefits, and the preservation of forest health and diversity. I look forward to working with the International Forestry Fund in the years ahead to develop a structured process for the long term management of forests in keeping with the principles of sustainable development."

"The fund offers significant diversification by distributing the age of each forest, from bare agricultural land to semi-mature plantations, in order to provide consistent returns. We try to prevent distortions of land prices by investing continuously and on a long-term basis. This implies that we might limit subscription in any given period", explains Trevor McHugh, a director of the fund and Managing Director of I.F.S. Asset Managers, Dublin, which in 1997 developed the concept of the Irish Forestry Funds, investing directly into Irish Forestry. The Irish Forestry Funds have a track record spanning 13 years delivering an average 9% p.a. return for their investors.

“The idea of creating the International Forestry Fund was born after the original Irish Forestry Funds could not accept further investments simply because the availability of suitable land for forestation in Ireland is finite”, explained Trevor McHugh. “We have spent a number of years establishing the necessary relationships required to launch a Forestry Fund of this nature and are delighted to have engaged with Helvetia Wealth AG from Switzerland who are the Fund Managers to the International Forestry Fund. This relationship enables us to attract international institutional investors interested in acquiring forestry assets on a global basis, thereby taking advantage of an asset class that benefits from ongoing biological growth regardless of economic conditions.”

The fund is open-ended with a five-year initial lock-up period. Minimum investment is 100,000 Euro. The fund targets annualised returns of 7 to 10 percent. There is a 1.5 percent management fee and a 10 percent performance fee over 10-year Euro Bond returns.

“Helvetia Wealth is delighted to broaden its product portfolio into alternative investments with the International Forestry Fund. We strongly believe in the success of this fund. Creating more renewable resources to cater to issues like the increasing demand for biofuels is an irreversible trend and an environmental necessity. We want to facilitate this trend by providing the appropriate financial tools and lucrative investment opportunities”, said Kamil Stender, CEO of Helvetia Wealth.

**About Bertie Ahern:**

Bertie Ahern is the first person since 1944 to be elected prime minister of Ireland on three successive occasions. At each step, he laid the foundation for a renewed Ireland that will benefit future generations of Irish. Mr Ahern implemented bold economic initiatives that included corporate tax incentives and education reform. His efforts laid out a welcome mat for international corporations, making Ireland an attractive location for foreign companies which drove job creation for over a decade. Known as a dedicated negotiator focused on the end result, Ahern brought divergent parties together in Ireland and Europe urging them to set aside centuries of conflict to create lasting peace and prosperity.

<http://bertieahernoffice.org/>

**About Helvetia Wealth AG:**

Helvetia Wealth is one of the fastest growing financial services brands in Europe. The core business is the provision of Swiss private banking solutions and asset management services. The firm using an open architecture business model, sits at the centre of a network of best of class third party suppliers and is able to bring progressive institutional wealth management products and services to the wider market. Helvetia has a team of private banking and institutional advisors from all over the world, who care for a quickly growing family of international clients. [www.helvetia-wealth.com](http://www.helvetia-wealth.com)

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