

1. Executive Summary

This regional workshop was held from 23 to 25 February 2010, at the Korea Forest Research Institute (KFRI) in Seoul, organised by FAO within the framework of its Support to National Forest Monitoring and Assessment (NFMA) programme, and hosted by the Korea Forest Service (KFS) and the Korea Forest Research Institute. The workshop aimed to: a) facilitate better understanding among the participants of the role of multipurpose National Forest Inventory (NFI) for coherent policies, strategies and integrated programs including climate change, REDD etc., b) deliberate a general action plan for promoting and strengthening the NFI activities in this region, and; c) identify the funding needs for NFI implementation in partner countries for consideration by donors. The event targeted, in particular, the directors responsible for NFI and REDD activities in the Asia-Pacific Region, experts on Climate Change, REDD and NFI. 13 countries participated.

The workshop included presentations on: a) international processes and national policies related to climate change and REDD; b) the status of actual NFI policies designed to mitigate climate change by participating countries, and; c) the methodological background and actual NFI programmes. The workshop stimulated discussions among participants through plenary and working groups sessions to produce recommendations on a strategy and an immediate action plan for NFI implementation in this region. The workshop was also comprised of a field demonstration of the Korean NFI field measurements at their permanent sample plots.

All the Asia-Pacific country representatives stressed that multipurpose NFI systems are essential for integrated and comprehensive national policy-making processes and also for reporting to international processes, including reporting on carbon emissions from deforestation and forest degradation. Currently, most Asia-Pacific countries are using default factors of GPG of IPCC for carbon estimates and biomass and the participating countries stated that they are lacking technical skills, knowledge and capacities in all dimensions of Forest Greenhouse Gas (GHG) reporting. They expressed their goal to report at higher tier levels (2-3) as soon as possible, but they pointed out that they lack resources for NFI implementation, as a result of weak political will and support.

In order to strengthen the institutional capacities related to GHG reporting, all participating countries suggested a phased programme to develop and sustain their national institutionalized NFI systems with an annual, regular financial support of about one million dollars per country. The meeting stressed the importance that such support be provided to all partner countries as soon as possible and that a sustained flow of resources, technologies and methodologies be ensured for timely and quality implementation of regular and periodic NFIs.

The participating countries expressed the difficulty in satisfying increasing demands for forest information and the challenges in conforming to a variety of suggested methodologies by different donors and conventions, given their very limited institutional capacities. The workshop therefore resolved that a working group for NFI, under the Asia-Pacific Forestry Commission, be established to coordinate, in particular, with donors and conventions to support the development of a harmonised, common and basic framework at both the regional and international level for the development and implementation of NFI systems. The workshop resolved that FAO should take the lead on the establishment of such a working group on NFI, based on its rich experience of more than six decades of supporting countries in developing their NFI/NFMA.

