

March 2006



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Organización  
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para la  
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## ASIA-PACIFIC FORESTRY COMMISSION

### TWENTY-FIRST SESSION

Dehradun, India, 17-21 April 2006

### FROM GLOBAL TO LOCAL: THE ROLE OF REGIONAL MECHANISMS IN SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT

### SECRETARIAT NOTE

#### INTRODUCTION

1. Under this agenda item, delegates will be informed of recent developments in the major forest-related international and regional agreements, processes and partnerships. Delegates are invited to discuss the ways in which the intergovernmental commitments can more effectively be put into practice through regional, national and local implementation as well as the utility of seeking synergies and enhancing collaboration among the many on-going regional and sub-regional initiatives.

#### ASIA-PACIFIC FORESTRY COMMISSION (APFC) AND GLOBAL FOREST DIALOGUE

2. The Asia- Pacific Forestry Commission (APFC) provides excellent opportunities for linking member countries with the global forest community through the Committee on Forestry (COFO), the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF) and the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF). APFC has a proven track record both in facilitating policy discussions and negotiations at the regional level, and, most importantly, in translating the outcomes of these discussions into practical, field-based activities.

#### Ministerial Meeting on Forests

3. In March 2005, ministers responsible for forests gathered in Rome at FAO Headquarters to boost international cooperation on sustainable forest management. The Ministerial Statement challenged countries to improve forest management; enhance cooperation on forest fires; improve forest law enforcement and governance; enhance intersectoral cooperation of the Millennium

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Development Goals; and to support national forest assessment and reporting. Ministers also called for the enhancement of FAO's leadership role in forestry internationally [www.fao.org/forestry/site/26480/en](http://www.fao.org/forestry/site/26480/en)).

### **Committee on Forestry (COFO)**

4. "Building on the outcome of the Ministerial Meeting on Forests, the Seventeenth Session of the Committee on Forestry (COFO), March 2005, focused on forest fire cooperation, linkages between forestry and the Millennium Development Goals, monitoring progress towards sustainable forest management and strengthening the Regional Forestry Commissions." COFO sustained that these commissions provide effective mechanisms for enhancing regional and sub-regional cooperation and supporting member countries' efforts to implement sustainable forest management. It recommended that the Regional Forestry Commissions address: i) collaboration on fire management; ii) regional policy dialogue; iii) poverty alleviation; iv) valuation of environmental services; v) invasive species; vi) water; vii) illegal logging and associated trade; and viii) elevating the importance of forestry on the political agenda. It further recommended that the Commissions continue to facilitate country implementation of the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests (IPF)/Intergovernmental Forum on Forests (IFF) proposals for action; provide information on developments in the international dialogue on forests; and set the stage for conducting regional forestry sector outlook studies. The Commissions were also urged to build synergies with other regional and international organizations and processes. (<http://www.fao.org/docrep/meeting/009/j5015e.htm>)

5. APFC is working to translate the international dialogue into more practical implementation. In responding to the outcomes of IPF/IFF and UNFF and other processes, APFC, supported by FAO, has implemented a large number of inter-sessional seminars, workshops and training initiatives and disseminated information on key issues and challenges to the region. Several of these are important globally, such as forest finance, criteria and indicators, national forest programmes, invasive species, codes of practice and the role of forestry in poverty reduction.

6. APFC, like other Regional Forestry Commissions, provides a variety of links from regional to global level, including to UNFF. For example by:

- focusing on the implementation of sustainable forest management in the region
- considering the developments in IPF/IFF/UNFF;
- organizing, in 2004, a workshop on the implementation of IPF/IFF proposals for action;
- inviting all CPF members to attend APFC sessions; several representatives of which have made specific contributions by presenting their member's work and serving as resource persons. The UNFF secretariat has also had a particular role in briefing participants on developments in the UNFF process;
- inviting the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and other regional economic and development organizations to attend the sessions;
- encouraging broad participation by non-governmental organizations and other stakeholders; and
- reporting to COFO. FAO, in providing secretariat support for both APFC and COFO, ensures that the key outcomes are presented to other global meetings.

7. These linkages can be further strengthened to facilitate the two-way flow of information from global to local level and vice versa, and to provide inputs from APFC to the global dialogues.

## DEVELOPMENTS IN OTHER KEY INTERNATIONAL PROCESSES

### United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF)

8. The sixth session of UNFF (February 2006) agreed to make progress toward the achievement of the following four global objectives on forests by 2015:

- 1) reverse the loss of forest cover worldwide through sustainable forest management, including protection, restoration, afforestation and reforestation, and increase efforts to prevent forest degradation;
2. enhance forest-based economic, social and environmental benefits, including by improving the livelihoods of forest dependent people;
- 3) increase significantly the area of protected forests worldwide and other areas of sustainably managed forests, and increase the proportion of forest products from sustainably managed forests; and
- 4) reverse the decline in official development assistance for sustainable forest management and mobilize significantly increased new and additional financial resources from all sources for the implementation of sustainable forest management;

9. In addition to deciding on its multi-year programme of work, UNFF is expected to adopt a non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests at its seventh session in April 2007. An open-ended ad-hoc working group is planned to consider the content of this instrument. In order to strengthen interaction between global and regional activities, forest-related regional and sub-regional bodies were invited to provide input to the work of UNFF. Furthermore, UNFF6 recommended that 2010 be proclaimed as the UN international year of forests.

10. The outcome of the sixth session, including a renewed mandate for UNFF until 2015, will be considered by the ECSOOC in July 2006 ([www.un.org/esa/forests](http://www.un.org/esa/forests)).

### Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF)

11. Many countries recognize the contributions of the CPF in helping countries implement internationally agreed actions on forests, including those related to the Millennium Development Goals. The 14 CPF members<sup>1</sup> are committed to strengthening this voluntary partnership, particularly through collaborative and well coordinated activities at the regional and national levels. Recent developments in the CPF joint initiatives include:

- (i) development of a CPF joint information framework, including agreement to work towards joint information gathering in 2010 among the global Forest Resources Assessment (FRA) of FAO, Criteria and Indicators for Sustainable Management of Natural Tropical Forests of the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO) and the forest-related targets and indicators of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)([www.fao.org/forestry/cpf-mar](http://www.fao.org/forestry/cpf-mar));
- (ii) launch, at XXII World Congress of the International Union of Forest Research Organizations (IUFRO, August 2005) of the Global Forest Information Service (GFIS) that catalogues key information resources, such as news, events, publications and job vacancies provided by partners. ([www.gfis.net](http://www.gfis.net));

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<sup>1</sup> **Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF) member organizations:** Center for International Forestry Research; FAO (Chair); International Tropical Timber Organization; International Union of Forest Research Organizations; Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity; Secretariat of the Global Environment Facility; Secretariat of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification; Secretariat of the United Nations Forum on Forests; Secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change; United Nations Development Programme; United Nations Environment Programme; World Agroforestry Centre; World Bank; World Conservation Union.

- (iii) agreement on the working definitions of natural forest, planted forest, forest plantation and forest management by the Third Expert Meeting on Harmonizing Forest-related Definitions for Use by Various Stakeholders (January 2005) ([www.fao.org/forestry/cpf-definitions](http://www.fao.org/forestry/cpf-definitions)); and
- (iv) update of the CPF sourcebook on funding sustainable forest management to contain 600 potential sources of funding ([www.fao.org/forestry/cpf-sourcebook](http://www.fao.org/forestry/cpf-sourcebook)).

12. The sections below summarize recent developments in major forest-related agreements and institutions, many of whose secretariats are members of CPF.

### **International Tropical Timber Agreement (ITTA)/International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO)**

13. A new International Tropical Timber Agreement (ITTA) was agreed to in January 2006. The two key objectives of the new agreement are to promote the expansion and diversification of international trade in tropical timber from sustainably managed and legally harvested forests; and to promote the sustainable management of tropical timber producing forests.

14. The agreement acknowledges the role of ITTO in assisting countries to pursue sustainable development and alleviate poverty and encourages forest-dependent indigenous and local communities to achieve sustainable forest management. ITTO will continue to help countries, companies and communities to improve the management of their forests and the marketing of their products. The new ITTA is expected to come into force in 2008 and operate for ten years, with the possibility of extensions up to eight years. The 40th session of the International Tropical Timber Council (ITTC) will convene from 29 May to 2 June 2006, in Mérida, Mexico. ([www.itto.or.jp](http://www.itto.or.jp)).

15. FAO and ITTO have increased collaboration significantly in recent years, including through joint projects, workshops and conferences. In 2006-07, joint activities will concentrate on law enforcement in the forest sector; data collection and statistics; management of forests for poverty reduction; training and education (particularly in forest policy); decentralization of forest management; competitiveness of the tropical plywood industry; wood-based bioenergy; and the development of non-timber forest products and services.

### **Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)**

16. The CBD 2010 target (to “achieve by 2010 a significant reduction of the current rate of biodiversity loss”) has initiated the development of sub-targets and indicators in many of the Convention’s work programmes, including on forest biological diversity.

17. The draft recommendations prepared for the eighth ordinary meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP-8, March 2006), indicate that the current priorities in the CBD programme of work on forest biological diversity include forest law enforcement, cross-sectoral approaches, and further integration of the ecosystem approach and sustainable forest management, as well as national biodiversity strategies and action plans and national forest programmes. The review of the implementation of the work programme will be carried out at COP-9 in 2008 ([www.biodiv.org](http://www.biodiv.org)).

18. The complex issues of “fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources” and “sustainable use” are increasingly debated, including negotiations on an international “regime” on access and benefit sharing. Such a legally binding instrument may have significant impacts on the forestry sector in many countries, if it regulated, as the negotiations now indicate, the legality of acquisition of genetic resources, such as a certificate of origin, source or legal provenance, as well as establish disclosure requirements in intellectual property rights.

19. The Secretariat of CBD and the FAO Forestry Department are working together on a range of common topics. These include joint activities of CPF, monitoring requirements of the CBD 2010 targets and indicators related to forests; FAO inputs to a range of CBD papers and meetings; and further integration of the concepts of ecosystem approach and sustainable forest management.

#### **Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)**

20. The United Nations General Assembly designated 2006 as the International Year of Deserts and Desertification. At the seventh session of the Conference of the Parties (COP-7) to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification (UNCCD), in October 2005, parties committed themselves to promoting collaboration among the (UNCED 1992) Rio Conventions and suggested a synergetic approach to sustainable forest management. They noted that UNCCD activities should involve efforts to combat land degradation through reforestation and afforestation.

21. South Asian Country Parties adopted a subregional action programme in Sri Lanka in July 2004, in order to prevent further land degradation and loss of biodiversity and agricultural productivity. Southeast Asian Country Parties are finalizing their programme. ([www.unccd.int](http://www.unccd.int)).

22. The Global Mechanism of UNCCD works to facilitate resource allocation and mobilisation of additional resources to combat land degradation and poverty. FAO is a member of the Facilitation Committee, which provides support and advice to the GM and allows for collaborative arrangements between the GM and those institutions providing relevant technical and financial expertise to UNCCD ([www.gm-unccd.org](http://www.gm-unccd.org)).

#### **Framework Convention on Climate Change and Kyoto Protocol (UNFCCC)**

23. The Kyoto Protocol entered into force in February 2005. Its financial mechanism, the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM), allows industrialized member countries to meet part of their greenhouse gas reduction obligations through offset projects, such as afforestation and reforestation, in developing countries. To date, no forestry projects have been approved.

24. As a new development, the eleventh session of the Conference of the Parties to the convention (COP-11, December 2005) agreed to initiate a process to address the issue of reducing emissions from deforestation in developing countries and identifying approaches for stimulating action. Negotiations for the second commitment period of the Kyoto protocol are due to begin in 2006 ([www.unfccc.org](http://www.unfccc.org)).

25. FAO has continued to provide technical assistance to member countries in improving forest management policies and practices, including for implementation of the Clean Development Mechanism.

#### **Global Environmental Facility (GEF)**

26. As of mid-2005, GEF had funded 231 forest-related projects, amounting to US\$ 1.2 billion. The GEF contributions leveraged co-financing from non-GEF sources in the amount of US\$ 3.5 billion. Forest projects receive about 14 percent of the overall GEF funds. The GEF Secretariat and the Implementing and Executing Agencies, including FAO, are investigating the potential for additional GEF support for sustainable forest management. ([www.gefweb.org](http://www.gefweb.org)).

#### **Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)**

27. The thirteenth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP-13) to CITES met in October 2004. Delegates proposed 50 amendments to the CITES Appendices and discussed cooperation with the CBD and FAO. Delegates also adopted the proposals to list *Gonystylus spp.* (ramin) and agarwood producing species *Aquilaria spp.* and *Gyrinops spp.* in Appendix II.

28. In 2005, the Convention's Plant Committee (PC) considered the recommendations to evaluate four tree species using the new CITES-listing criteria, namely, *Balmea stormiae*, *Cedreal odorata*, *Dalbergia retusa*, and *Dalbergia stevensonii*. It recommended that action plans be developed for CITES and non-CITES listed tree species, involving countries, FAO and other stakeholders and that regional workshops be organized, including in Southeast Asia, to identify relevant tree species. The sixteenth session of the Plant Committee will be held from 3-8 July 2006 in Lima, Peru. COP-14 of CITES will be held in 2007 in the Netherlands ([www.cites.org](http://www.cites.org)).

#### **International Union of Forest Research Organizations (IUFRO)**

29. The XXII World Congress of IUFRO (August 2005) focused on "Forests in the Balance: Linking Tradition and Technology." Two resolutions were adopted by the Congress to promote global cooperation in forest-related research and the use of science in decision-making. ([www.iufro.org/events/congresses/2005/#922](http://www.iufro.org/events/congresses/2005/#922)).

30. The Asia Pacific Association of Forestry Research Institutions (APAFRI) has been collaborating closely with the IUFRO Special Programme for Developing Countries (IUFRO-SPDC) in strengthening research in the Asia Pacific region. Since March 2004 the Executive Director of APAFRI has been acting as the IUFRO-SPDC Regional Coordinator and assisting in the implementation of training workshops and networking activities. ([www.apafri.org](http://www.apafri.org))

#### **World Conservation Union (IUCN)**

31. The IUCN Asia Regional Office covers 23 countries stretching from Pakistan in the west to Japan in the east, from Mongolia in the north to Indonesia in the south. The Asia Regional Forest Programme works in five thematic areas: collaborative management of forests and landscapes outside of protected areas, forest fire management, National Protected Area system planning/trans-boundary protected areas management, restoration and rehabilitation of degraded forest landscapes and sustainable and equitable use of non-timber forest products. An example of an on-going activity is field projects related to the Non-Timber Forest Products Network for South and Southeast Asia.

### **KEY REGIONAL PARTNERSHIPS IN ADVANCING SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT**

32. In addition to APFC, there is an abundance of regional and sub-regional mechanisms for discussion of forestry issues, a few of which are described below.

#### **Asia Forest Partnership (AFP)**

33. AFP seeks to promote sustainable forest management in Asia. Partners are governments, intergovernmental organizations, including FAO, and members of civil society. AFP focuses on three key areas: combating illegal logging, forest fire management, and rehabilitation and reforestation of degraded lands. Cross-cutting initiatives support improved forest governance and strengthening of capacities. Recent initiatives include the development of a partnership to link districts in Kalimantan to the global market place, a study of trends in forest ownership/tenure and a regional workshop on decentralization of forest management.

**Regional Forest Law Enforcement and Governance (FLEG) initiatives**

34. Regional FLEG Ministerial processes, supported by the World Bank, aim at combating illegal logging and associated trade and corruption through political commitment and partnerships.
35. The Asia Forest Law Enforcement and Governance (Asia FLEG) initiative builds on the commitments of the Ministerial Declaration of the first Asia FLEG Ministerial Meeting in Bali, in 2001. In order to intensify national efforts and strengthen bilateral, regional and multilateral collaboration to address violations of forest law and forest crime, the Asia FLEG organized a series of meetings, including a steering committee in New York in May 2005 during UNFF5 and the Customs and Law Enforcement Workshop: Promoting Cooperation Among Customs Authorities and Other Relevant Agencies in East Asia, in November 2005, in Cebu, Philippines.
36. The Second Meeting of the Asia FLEG Task Force and Advisory Group was convened in Manila, Philippines, in March 2006. The meetings recommended the convening of a second Asia FLEG Ministerial Conference, which is tentatively planned for late 2006.
37. The Asia FLEG initiative has catalysed agreements on specific national and regional efforts, such as a memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the United Kingdom and Indonesia to improve forest law enforcement and governance and combat illegal logging and international trade in illegally logged timber; and an MOU between Japan and Indonesia with similar objectives.
38. The Europe and North Asia Forest Law Enforcement and Governance (ENA FLEG) process had its Ministerial Conference in St. Petersburg on 22-25 November 2005. Through the St. Petersburg Declaration 44 governments, including Japan, China, Russian Federation and the United States of America, expressed their commitment to take action to address illegal logging and associated forest crimes. The participating governments also identified an Indicative List of Actions for the implementation of the Declaration. ([www.worldbank.org](http://www.worldbank.org)).

**Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)**

39. ASEAN is developing a Regional Action Plan on Trade in Wild Fauna and Flora, 2005-2010 and a Strategic Plan of Action on ASEAN Cooperation in Food, Agriculture and Forestry Sector. The ASEAN Senior Officials on Forestry have established an Expert Group on International Policy Processes. Forest fires have been identified by the ASEAN Environment Ministers as one of the regional cooperation priorities, with recent efforts to develop an online inventory of available fire fighting resources in member countries and the dissemination of guidelines for zero burning and controlled burning practices to facilitate cross-border sharing of resources during emergencies. In addition a "*Monitoring, assessment and reporting for assessing progress towards sustainable forest management in the ASEAN region*" workshop was held in Phnom Penh in December 2005.

**South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC)**

40. The Twenty-fifth Session of the Council of Ministers (Islamabad, July 2004) approved the establishment of the SAARC Forestry Center in Bhutan to promote regional cooperation.

**Mekong River Commission**

41. The Mekong River Commission (Cambodia, Lao PDR, Thailand and Viet Nam) launched in 2002 an Agriculture, Forestry and Irrigation Programme to undertake an inventory of

watersheds in the Lower Mekong Basin, followed by two major projects. The commission's Mekong Wetlands Biodiversity and Sustainable Use Programme is expected to extend to 2009. It also organized a "*Policy Dialogue on Watershed Management in the Lower Mekong Basin*" workshop in September 2004 in Vientiane, Lao PDR.

### **Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC)**

42. SPC programmes benefit 22 Pacific Island countries and territories. The 26 members of the Pacific Community include the above island countries and territories, plus the four founding countries: Australia, France, New Zealand and the United States of America. A "*Regional Workshop on Sandalwood Research, Development and Extension in the Pacific and Asia*" was organized in December 2005. SPC and the National Forest Programme Facility launched a partnership in Suva, Fiji in April 2005, followed by a regional awareness raising tour of non-forestry government agencies in the Pacific, which are responsible for allocating government resources. A Regional training course on "*Positioning for international forest policy dialogue in preparation for UNFF6 in New York*" was attended by 15 Participants from Fiji, PNG, Samoa, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu in Fiji, in January, 2006. SPC was represented at UNFF6 and provided support to Pacific Islands.

### **Non-governmental organizations, including scientific and information networks**

43. The Asia Forest Network (AFN) supports the role of communities in the protection and sustainable use of Asia's forests through regional exchanges such as the 10th Regional Meeting on *Community Forest Management Policies, Implementation and Adaptations* in December 2004 in Davao, Philippines; country working groups; development of field methods and case studies, such as *Community Forest Management in Visayan*; and working papers such as *Approaches to Controlling Illegal Forest Activities*. Recent cross-learning themes include community management of fish and forests, watershed governance and small-scale tree farming. The network is also helping information flow between national and global forest policy dialogues.

44. Asia Pacific Association of Forestry Research Institutions (APAFRI) promotes the development of the region's scientific research and development culture and capacity and helps to foster the establishment of institutional and professional collaboration among the region's forestry researchers. APAFRI's activities support sustainable management and utilization of forest resources at the local, national and regional levels. Its recent programmes and projects include the Asia Pacific Forest Genetic Resources Programme (APFORGEN, 2003); launch and maintenance of a website ([www.apforgen.org](http://www.apforgen.org)); a Directory of Asia Pacific Forestry Researchers; and workshops on coconut beetles (under the umbrella of the Asia Pacific Forest Invasive Species Network) and on early warning systems; as well as a training course on the health of tropical forest trees. Over the next three years an ITTO-funded project will support forest genetic resources conservation and management activities.

45. Regional Community Forestry Training Center for Asia and the Pacific (RECOFTC) assists people in the Asia-Pacific region to manage and benefit from forests equitably and sustainably, through community based forest management. It works mainly on poverty reduction and livelihoods, sustainable forest use, governance and protected areas issues, develops training and study courses and provides technical advisory services. RECOFTC's recent projects include verifying legality?? in the forest sector, analyzing opportunities for market reform to benefit poor forest communities (in Lao PDR and Vietnam), and facilitating good forest governance through Forest Governance Learning Groups in Indonesia, India and Vietnam. The center also hosted the first *Community Forestry Forum for the Asian Region* in Bangkok in August 2005.



### KEY DISCUSSION ITEMS FOR THE COMMISSION

46. It is apparent that there are a large number of forest-related initiatives active in the region. More collaborative approaches among these initiatives might be beneficial for the member countries, many of which are struggling with the implementation of the actions and recommendations agreed. With focused, long-term work and adequate resources, regional mechanisms, such as APFC, are well-positioned to help translate the international dialogue into more practical and substantive implementation at national and local levels.

47. Delegates may wish to discuss the need for, and mechanisms to:

- enhance regional dialogue and make regional activities more dynamic and effective
- improve the flow of information and communication from global to local, and vice versa
- better coordinate the range of forest-related activities that exist under various arrangements

48. Delegates may also wish to identify and elaborate the main roles of APFC, as the leading forum/body within the United Nations system dealing with forest issues in the Asia-Pacific region, in helping to achieve the above objectives.

49. Furthermore, delegates may wish to identify and elaborate the roles of APFC and FAO in contributing to the global processes, notably UNFF, including the potential role in the development of instruments that strengthen political commitment and action for effective implementation of sustainable management of all types of forests and the achievement of the global objectives on forests.