



Forestry Department

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

PROCEEDINGS

REGIONAL WORKSHOP ON STRENGTHENING OF HARMONISATION OF NATIONAL REPORTING TO FRA 2010 AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL PROCESSES ON FORESTS IN ASIA

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Global Forest Resources Assessment 2010

Sustainably managed forests have multiple environmental and socio-economic functions which are important at the global, national and local scales, and they play a vital part in sustainable development. Reliable and up-to-date information on the state of forest resources - not only on area and area change, but also on such variables as growing stock, wood and non-wood products, carbon, protected areas, use of forests for recreation and other services, biological diversity and forests' contribution to national economies - is crucial to support decision-making for policies and programmes in forestry and sustainable development at all levels.

FAO, at the request of its member countries, regularly monitors the world's forests and their management and uses through the Global Forest Resources Assessment Programme. The Global Forest Resources Assessment 2010 (FRA 2010) has been requested by the FAO Committee on Forestry in 2007 and will be based on a comprehensive country reporting process, complemented by a global remote sensing survey. The assessment will cover all seven thematic elements of sustainable forest management, including variables related to the policy, legal and institutional framework. FRA 2010 is also aimed at providing information to facilitate the assessment of progress towards the Global Objectives on Forests of the United Nations Forum on Forests and the 2010 Biodiversity Target of the Convention on Biological Diversity. Results are expected to be published in 2010.

The Global Forest Resources Assessment programme is coordinated by the Forestry Department at FAO headquarters in Rome. The contact person is:

Mette Løyche Wilkie
Senior Forestry Officer
FAO Forestry Department
Viale delle Terme di Caracalla
Rome 00153, Italy

E-mail: Mette.LoycheWilkie@fao.org

Readers can also use the following e-mail address: fra@fao.org

More information on the Global Forest Resources Assessment programme can be found at:
www.fao.org/forestry/fra



Strengthening Monitoring, Assessment and Reporting (MAR) on Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) in Asia (GCP/INT/988/JPN)

FAO initiated the project “Strengthening Monitoring, Assessment and Reporting (MAR) on Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) in Asia” (GCP/INT/988/JPN) (abbreviated as the “MAR-SFM Project”) in January 2006. This five-year project is funded by the Government of Japan and will be implemented until December 2010.

The main objective of the MAR-SFM Project is to develop a globally harmonised forest-related national MAR system to contribute directly to the improvement of SFM regimes in the Asia-Pacific region. Allied objectives of the project are to enhance the use of the MAR information in national decision-making, formulation of effective forest policies, and sustainable forest management and planning.

The MAR-SFM Project aims to accomplish its objectives in two phases: Development Phase for two years and Implementation Phase for three years. During the development phase the project focused on: (i) strengthening of linkages with forest-related processes; (ii) development of globally harmonised frameworks and guidelines; (iii) use of MAR information in national policy development and planning on forests; (iv) establishment of networks of national focal points to various forest-related processes; and (v) national activities to facilitate harmonisation of forest MAR. The implementation phase spreads over the remaining three years of the project period and focuses on the implementation of the harmonised MAR at the national level in selected project countries through studies, expert consultations, training, and pilot testing.

All countries in the Asia-Pacific region are welcome to participate in the MAR-SFM Project, although the actual level and intensity of their participation may vary. Up to now, forestry departments in 26 countries have nominated their national focal points for the project.

FAO, in collaboration with the Forest Agency of Japan, the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO), the International Network for Bamboo and Rattan (INBAR), and the FAO - Norway project organised an inception workshop on the MAR-SFM Project in Sapporo, Japan, 24-28 July 2006. The workshop reviewed the current status of MAR in project countries, briefed participating national focal points on the project, and deliberated on a work plan of project activities. The project organized a planning workshop in Chiang Mai, Thailand, 31 October - 2 November 2006, a training workshop on the remote sensing-based land cover classification system in Dehradun, India, 4-8 December 2006, a workshop on harmonisation of national forest inventories (NFIs) in Beijing, China, 26-31 March 2007, and a training workshop on MAR in Nadi, Fiji, 10-12 October 2007. The tripartite mid-term review meeting was held at the FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (FAO-RAP) in Bangkok, 16-19 September 2008, to review overall achievements of the MAR Project to date. FAO, the donor (Japan) and participants from 18 project countries discussed a plan of project activities up to December 2010. The participants proposed core international and national activities for the remaining period.

FAO-RAP manages the MAR-SFM Project in close coordination with the Forest Resources Development Division (FOMR) and other divisions at FAO Headquarters in Rome and other collaborating organizations. Contact persons are:

Dan Altrell, Forestry Officer, FOMR/FAOHQ
Patrick Durst, Senior Forestry Officer, RAPO/FAORAP
Masahiro Otsuka, Forestry Officer, RAPO/FAORAP

Dan.Altrell@fao.org
Patrick.Durst@fao.org
Masahiro.Otsuka@fao.org

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Participants' views reported in the working papers are regarded as their personal views. These may be the same as or different from official views of their governments.

The MAR-SFM Working Paper Series provides an important forum for rapid release of preliminary findings needed for validation and facilitation in the final development of official quality-controlled publications. Should users find any errors in the documents or have comments for improving their quality, they are kindly requested to contact Masahiro.Otsuka@fao.org.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Regional Workshop on Strengthening of Harmonisation of National Reporting to FRA 2010 and Other International Processes on Forests in Asia was convened in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 13-16 October 2008. The workshop aimed to facilitate harmonisation and streamlining of national reporting to international processes in the Asian region and to provide technical assistance to the national correspondents of FRA 2010 to ensure high-quality reporting in line with its specifications. Sixty-two persons from 22 countries and 5 organizations participated in the meeting.

Presentations and discussions were made on international reporting systems and formats, the status of countries' reporting to FRA 2010 and other international processes, and the scope of harmonisation of international reporting on forests. The main points of the discussions were as follows:

- Coordination among different national agencies and programmes is essential to update and harmonise reporting processes effectively in each country, while maintaining the consistency in national definitions.
- Terms, definitions and classifications of forests should be simple and flexible in order to be easily adapted to national definitions and ensure consistency in forest area assessment within a country over time.
- Definitions of Permanent Forest Estate (PFE) should be further clarified. Some countries do not have such a legal designation but instead recognise it as the total forest area demarcated.
- Following in-depth revisions of FRA 2010 draft country reports during the working group discussions, the issue of revising previous FRA estimates was discussed for countries where the availability of updated and more reliable figures affect the consistency of the trend in forest areas over time.
- Participants presented the status of international reporting work. They pointed out inconsistent terms and definitions among international processes, limited reporting capacities on specific thematic aspects, dispersion of data among various agencies, and lack of communications among them.
- International processes also face problems caused by divergent definitions of specific terms among countries, soliciting countries to adopt common terminologies which were defined through technical consultations among the various processes.
- Free data accessibility by users (reporting organizations) is crucial for efficient and accurate reporting.
- In the discussion on variables for the extent/conditions of forests (total forest areas, other tree cover, change in forest areas, PFE, connectivity and fragmentation), the participants underscored the need for sharing of updated remote sensing data and strengthening of field studies with technical assistance from international organizations.
- Participants discussed the extent/nature of forest encroachment, degradation due to human causes, extent/nature of forest degradation/disturbance due to natural causes, forest areas disturbed by other agents (besides fire), nitrogen deposition, and forest health/vitality. They requested further clarifications of these indicators for accurate assessments.
- Critical biodiversity indicators were forest areas designated for biodiversity conservation, forest areas within protected areas, the number of endangered species by type, assessment of the effectiveness of existing protected forest areas, and the main threats to important biodiversity components for biodiversity. Strengthening of coordination among stakeholders and improvement of international criteria is crucial for improved classifications and assessment.
- For soil and water protection, discussions were made on inventory/integrated management of shared wetlands, hydrological basins, and species, integration of policies on conservation and

the wise use of wetlands, procedures to protect soil productivity/water retention capacity within production forests, regional and sub-regional action programmes under the UNCCD, and recognition of the significance of wetlands. It will be necessary to strengthen institutional coordination and scientific studies to improve data quality for these indicators.

- As regards forests and climate change, participants highlighted issues on forest area change such as rates of deforestation, increases in forest areas, and a need to improve the existing information base on carbon lifecycles in wood (e.g., soil carbon, biomass expansion factors and carbon emissions, etc.). An agreement on a global forest-type classification would be useful, as would be methodologies for measuring biomass and carbon in trees outside forests. They also highlighted a difference in thresholds of forest definitions between FAO and UNFCCC.
- On productive functions of forests, some key indicators (e.g., removals and value of wood products) were well established, whereas there are no common classifications on removals of non-wood forest products and no fixed methods to account for unrecorded removals. They also discussed inconsistencies in reporting on the area of forest designated for productive purposes, the area available for wood supply and the actual area undergoing wood harvesting.
- Key variables for social, economic and cultural aspects of forests included employment, livelihoods and people's dependence on forests, ownership, indigenous knowledge and community involvement in forest management, valuation of environmental services, and traditional user rights. Cultural aspects are not yet covered well in most reporting processes.
- Regarding the legal, policy and institutional framework, political commitment to sustainable forest management (SFM) was highlighted as a key variable. It should aim at assessing achievements of the commitments. Problems include difficulties in evaluating the quality of laws and policies, quantifying the level of good governance or capacities, and unclear links between individual variables and outcomes of SFM.
- Countries still face deficiency in updated data collection, lack of proper tools and methodologies, and lack of unambiguous definitions and terms for these variables.

Key reporting issues on major indicators discussed during the workshop suggest a necessity for substantive efforts to collate this type of forest-related information with various organizations at the national level. The participants acknowledged the efforts of international and regional organizations to streamline and harmonise international reporting. Following up the current progress, international organizations are expected to consolidate their efforts to harmonise terms, definitions, classifications, and indicators for coherent reporting by countries. Many countries have made substantial progress in reporting to the FRA 2010, whereas some are still facing difficulties in advanced reporting for specific thematic variables. Capacity building of national staff was recommended for enhanced data collection and assessment.

Development of a joint information framework and a common format with the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF) and individual reporting processes will be beneficial for countries to facilitate consistent reporting. Coordination among national agencies and other stakeholders will also have to be strengthened to promote national- and regional-level harmonisation of forest-related reporting. Positive partnerships between FAO and other international organizations should be maintained to ensure optimal harmonisation of international reporting processes.

Regional Workshop on Strengthening of Harmonisation of National Reporting to FRA 2010 and Other International Processes on Forests in Asia

**Vistana Hotel, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
13 - 16 October 2008**

1. Background of the Workshop

A variety of international processes regularly request national governments to provide them with updated data on the status of forests and various action programmes to satisfy the requirements of the international conventions.

Among them, FAO, through the Global Forest Resources Assessment (FRA) collects, analyzes and disseminates information on the world's forest resources. FRA 2010 will provide comprehensive picture of the extent and condition of the world's forests and other wooded land and their management and use, covering seven thematic elements of sustainable forest management (SFM).

Despite the importance of international reporting on forests, most of the Asia-Pacific countries still face difficulties in reporting to various processes because of their limited technical and/or financial capacities. Furthermore, another serious problem is big differences in forest-related terms and definitions and methods of reporting among various reporting processes. In this context, the Japan-funded FAO project: Strengthening Monitoring, Assessment, and Reporting (MAR) on Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) in Asia (GCP/INT/988/JPN) is encouraging regional and national discussions and action to develop coherent forest MAR systems in the region for regular collection, analysis and reporting of national forest-related information.

At the global level, the FRA process is spearheading such efforts of harmonisation together with many of the members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF). FRA 2010 will, for example, encompass the reporting requirements on quantitative indicators for the Millennium Development Goals (MDG), the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF), help countries report on carbon stocks in forests for the United Nations Framework Conventions on Climate Change (UNFCCC), and incorporate many of the Criteria and Indicators (C&I) of the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO). Definitions have already been harmonised for all of these processes. At the regional level, FRA 2010 also meets many of the indicators established by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) C&I process.

FAO is conducting a series of sub-regional and regional workshops as part of the technical assistance and guidance provided to ensure high-quality reporting which meets the specifications established for FRA 2010.

2. Objectives of the workshop

Because of the strong linkages between FRA and MAR, and in order to improve communications and collaboration among national agencies responsible for reporting to international organizations, this workshop was organised jointly by the FRA 2010 team and the MAR-SFM Project. The workshop had two main objectives:

1. Facilitate harmonisation and streamlining of national reporting to international conventions/processes in the Asian region through consultations between countries and international organizations. The workshop provided an opportunity for the participants to present the situation of reporting processes within countries, their technical and organizational challenges, and to benefit from the sharing of experiences with other colleagues.
2. Provide the FRA National Correspondents with technical assistance and guidance to ensure high-quality reporting which meets the specifications established for FRA 2010 through a detailed review of draft country reports.

3. Organization of the workshop

FAO organized the workshop at the Vistana Hotel, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 13-16 October 2008 in close collaboration with the Forestry Department of Malaysia as the co-organiser. The workshop was also supported by the CBD, ASEAN, and ITTO. The UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC) and the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) provided materials for the workshop to introduce their international reporting processes to the participants.

4. Structure of the Workshop

The workshop included plenary and working group sessions. Presentations and discussions were made on FRA 2010 and other international reporting processes on forests, terms, definitions, and classifications of forests, thematic aspects of forest-related reporting, efforts for harmonisation of international forest-related reporting, and the next steps of activities for reporting harmonisation. The agenda of the workshop is presented in **Appendix 1**.

5. Participants of the Workshop

Sixty-two participants attended the workshop from 22 Asian countries and 5 organizations, including FAO, CBD, ITTO, and ASEAN. Representatives of the UNEP-WCMC, CITES, and Brunei Darussalam could not attend the workshop, but provided the workshop with slide sets. The complete list of participants is given in **Appendix 2**.

6. Workshop Sessions

The following is the summary of presentations and discussions during the workshop:

6.1. Opening session

Ms. Mette Løyche Wilkie (Senior Forestry Officer, FAO – FRA 2010) gave a welcome address and introduced the workshop objectives, while referring to activities of FRA 2010.

Dato'Razani bin Ujang (Deputy Director General of Forestry, Forestry Department Peninsular Malaysia) formally opened the workshop, with an introduction to the forestry sector and forest management in Malaysia.

Their texts are annexed in **Appendix 3**.

6.2. Introductory session

(1) FRA 2010

Ms. L. Wilkie provided an overview of the history of global assessments with a special focus on the FRA 2005 key findings. She then introduced the FRA 2010 process and its components, including the country reporting process, the remote sensing survey and the proposed special studies. She highlighted the indicators in FRA 2010 that are relevant for UNFF, CBD and UNFCCC, and she also briefed the participants on the timeline for the FRA 2010 process and the partner organizations involved.

(2) MAR-SFM Project

Mr. Masahiro Otsuka (FAO) made a presentation on the project “Strengthening Monitoring, Assessment and Reporting on Sustainable Forest Management in Asia” (MAR-SFM Project). The project has initiated regional and national activities to develop and test frameworks, guidelines, and information sharing networks among stakeholders. Regional workshops and working papers facilitated technical development on MAR such as national forest inventories and forest classification.

(3) National Forest Monitoring and Assessment (NFMA)

Ms. Monica Garzuglia (FAO) introduced the FAO Approach to the National Forest Monitoring and Assessment (NFMA). She outlined the methodology applied and highlighted the advantages of carrying out this type of assessment to improve national forest information bases with an emphasis on capacity building and improvement of knowledge and information management for national decision making.

(4) ASEAN initiatives on MAR

Mr. Htain Lin (ASEAN Secretariat) presented the ASEAN initiatives for MAR on SFM, introducing the ASEAN Charter, the ASEAN Summit and other initiatives. The Vientiane Action Programme (2004 - 2010) calls for promoting sustainable forest management by harmonising environmental, social and economic policies and development and adoption of common criteria for SFM in ASEAN. Under the ASEAN Summit, ministers’ or senior officers’ meetings are convened to elaborate on ASEAN cooperation for forestry, supported by working groups and networks. Three documents constitute key ASEAN documents for SFM, including “ASEAN C&I for Sustainable Management of Tropical Forests” and “Monitoring, Assessment and Reporting Format for SFM in ASEAN.” The ASEAN C&I cover 7 criteria and 51 indicators, based on the ITTO C&I. Through initial design, field testing and feedback, the online MAR system is currently being developed now. The advantage of the ASEAN C&I is avoidance of extra reporting burdens by its close linkage with international C&I sets and support to national reporting for international processes.

(5) Discussions

Participants and presenters discussed the following matters related to the above presentations:

- Linkage between FRA 2010 and the MAR Project

The linkage between FRA 2010 and the MAR Project was discussed. The MAR Project could support countries to strengthen national data collection and management capacities for reporting

to FRA 2010. FRA 2010 takes into account quantitative data and global core indicators, while the MAR Project would deal with a wider range of data beyond the FRA data. The MAR programme would offer technical support on how to organise data without inconsistencies with other initiatives. Considering that FRA 2010 requires many variables, the MAR Project should play a supporting role in fulfilling the FRA requirement.

- **Data generation process**

Countries may solicit support for data generation at regional and global levels in view of the lack of financial resources. This would not be possible as FRA relies on existing available information provided by the countries and does not aim to generate new information. New data might be collected through NFIs and NFMA, which are crucial for national level decision-making.

- **Streamlining of MAR indicators for SFM**

Discussion was carried out on how to synchronise various themes, indicators and periods of MAR information for SFM. FRA indicators were initially developed to take into account the socioeconomic situation in Europe after the Second World War, where due to the rebuilding after the war destructions, timber availability was a serious concern.

- **MAR activities at ASEAN**

Forest-related ministries are the partners for the forestry group of ASEAN. Ministry-level meetings of ASEAN have already endorsed the MAR guidelines. ASEAN Senior Officials on Forestry (ASOF) and working groups such as the International Forest Policy Processes work on MAR development with ASEAN member countries. For reporting harmonisation, ASEAN was taking initiative to harmonise standards, customs, trade, and protocol, as well as economic, socio-cultural and environmental aspects, as encouraged by the ASEAN Charter. Their first focus was on the economy, followed by socio-cultural and environmental aspects.

6.3. Other international reporting processes on forests

Presentations were made on the reporting schemes of other reporting processes (CBD, UNFF, UNFCCC, ITTO, UNCCD, CITES, and Ramsar) (See **Appendix 4**). Each process sets different objectives and frameworks of reporting as well as specific indicators. While these processes are collecting data on situations and trends in forests and other natural resources, it appears that they lay more emphasis on the outcomes of action programmes initiated under the conventions to improve natural resource conditions. Several processes such as the ITTO, CBD, UNFF, and UNFCCC have coordinated with FRA to streamline reporting schemes and formats.

A participant pointed out a difficulty in rigid and compulsory reporting under CBD and UNFCCC as compared with the voluntary reporting of UNFF. The CBD was also adopting more flexible reporting approaches with more actual information gathering from the countries.

6.4. Terms and definitions of forests

(1) Presentation

Ms. L. Wilkie reviewed terms and definitions of forests, based on the experience of FRA. A number of forest-related definitions are adopted for different purposes and different definitions of forest can be found at both national and international levels (e.g., among FAO, UNFCCC, and UNEP). UNFCCC has, for example, no definite land use criterion. Tree species to be considered in the definition of forest may also vary among the different processes and no set of forest types

is commonly agreed on at the global level. Definitions of forest lands, other land with tree cover, and trees outside forests also need to be harmonised.

Different definitions and classification of forest characteristics/naturalness (primary/undisturbed forests, modified/secondary/degraded/managed forests, and planted forests/forest plantations) are found among the processes. Regarding the Permanent Forest Estate (PFE) defined by ITTO, the issue is whether the deforestation rate should be estimated for all forests or only PFEs. The biodiversity and protected areas are defined by the CBD with IUCN, and utilised by FRA 2010. The issue would also be whether all kinds of protected areas should be included or only areas for the conservation of biodiversity in accordance with IUCN/CBD definitions in reporting. For biomass and carbon, FRA 2010 applies the IPCC definitions, but there are some difficulties in estimating carbon in the soil, due to different thresholds applied by the countries in measuring this variable.

(2) Discussions

The following discussions were made on terms and definitions of forests:

- *Simplification of forest-related terms and definitions*

A participant suggested that FAO simplify terms and definitions to help the harmonisation process. It was clarified that harmonisation would not always lead to a single definition, but that common and comparable definitions and classification should be prepared. What is necessary is to ensure that definitions are compatible among national and international organizations.

- *Variations in national terms and definitions of forests and their integration into FRA 2010*

In Malaysia, there are three types of forests: peat swamp forest, inland forest, and coastal forest. The PFE includes the state land, forest reserves, protection forest and plantation forest by forest conversion, while rubber plantation is considered non-forest tree cover. India regrouped more than 200 forest types into 16 categories. It would be necessary to clarify the area to be included in the permanent forest estate. Another category to be discussed would be land inhabited by tribal groups. Reclassification and redefinition of forest types are required to strengthen a national forest inventory due to rapid changes in forest conditions and consequent modification of the forest policy in Mongolia.

A participant asked about how to integrate different national definitions into FRA 2010 global definitions. Through the process of reclassification, different national definitions could be harmonised and analysed at the global level. The FRA 2010 Global Remote Sensing Survey will also allow comparison of data from different countries and regions, enhancing their comparability.

- *Assessment of PFEs*

It may be difficult to assess PFEs under a decreasing forest cover. What is required in FRA reporting is to report forested areas within the PFEs. Another difficulty related to the PFEs would be the classification of temporarily unstocked land due to silvicultural activities into PFEs or non-PFEs. Forest areas should also include temporarily unstocked lands which are expected to regenerate naturally or artificially.

- *Levels of harmonisation of terms and definitions*

A participant suggested that harmonisation of forest-related definitions and terms at the international level would be essential, although a certain degree of flexibility should be allowed in the harmonisation without going down to the grass-root level. In this regard, a number of expert meetings were held to discuss this particular issue, where a common conclusion was that

national-level harmonisation was equally important. There was also an opinion that harmonisation should be shifted from international level to regional/national levels.

▪ *Harmonisation of forest definitions among different sectors*

Considering various perspectives of forests from different sectors in addition to foresters, there is an urgent need for harmonisation of forest definitions by its functions. It is important to facilitate collaboration among different sectors within the country for the harmonisation. Synergy among international processes is also essential for harmonisation of terms and definitions. Seeing that different people had different perspectives of forests, it may be suggested that forest definitions be kept broad enough to encompass different categories and sub-categories. It is also recommended that people take the initiative to decide on what definitions would be more meaningful for all agencies, paying attention to functions and structure of forests as different parameters.

6.5. Countries' reporting to FRA 2010 and other reporting processes

(1) Summary of countries' reporting to FRA 2010

A. Group presentations on 14 October

Participants made a short presentation on the status of their FRA 2010 country reporting process (see **Appendix 5**), with the aim of sharing experiences with colleagues in the region and highlighting key issues, problems and difficulties. Then the working group sessions focused discussion on the 17 national reporting tables, including the process of identification, selection and documentation of national data and data sources.

Many of the issues identified by the countries were clarified during the working groups and in the individual sessions held on the third and fourth days of the workshop, while the remaining issues were forwarded to the FRA secretariat to be clarified and included in the Frequently Asked Questions on the FRA website.

Participants raised an issue of data availability (missing data or weak data), along with their concern about the reliability of expert estimates. It was suggested that as long as any assumption is clearly explained and supported by local expertise, it is highly preferable to use expert estimates instead of leaving tables blank. The adoption of linear extrapolation in case of old figures may lead to trends in forest area which are not really realistic and it was suggested that the national experts may decide to revise the trend using their knowledge of the real status of forests in their country, since linear extrapolation is a suggested method to obtain forest area estimates but in certain cases cannot be strictly applied.

The issue of new data affecting previous trends in forest area change was discussed, highlighting the need to revise previous estimates in order to reach consistency in the forest cover trend. For certain countries it is necessary to undertake the process of reclassification prior to the process of estimation and forecasting to facilitate the calculations, and it was clarified that the order of the steps involved could be changed as long as all steps were undertaken. Finally, participants were urged to clearly document all the steps of the reporting methodology for the sake of traceability and transparency of the country reports.

B. Individual consultations on 15 October

Individual sessions of 30 minutes were arranged for all those participants seeking further clarifications related to the country reporting process. Many of the issues identified by the

countries were clarified during these sessions while the remaining issues were forwarded to the FRA secretariat to be clarified and included in the Frequently Asked Questions on the FRA website.

(2) Countries' reporting to other international reporting processes

The reporting harmonisation group presented and discussed the status of national reporting to international processes, facilitated by Mr. Cai, Mr. Kashio, Dr. Johnson, and Mr. Otsuka.

A. Country presentations

1. Bangladesh

Mr. A.K.M. Shamsuddin presented reporting activities in Bangladesh. Bangladesh has worked with the UNFF, UNFCCC, CBD, ITTO, UNCCD, Ramsar, CMS, and other processes or organizations related to forest and environment. Three agencies of the Ministry of Environment and Forest (Forest Department, the Department of Environment, and the Forest Research Institute) deal with reporting processes. Bangladesh conducted a National Forest Assessment (NFA) with FAO from 2005 to 2007, improving the quality of data for international processes, particularly regarding the variables of forest area, growing stock, biomass, carbon, biodiversity, forest health, forest products, socio-economic benefits, and institutional aspects.

However, divergence in definitions and formats among various international processes make reporting work difficult in Bangladesh. Land use classifications have not yet been harmonised among various national stakeholders. Furthermore, technical capacities are not adequate for thematic reporting and database management. Harmonisation of definitions and formats among various processes, networking of national stakeholders, capacity building of forestry personnel, and development of infrastructure in the Ministry will be important.

2. Brunei Darussalam

Ms. Hjh. Jamilah Haji Abdul Jalil could not attend the workshop, but she provided background material. Brunei Darussalam is still at an early stage in terms of membership in international processes on forests. The country's participation in the processes is limited to the UNFCCC, CITES, UNFCCC, CBD, and the Tri-lateral Heart of Borneo Initiative (HoB). Brunei Darussalam also ratified the ASEAN Agreement on the Prevention of Trans-boundary Haze in 2002 and participates in the ASEAN Conservation of Nature and Biodiversity Programme through the ASEAN Biodiversity Centre (ABC). The country also made a commitment to pilot-test the ASEAN C&I for SFM to assess its adaptability to local situations and use it as a basis for monitoring countries' progress towards SFM.

Initiatives related to the CBD, UNFF, ASEAN, and HoB are spearheaded by the Forestry Department, while UNFCCC and UNFCCC are handled by the Department of Environment, Parks, and Recreation. CITES is under the Department of Agriculture. Responsible organizations would be changed for the international processes through reorganization of these focal agencies.

Brunei Darussalam faces several challenges on international reporting, such as updating the national forest inventory and forest statistics, improvement of coordination among forestry stakeholders, and increasing the capacity of concerned agencies to harmonise data generation and provision. Strengthening of regional coordination among ASEAN member countries and technical assistance in generating and packaging forest information are required to build up forest MAR in Brunei Darussalam.

3. Cambodia

Mr. Horn Leang introduced the status of forest resources in Cambodia, activities under the initiatives of Clean Development Mechanism (CDM), Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation (REDD), ITTO and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD). He pointed out the difficulties in international reporting due to different formats and definitions among international processes and separate management of different types of data among Cambodian institutions. He also mentioned different forest definitions between FAO and Mekong Basin countries. Technical capacities are still limited for international reporting, including English writing. Very few studies have ever been made on growing stock, carbon stock and forest health. Development of uniform reporting systems at the international level and technical assistance from competent organizations were suggested to improve international reporting in Cambodia.

With regard to responsible agencies for international processes in Cambodia, either the Forestry Administration or the Ministry of Environment works with the UNFCCC, UNCCD, ITTO, and CBD. Inconsistency was pointed out in forest classifications between FAO and the Mekong River Committee supported by GTZ such as the minimum tree cover for forests (20 %) and exclusion of bamboo forests. The sub-regional definitions do not yet comply with global standards.

4. China

Dr. Liu presented the overall activities (national action programs, key projects) and reporting under the UNCCD in China through the establishment of national committees with the State Forestry Administration as a lead organization and 17 related government agencies. China implemented a national desertification monitoring system in 1994, 1999 and 2004. Existing problems in the UNCCD reporting include an ambiguous reporting concept which does not always suit China and limited technical and language capacities. He suggested that the report focus on a country's actual work on desertification control under UNCCD to provide more actual information.

5. DPR Korea

Mr. Chun Kwang Ryu presented the status of forest resources census in the DPR Korea. Landsat imagery is used to collect natural forest information, especially in the less accessible mountainous regions, for formulation of national policies. Resource survey methods are under the process of harmonisation, including wild fire and timber resources. National resources inventories are conducted every ten years. There is collaboration with the Ministry of Lands to obtain forest-related information. The country is prepared to participate in international processes such as the CBD and UNFCCC. The issue is the lack of capacity for forest resources assessment.

6. Indonesia

Mr. Radiansyah explained the qualitative definitions of various types of forests and methodologies of the national forest inventory with satellite imagery (Landsat, MODIS, etc.) by the Ministry of Forestry (MoF) and the Ministry of Environment. Since 2000, the MoF has conducted satellite monitoring every 3 years with 23 classes for harmonisation. Challenges to reporting include the lack of historical data under uniform definitions and carbon stocks – especially for REDD. He suggested harmonisation of global terms for forest definitions by main forest functions that are widely acknowledged by forest owners for consistent reporting.

7. Malaysia

Mr. Yusoff bin Muda presented the overall international reporting system of Malaysia, addressing forest monitoring using FAO definitions of forests and multi-sectoral institutional linkages. Reporting work is spearheaded by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment as a land management authority under the support of the Forestry Department for the UNFF, CBD, CITES,

Ramsar, the Forest Research Institute of Malaysia for the UNFCCC, Ramsar, and the Department of Wildlife & National Park for CITES and Ramsar.

Participants discussed regional cooperation for effective monitoring and reporting of illegal logging and forest fires and possible international agreements to solve these problems. ASEAN is supporting a regional agreement on transboundary haze control. The FLEGT (Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade) programmes also facilitate bilateral agreements to control illegal logging. Sub-regional agreements could also be recommended for continental and insular countries with reporting obligations. Websites could be utilised to capture hot spots and updated information on fires as well as illegal logging and trade.

8. Myanmar

Mr. Than reviewed the strengths and weaknesses of MAR activities, including ample experience in FRA and other reporting processes but weak capacities for inventory and database technologies. The Ministry of Forestry, National Commission for Environment Affairs and other organizations share responsibilities for reporting to FRA 2010, UNFF, CBD, UNFCCC, UNCCD, ITTO, CITES, and ASEAN. He underlined an urgent need for research and improvement of thematic reporting elements to be better incorporated into the NFI. He pointed out issues on reporting such as harmonisation of reporting categories, harmonisation of reporting techniques among national stakeholders, and increase of technical capacities. He suggested direct reporting harmonisation among international processes and formation of a national steering committee and working groups at the national level for better data generation and reporting.

He also underlined a need for combination of FRA and MAR for consolidated analysis and facilitating harmonisation. The national MAR centre could be suggested to facilitate FRA reporting and initiate studies and analyses on MAR. On the other hand, he was concerned about the capacities of regional organizations such as ICIMOD for data provision.

9. Nepal

Mr. Sahas Man Shrestha (Nepal) presented the status of international reporting in Nepal. The Ministry of Forests and Soil Conservation is the focal point for FRA 2010, Ramsar, CITES, CBD, ITTO INBAR and IUFRO, and the Ministry of Population and Environment is the focal point for UNFCCC. Issues about reporting include a lack of coordination among national focal points and concerned agencies, the absence of experts designated to take care of reporting, the lack of reporting review systems, and insufficient budget for reporting. He wanted to see the resolution of these problems for better reporting.

10. Pakistan

Mr. Abdul Munaf Qaimkhani presented the status of international reporting and MAR activities in Pakistan, including the development of a national network of stakeholders for harmonisation of MAR. Pakistan participates in various international processes, including FRA 2010, CBD, UNCCD, UNFF, and UNFCCC. Provincial forest departments are mandated to perform monitoring, assessment and reporting on forests, but they still lack the capacity to assess and monitor forest resources under a harmonised international system. In view of the current problems in Pakistan, he suggested improvements in international reporting such as facilitation in standardisation and harmonisation of MAR with fixed national definitions for coherent action, strengthening of satellite monitoring with harmonised classification schemes, as well as increasing foresters' capacities for field surveys, empowerment of a national network for authentication of forest information and metadata for dissemination, and establishment of a central forest information centre to coordinate MAR activities and serve as a hub for all data on forests.

11. Philippines

Mr. Jose Callanta Cabanayan clarified the efforts of the Philippines for harmonisation of MAR. In the past, confusion existed over terms and definitions at national and international levels. A series of meetings and workshops were held with experts on forest-related terms and definitions of forest cover, resource conditions, and products or services in technical working groups (TWG). The TWG proceeded to iterative processes using criteria which adopted terms and definitions with a priority on existing local laws and policies and international laws applied in local settings. Commonly used terms were included and highly technical terms were excluded. In collaboration with international organizations, the “Philippine Official Reference for Forest-Related Terms and Definitions” was published in 2006.

12. Thailand

Dr. Sirikul Bunpapong explained the overall process of CBD reporting in Thailand, which is undertaken by the Office of Natural Resources and Environmental Policy and Planning (ONEP). Steps in preparing a national report include: (i) updating the former biodiversity status report which was a part of the annual environmental status report; (ii) collecting updated information and data from the national clearinghouse mechanism and other documents; (iii) discussing with biodiversity scientists and managers to make a peer review of the draft biodiversity status report; (iv) collating information from news clipping files; (v) selecting current Ministerial orders and Cabinet decisions on biodiversity issues; and (vi) drafting texts on biodiversity trends and threats. The country still faces difficulties in reporting due to the lack of harmonisation of reporting categories and data, as well as limited technical capacities. Dr. Sirikul suggested improvement of these issues at international and national levels.

13. Timor-Leste

Mr. Luis Godinho presented the status of the national action plan and reporting under the UNCCD, developed mainly by the Division of Reforestation and Forest Rehabilitation of the Directorate of Forestry (NDF) within the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries. The country faces obstacles such as lack of key agencies’ participation and lack of human resources.

Mr. Godinho clarified that special use of forests is defined as the natural forest area for national parks and nature reserves. It was suggested that training of decision makers be required on terms and definitions of forests for easier adoption in the Cabinet. Mr. Godinho explained that Timor Leste was applying the strategy and policy of FAO on forests, bringing together decision makers and technical officers with private organizations for joint discussions. Technical group consultations were held on terms and definitions with policy endorsements. Nevertheless, there are differences in forest definitions and categories among stakeholders.

14. Vietnam

Dr. Ty Xuan Hoang introduced forest inventory and country reporting methods and their difficulties in Vietnam. Reporting work is carried out by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, and the National Statistic General Department, supported by the Forest Inventory and Planning Institute, Forest Protection Department and Province Statistic Department. He pointed out difficulties in reporting such as: (i) discrepancies in identification and classification of some forest types using various international standards (e.g. savannah); (ii) variations in forest data resulting from divergent definitions and classifications of forests; and (iii) technical difficulties in forest inventory surveys and forest resources assessment, and above all in categorizing and mapping of jungles by interpreting satellite image and assessing growing stock of natural dense forests. He suggested solutions such as capacity building of related staff, harmonisation of national forest classification systems, and development of guidelines for forest inventories and forest resources assessments

for the country and development of an international framework on forest inventory and assessment.

He also stressed a need for harmonisation of forest categories, including for bamboo in line with INBAR definitions. In Vietnam, the term “special use of forest” is used for national parks, natural zones, historical areas, and cultural areas, not including critical watersheds.

B. Discussions

Participants discussed how to report on deforestation and reforestation by collecting data from the national government, NGOs and individuals. In Pakistan, for example, deforestation assessments were conducted using remote sensing, but they took into account different types of forests, including plantations. Assessment of deforestation is particularly difficult on private forest land, other wooded land, and reforested land. Pakistan still faces divergent categories of protected areas among international organizations, and requested their harmonisation. Harmonisation of national definitions would be initiated through the national network of stakeholders established through the MAR project in Pakistan.

Data are produced annually in the Philippines, but deforestation on the wooded land could not be estimated as it was not included in the past. It is necessary to carefully define the terms of deforestation, while deciding whether tree regrowth is regarded as forests and whether there are any policy to specify land areas and the percentage of tree cover for forest areas. Participants discussed crucial issues of estimation of deforestation, including treatment of forestland where there are temporarily no trees growing, minimum tree cover in forest definitions, etc. There was a suggestion that more than 25% of the tree cover should be considered as forest as a whole, though the percentage would vary among countries.

There would be a need for guidelines on protected areas with classification of forest biodiversity. National-level indicators would depend on the needs and requirements of the countries, and reporting data should be authentic in accordance with national guidelines.

Mr. Otsuka raised the issues of strengthening of national-level reporting, covering terms and definitions, information sharing among government agencies and regional cooperation, linkages between data providers and reporters, and institutional capacities. For better harmonisation of data, it would be better to use the terms and definitions of forests developed by FAO and UNEP. Participants suggested that FAO inform high-level planners and decision makers about its standards through officers at FAO Headquarters and its country representations to better orient national decision making. Consultations will begin with technical officers and then involve decision makers in the countries. It was also remarked that classifications should ideally be the same among countries, though they were less consistent with international organizations. It was argued that data harmonisation would need to be facilitated at the international level first.

6.6. Group discussions on thematic issues for harmonisation of international reporting

Group discussions focused on thematic issues of international reporting in the following eight criteria:

(1) Group A

Group A discussed thematic issues for international reporting, such as the extent and condition of forests, forest health and vitality, biological diversity and its conservation, and soil and water/protection or protective functions of forests, facilitated by Mr. Cai, Mr. Kashio, and Mr. Otsuka.

A. Extent and condition of forests

Each international process sets different parameters to assess the extent and conditions of forests with specific definitions. Issues on this thematic subject would be the need for a consolidated data set for all processes, harmonisation of classifications and definitions of forests, accurate definition and assessment of deforestation, reforestation, afforestation and degradation, as well as forest cover change over time using appropriate data sources.

Participants discussed critical variables related to the forest extent and conditions, i.e. total forest areas, other tree cover, forest area change, permanent forest estate, and connectivity and fragmentation. Countries still face difficulties in the assessment of these variables due to ambiguous definitions, lack of updated data and assessment techniques, limited government jurisdiction for assessment (no data for private land, and trees outside forests, etc.), and incomplete forest demarcation. The participants suggested technical and financial assistance from international organizations, cooperation among countries to share updated satellite data, and international cooperation to elaborate common methodologies.

B. Forest health/vitality

International processes set the area, number and nature of forest disturbance and encroachment as well as ecological soundness from their aspects. Overall issues would be the definition of forest health and degradation by natural and anthropogenic factors, identification of agents of deforestation and forest degradation, and assessment techniques with historical records.

Variables discussed were:

- Extent and nature of forest encroachment and degradation due to human causes;
- Extent and nature of forest degradation and disturbance due to natural causes;
- Forest areas disturbed by other agents (besides fire);
- Nitrogen deposition; and
- Ecological footprint.

Countries' capacities are still limited for these variables due to the shortage in scientific evidence on forest degradation and difficulties in distinguishing the various agents of forest degradation owing to the lack of proper and regular tracking or reporting systems. They still need more information and technical knowledge for nitrogen deposition and the ecological footprint. The participants suggested guidelines for assessment of forest conditions, strengthening of satellite monitoring, sharing of information on assessment processes among countries, and case studies.

C. Biological diversity and its conservation

International processes set overall and specific parameters for the assessment of biodiversity and its conservation. The CBD assesses the biodiversity status and conservation measures in national strategies and programmes, specifying 22 biodiversity indicators in 7 focal areas. Overall issues raised were as follows: (i) availability of quantitative data for ecosystems, species and genetics; (ii) information on biodiversity conservation in non-protected areas; and (iii) threat assessment and evaluation of conservation efforts and strategies. Appropriate methodologies would need to be elaborated for comprehensive biodiversity inventory.

Participants focused on the following variables in their discussions:

- Area of forest designated for biodiversity conservation;
- Forest area within protected areas;
- Number of endangered species by type;
- Assessment of effectiveness of existing protected forest areas; and
- Main threats to important biodiversity components.

They pointed out the problems in assessing these variables, including: lack of guidance or tools; poor coordination among different government agencies; different criteria for categorisation of protected areas; difficulty in designation of areas for biodiversity conservation due to multiple functions of forests; lack of information on land use and its change; insufficient synergies among information systems and databases; inconsistent international criteria for endangerment assessment; difficulty in comprehensive assessment; difficulty in identifying different impacts; and limited survey capacities.

The participants suggested providing clear reporting guidelines, coordination among different sectors, strengthening of capacity building for these variables, international cooperation for harmonisation of categories, and case studies.

D. Soil and water protection/protective functions of forests

Several international processes determine the variables for protection of soils and water as well as wetland areas. General issues would be identification of water catchment areas, criteria for forest to protect soils and water (e.g., slope, soils, rainfall, vegetation, etc.), and effectiveness of soil and water conservation techniques.

Participants took up the following variables for discussion:

- Inventory/integrated management of shared wetlands, hydrological basins, and species;
- Integration of policies on conservation and wise use of wetlands;
- Procedures to protect soil productivity and water retention capacity within production forests;
- Regional and sub-regional action programmes; and
- Recognition of the significance of wetlands.

Countries face shortages in inventory and data, parallel administration in reporting on wetlands without coordination at national and regional levels, weak scientific evidence and deficiency in research on forest soils and water dynamics, difficulties in assessment of hydrological impacts of forest protection, and poor understanding of wetlands terminologies among stakeholders. The participants suggested the establishment of regular monitoring systems, improved coordination among different agencies for various data, enhancement of cooperation among countries to exchange experience, strengthening of studies or research at national and regional levels for data collection, and training of managers.

(2) Group B

Group B discussed growing stock, biomass, and carbon (forest and climate change), productive functions of forests, social, economic and cultural benefits of forests, and legal, policy and institutional aspects of forest management, facilitated by Dr. Johnson and Ms. Wilkie.

A. Growing stock, biomass, and carbon (forest and climate change)

FRA, ITTO, and UNFCCC request reporting on this subject, while drawing on updated IPCC methodologies. General issues are national capacities for country-specific data collection, assessment of the carbon market, accommodation of reporting formats on deforestation and forest degradation, analysis of uncertainties, and consistency in assessment periods.

Participants discussed the crucial variables (forest areas/types, forest conversion rate, growing stock/biomass, annual harvesting, and annual biomass growth). Carbon sequestration is influenced by various factors such as species, growth rate, crown density/size, deforestation rate, and level of forest degradation. They pointed out divergent forest definitions among FAO and UNFCCC as well as incomplete assessment of forest area change. Countries still face difficulties in estimation of the biomass expansion factor, different growing stock reports due to diameter thresholds, difficulty in estimation of non-commercial species and growing stock changes, and limited information on litter, dead-wood, and below-ground biomass. There is no global agreement on forest types, which is essential for carbon assessment. The participants recommended more research on forest soil carbon and wood products as well as measurement of carbon on other wooded land and trees outside forests. Different national forest classifications should be harmonised internationally for consistent carbon assessment.

B. Productive functions of forests

Participants identified the following data sets which would be crucial to assess productive functions of forests:

- Area of production forests (planted and natural) for wood supply;
- Area exploited and available area for wood supply;
- Growing stock of key species and volume of removals;
- Classes of round wood and wood fuel;
- Quantity and value of NWFPs;
- Above- or below-bark volume;
- Data related to SFM and its certification; and
- Legal or illegal removals.

Participants raised the following issues to be considered for data generation and reporting:

- Value of removed industrial wood which depends on markets;
- Valuation of non-traded wood-fuel / NWFPs;
- Conversion of local currency into dollars;
- Regional difference in species importance;
- Value points on forest land, stumpage prices, and royalty;
- Data accuracy and reliability on wood fuel and NWFPs;
- Estimation of unrecorded removals;
- Identification of species for productive functions.

They recommended technical assistance to improve national capacities for better understanding of these variables and enhancement of data collection.

C. Social, economic and cultural benefits of forests

Difficult variables related to social benefits of forests included livelihoods, information on poverty alleviation, indigenous knowledge of community involvement, and ownership of land and trees under unclear definition and classification of tenure. In economic benefits, variables difficult to assess included: (i) environmental service values (e.g., water, biodiversity, carbon, eco-tourism, etc.); (ii) employment opportunity for traditional forest users and for new services (e.g., nursery raising, logging, etc.); and (iii) traditional economic rights (e.g., grazing, collection

of fuel-wood, NWFPs, etc.) of indigenous people. Participants mentioned that international processes do not cover cultural benefits of forests sufficiently. They recommended broadening of reporting items on social, economic and cultural benefits of forests with an emphasis on a wider range of cultural aspects. They also requested FRA 2010 focal points to make special efforts to give a true picture of these aspects in the relevant tables.

D. Legal, policy and institutional aspects of forest management

Participants discussed a variety of crucial variables for legal, policy and institutional aspects, including various acts, certification, law enforcement, indigenous rights, planning and policy guidelines, national action plans or national forest programmes (NFPs), financial/human resources, decentralisation, research and education, stakeholder participation, and communications. Difficulties in these variables included; poor coordination among different institutions for data collection; limitations in quantification; limited staff capacities and financing; unclear impacts of various programmes on forests; unclear quality of laws and programmes; and the difficulty in measuring effects of good governance. Participants suggested a need to prioritise topics and variables as well as improved transparency and accessibility of information.

6.7. Discussions on harmonisation of international reporting systems and formats

Presentations and discussions were made on current efforts for reporting harmonisation at various levels.

(1) Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF)

Ms. Wilkie briefly presented the activities of the CPF Task Force on Streamlining Forest-related Reporting. The CPF was established with 14 international organizations in 2001 to promote the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forest and strengthen long-term political commitments to this end. The CPF Task Force was established by ITTO, CBD, UNCCD, UNFCCC, UNEP-WCMC, and FAO in 2002 to propose ways to reduce forest-related reporting burdens by streamlining reporting requests, synchronizing reporting cycles, and facilitating the accessibility and flows of existing information. The Task Force undertook tasks to identify gaps and overlaps in current national reporting, compare reporting requirements of various international processes, and propose practical approaches to reporting harmonisation by countries including capacity building. Through meetings, a joint information framework (JIF) was developed to further improve access to forest-related information, ensuring increased coordination of reporting among different focal points and CPF member organizations, increased access to national reports with the CPF Reporting Portal, and organization of information according to seven thematic elements. The JIF were recommended to provide more analytical, comprehensive, reader-friendly synthesis for better use of information.

(2) UNEP-WCMC

Mr. Otsuka provided the current efforts of UNEP-WCMC for reporting harmonisation on their behalf by courtesy of Mr. Peter Herkenrath, Senior Programme Officer, CBD. UNEP-WCMC collaborated with the CPF on streamlining forest-related reporting. UNEP-WCMC identified obstacles to reporting harmonisation at the global level such as the lack of cooperation among multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs), divergent reporting cycles (1-6 years), inadequate identification of the exact information needs of MEAs with overlapping of their reporting items, different terminologies and taxonomies among MEAs, contradiction between information sharing and its confidentiality,

inconsistency among MEAs on changing strategies, and unclear initiatives for reporting harmonisation. Obstacles to harmonisation at the national level include scattered information throughout different organizations due to the lack of central mechanisms or national databases, poor coordination among national focal points and institutions, limited capacities to address issues of data and information management through coordination among stakeholders, and information barriers among line ministries and agencies.

UNEP-WCMC made efforts to clarify particular information needs for MEAs, facilitate agreements among them on reporting responsibilities, and develop joint information management systems at low costs for easier access (Human Rights Treaty System (HRTS) and the CPF Portal Site). Improvements were also made at the national level, including coordination among MEA focal points, collaboration among national data-collecting institutions, strengthening of linkages between support for reporting and implementation to stimulate reporting harmonisation, and facilitation in regular information provision for different reporting cycles of various MEAs. The UNEP-WCMC developed several modes of reporting harmonisation at both international and national levels. Suggestions were made for further reporting harmonisation, such as the utilisation of outcomes of the UNEP Knowledge Management Project, joint thematic reporting among MEAs for better consistency, organization of technical working groups on national biodiversity reporting, inputs from Asian countries on biodiversity reporting experience, and additional guidance for Parties on harmonised data and information management.

(3) CBD

Mr. Cai reported the efforts of CBD for reporting harmonisation with other conventions. The CBD established a task force to address forest-related reporting and conducted studies on possible common areas of reporting between CBD and the Ramsar Convention. The CBD is also initiating collaboration with UNCCD, UNFCCC and other related conventions on possible areas of joint reporting. The first group of pilot projects were implemented in four countries, and their findings were presented at the workshops in London in 2000 and in Belgium in 2005. The second group of similar projects will be implemented in six countries under GEF funds. The recent meetings of the Liaison Group dealt with relevant issues and provided some proposals. The Task Force held several meetings in recent years and analysed the opportunities and obstacles for streamlining of reporting and establishment of the JIF of the CPF and created an expert consultation mechanism to obtain feedback. Harmonisation work would enhance sharing of common areas of work and common needs for capacity building in information collection, processing and reporting at the international level as well as empowerment of a single government agency serving as national focal point for several related conventions and increasing synergies in the implementation of related conventions at the national level.

Meanwhile, obstacles to harmonisation are the different information needs, different reporting cycles, and different priorities and visions identified by the respective decision-making bodies at the international level. Other problems include different departments covering different conventions, scattered information or data, low-level awareness of synergies for related conventions, and lack of processes to involve relevant stakeholders at the national level. Mr. Cai suggested some better ways of harmonisation, including the following:

- National-level cooperation should be increased through development of common information systems or databases.
- The government should recognise that reporting is not just writing a report, but that through reviewing and reporting they could identify gaps, plan further actions, mobilise public actions and increase synergies.
- Capacity building at national and local levels is always a priority for national and international reporting.

- At the international level, a sustained and effectively coordinated mechanism is needed to work on harmonisation.
- A thematic approach may be useful in the initial work of harmonisation, but a holistic approach is needed for long-term work.

(4) FAO

Ms. Wilkie introduced reporting harmonisation efforts in recent FAO activities. FAO facilitated harmonisation of forest definitions under the FRA process through the Kotka consultations and three expert meetings. Forthcoming meetings will address reporting on forest degradation. Under the Joint Forest Sector Questionnaire (JFSQ), FAO, UNECE, EUROSTAT and ITTO jointly streamlined data on forest/wood products (production, consumption and trade) with add-on tables and separate reports. FAO also participated in nine eco-regional C&I processes with two global meetings to harmonise them. Through these processes, FAO has facilitated harmonisation of reporting formats with the CBD, UNFF, UNFCCC, and ITTO. FAO will continue harmonisation efforts through developing a strategy for FRA 2010; increasing the frequency of updating information on key variables to address issues of different reporting schedules; improving interactive databases and evaluating the feasibility of on-line reporting; and exploring the possibility of JFSQ-type agreements with ITTO, MCPFE and other interested processes.

(5) ASEAN C&I format

Mr. Lin presented the development of an online reporting system for the ASEAN C&I using 7 criteria and 51 indicators. The focal points of ASEAN will manage data entry in the ASEAN online format. After the system is test-run by focal points at different levels, database software will be circulated for stand alone test-run and compilation across FMU levels. It is expected that the online MAR system will be fully operational soon. The outcomes of MAR will be reported at the ASEAN Senior Officials in Forestry Meetings every year. After selecting the reporting year and giving the username and password, a user can log into the ASEAN MAR - CHM, comprising terms and definitions and indicator sets in 7 criteria. There are sections of selected indicators for one country, one indicator for selected countries, and country data reports. Data and maps can be uploaded and updated.

(6) Malaysia C&I

Dr. Yasin presented the Malaysian C&I (MC&I) for timber certificate schemes in Peninsular Malaysia, Sabah and Sarawak, introducing forest/tree cover, timber production, and a timber certification scheme. Nine principles were identified in the MC&I, including law compliance, user rights, benefits, environmental impacts, conservation, management plans, and monitoring/assessment. Under these principles, 47 criteria and 96 indicators were determined. The MC&I of 2002 entails more criteria and indicators with greater emphasis on social and environmental aspects. The considerable progress made in the implementation of the MC&I has contributed to an increase in direct benefits to timber-based exporters with green premiums and enhanced Malaysia's commitments to the SFM.

(7) Discussions

Regarding preparation of the ASEAN MAR format and its linkage with FRA 2010, it has been revised in consideration of regional initiatives in addition to the C&I of ITTO in 2005 and being finalised though a pre-test. The format uses C&I framework at the regional, national and FMU levels, while they will provide significant data to FRA 2010. It would be good to create an international task force for coordination among national and international organizations to

accelerate reporting harmonisation by countries, building on the experience of the CPF. A practical handbook will need to be prepared for national reporting.

6.8. Discussions on next steps for harmonisation of international reporting processes

The workshop focused on next steps for harmonisation of reporting.

(1) Presentation

Mr. Otsuka presented the next steps of activities for harmonisation of national reporting to international processes at both national and international levels in various cycles and topics. He suggested the following national-level activities:

- Review of international reporting needs and coordination among related national agencies;
- Coordination with data provider (organizations, individuals);
- Invitation of stakeholders for joint consultations on data harmonisation;
- Assessment of financial and technical capacities for reporting;
- Capacity building of reporting officers; and
- Collaboration and negotiation with international organizations for optimal reporting.

He also recommended the creation of a national committee from related national agencies and elaboration of a common international format through coordination among international processes as well as national governments in countries under the JIF with the CPF. He advised participants to develop common national formats with selected C&I sets by showing them some examples.

(2) Discussions

The participants highlighted issues for future reporting harmonisation. The suggested national committee could facilitate reporting harmonisation at the national level, contributing to the FRA process, but the question would be how to initiate this process in the countries. It would be essential to expedite the functioning of national steering committees as decision making bodies and centralised database coordination units with regional agencies. Regular assessment of knowledge gaps would also be recommended between one study and another. Centralised forest surveys are organised every two years in India, for example, involving planners and policy makers. It is also important to share information among countries as to how to harmonise political processes among national agencies. In this regard, education programmes for agency staff and formulation of a realistic strategies and action plans could be proposed for harmonisation for the long- and short-terms.

Satellite data from FAO could be incorporated into national planning processes for more objective discussions among national focal points of CBD, UNFCCC and UNFF. Meanwhile, communications with internet connectivity would be a critical problem to receive updated satellite imagery in developing countries. Regional-level collaboration under the MAR Project would also be a possibility for information sharing. National action plans would require political support from decision makers.

Considering that reporting frequencies would significantly determine reporting methodologies, harmonisation of the frequencies is also important. National terms and definitions should be maintained for each reporting period as much as possible, while aggregated into global definitions. Synchronisation of international reporting is a challenging task. International organizations are inclined to emphasise the harmonisation of technical aspects of reporting rather

than its organizational aspects such as frequency. There was a suggestion for preparing one single report by consolidating individual reporting processes, though it may not be easy to realize. On the other hand, communications among national focal points of different international processes should be strengthened for harmonisation of reporting in their countries.

Facilitated by Ms. Wilkie, participants synthesised discussions for harmonisation of forest-related reporting at the national and international levels.

a. National-level

- Countries should share information on reporting after this meeting. Political support should be sought from decision makers for reporting harmonisation along with action plans and political commitments.
- National committees should be established for structural reporting harmonisation. Communications should also be enhanced among countries for information sharing.
- National consensuses must be achieved on terms, definitions and methodologies for harmonisation of international reporting with suitable technology development, including the frequency of assessment and agreements to use specific data sets

b. International level

- International organizations should ensure continued involvement of national focal points through discussion fora to share their experiences. Letters of support should be prepared for continued commitments for reporting harmonisation with technical evaluation
- The CPF task force should develop a road map for quick reporting harmonisation regarding when and how it can be achieved by adopting flexible definitions and providing joint guidelines. The CPF should also enhance harmonisation of reporting cycles
- International organizations should organise capacity-building programmes with national focal points.

The workshop concluded with closing remarks by Ms. Wilkie, Mr. Otsuka, Dr. Yasin, and Mr. Pandey.

7. Conclusions and Recommendations

The key issues on major indicators discussed during the workshop suggest the necessity for substantive efforts to collate forest-related information with various organizations at the national level. The conclusions and recommendations are as follows:

- Participants acknowledged international and regional organizations' efforts for streamlining and harmonizing international reporting. They suggested that international processes should develop guidelines for translating various national definitions into common international definitions, while maintaining existing national definitions as much as possible to avoid confusion and minimise reporting burdens.
- Participants identified the need for technical and financial assistance from international organizations for clarification of methodologies, improved collection and management of field data, and supply and interpretation of remote sensing data together with national forest inventories and harmonised database systems.
- Participants suggested institutional strengthening for coordinated data collection and reporting as well as regional cooperation among countries to improve national capacities for forest-related reporting. They welcomed the development of a regional data management mechanism to facilitate effective and efficient reporting. Dissemination and sharing of forest-related information should be facilitated, using websites, electronic networks, and other tools.

- Many countries have made substantial progress in reporting to FRA 2010. However, they still face difficulties in advanced forest-related reporting for some thematic subjects, including biodiversity and carbon, requiring capacity building of national staff.
- Development of a joint information framework and a common format will be beneficial to countries for consistent reporting, whereas technical assistance will have to be strengthened for their application in Asian countries.

Strengthening of coordination among national agencies and other stakeholders should be enhanced to promote national-level harmonisation of forest-related reporting. Positive partnerships between FAO and other international organizations should be maintained to ensure optimal harmonisation of international reporting processes.

Acknowledgements

FAO would like to express sincere gratitude to the Government of Malaysia (Forestry Department of Malaysia), CBD, ITTO, ASEAN, UNEP-WCMC, CITES, and other international organizations for their technical and administrative support during the workshop in Kuala Lumpur.

Appendix 1 - Agenda of the workshop



Regional Workshop on Strengthening of Harmonisation of National Reporting to FRA 2010 and Other International Processes on Forests in Asia

Organised by:

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)
under:

Global Forest Resources Assessment (FRA) 2010
Strengthening Monitoring, Assessment, and Reporting (MAR)
on Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) in Asia (GCP/INT/988/JPN)



Vistana Hotel, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
13 - 16 October 2008

Hosted by:

Forestry Department

Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, Government of Malaysia

In collaboration with international organizations:

Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)

International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO)

Association of the Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)



DAY 1 (13 October) (plenary session)

08:00 - 09:00 Registration

Opening session (09:00 - 09:40) (Conference room)

09:00 - 09:10 Welcome address by FAO (Mette Løyche Wilkie)

09:10 - 09:20 Opening address by the Forestry Department of Malaysia (Dato' Razani Bin Ujang)

09:20 - 09:40 Introductions of participants

09:40 - 09:50 *Group photo*

09:50 - 10:20 *Refreshments (coffee/tea break)*

Session 1 Introductory session (10:20 - 12:00)

10:20 - 10:30 Introduction to the workshop (FAO)

10:30 - 10:45 Global Forest Resources Assessment 2010 (FAO)

10:45 - 11:00 Project: Strengthening Monitoring, Assessment and Reporting on Sustainable Forest Management in Asia (FAO)

11:00 - 11:15 National Forest Monitoring and Assessment (FAO)

11:15 - 11:30 Efforts for improvement of regional forest reporting (ASEAN)

11:30 - 12:00 Questions and discussions

12:00 - 13:30 *Lunch*

Session 2 Current international reporting processes on forests (13:30 - 17:00)

13:30 - 13:45 CBD

13:45 - 14:00 UNFCCC

14:00 - 14:15 UNFF

14:15 - 14:30 ITTO

14:30 - 14:45 Other reporting processes (UNCCD, CITES, Ramsar)

14:45 - 15:15 Questions and discussion

15:15 - 15:30 *Refreshments*

15:30 - 17:00 Discussion on terms, definitions and classifications of forests (Plenary session)

19:00 - Welcome dinner

DAY 2 (14 October) (Plenary session)

A. FRA 2010 group

Session 3 Review of national reporting to FRA 2010 (08:30 - 17:00) (2 groups)

Group A (12 countries: Bangladesh, China, DPR Korea, Bhutan, India, Iran, Maldives, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka)

Group B (11 countries: Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Singapore, Thailand, Timor Leste, Vietnam)

Session 3a. Status of country reporting

08:30 - 10:30 Country presentations on the status of the country reporting

10:30 - 10:45 *Refreshments*

10:45 - 12:00 Country presentations on the status of their country reporting (continued)

12:00 - 13:00 *Lunch*

Session 3b. Review of FRA 2010 Country Reports

13:00 - 15:00 Tables 1 - 9

15:00 - 15:15 *Refreshments*

15:15 - 17:00 Tables 10 - 17

B. Reporting harmonisation group

Session 3 Status of countries' reporting to other international processes (08:30 - 17:00)

08:30 - 08:45 Bangladesh

08:45 - 09:00 Brunei Darussalam

09:00 - 09:15 Cambodia

09:15 - 09:30 China

09:30 - 09:45 DPR Korea

09:45 - 10:15 Discussions

10:15 - 10:30 *Refreshments*

10:30 - 10:45 Indonesia
10:45 - 11:00 Lao PDR
11:00 - 11:15 Malaysia
11:15 - 11:30 Myanmar
11:30 - 11:45 Nepal
11:45 - 12:15 Discussions

12:15 - 13:30 *Lunch*

13:30 - 13:45 Pakistan
13:45 - 14:00 Philippines
14:00 - 14:15 Thailand
14:15 - 14:30 Timor Leste
14:30 - 14:45 Vietnam
14:45 - 15:15 Discussions

15:15 - 15:45 *Refreshments*

15:45 - 17:00 Discussions among participants: synthesis

- Review of achievements and challenges
- Comparison of reporting processes among countries
- Collaboration among countries

DAY 3 (15 October) (*group sessions*)

Individual consultations with FAO staff on FRA reporting (30 minutes each) (for FRA group)

(Participants of the FRA workshop can participate in the following session except during the above consultations with FAO staff.)

Session 4 Discussions on thematic issues on harmonisation of international reporting (08:30 - 17:00) (Group discussions):

Group 4A Topics to be covered:

- Extent and condition of forests
- Forest health and vitality
- Forest biological diversity and its conservation
- Soil and water protection/protective functions of forests

Group 4B Topics to be covered:

- Growing stock, biomass, and carbon (forests and climate change)
- Forest production/productive functions of forests
- Social, economic, and cultural benefits of forests
- Legal, policy, and institutional aspects of forest management

08:30 - 09:00 Introduction to group discussions and group organization

09:00 - 10:30 Group discussions (Groups 4A and 4B)

10:30 - 11:00 *Refreshments*

11:00 - 13:00 Group discussions continued

13:00 - 14:00 *Lunch*

14:00 - 18:00 Excursion
Putra Jaya government complex and surrounding areas (supermarket)

19:45 - Welcome dinner

DAY 4 (16 October) (*group/plenary sessions*)

Session 4 Discussion on thematic issues on harmonisation of international reporting (08:30 -12:00)

08:30 - 11:00 Group discussions continued (*with refreshments*)

11:00 - 11:30 Presentation on group discussions (*plenary session*)

11:00 – 11:15 Group 4A

11:15 – 11:30 Group 4B

11:30 – 12:00 Discussions

12:00 – 13:00 *Lunch*

Session 5 Discussions on harmonisation of international reporting systems and formats in the Asian region (13:00 - 15:00)

13:00 - 14:00 Presentations

13:00 - 13:10 CPF Task Force on Streamlining Forest-related Reporting

13:10 - 13:20 UNEP-WCMC

13:20 - 13:30 CBD

13:30 - 13:40 FAO

13:40 - 13:50 ASEAN C&I format

13:50 - 14:00 Malaysia C&I

14:00 - 15:00 Discussion on harmonisation of international reporting on forests in Asian countries

- Possibilities for development of harmonised reporting systems
- Suggestions for how to further harmonise reporting formats
- Countries' roles in harmonisation of reporting

15:00 - 15:15 *Refreshments*

Session 6 Discussions on next steps for harmonisation of international reporting processes (15:15 – 16:45)

15:15 - 16:15 Discussions on next steps of activities

- Suggested activities
- Collaboration among countries and with international organizations
- Capacity building

16:15 - 16:45 Conclusions/recommendations

Closing session (16:45 - 17:00)

16:45 - 17:00 Closing remarks

- FAO (Mette L. Wilkie, Masahiro Otsuka)
- Forestry Department of Malaysia (Mohd Hizamri bin Mohd Yasin)
- Representative of the participants (Devendra Pandey)

Appendix 2 - List of Participants

NAME LIST OF REGIONAL ON STRENGTHENING OF HARMONISATION REPORTING TO FRA 2010 AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL PROCESSES ON FOREST IN ASIA

No	Name	Position	Organization	Address	Country	Tel No.	Fax No.	Email	Group
1	Mr. Dun Michael Geoffrey	Scientist	Bureau of Rural Sciences	Daff.Gpo.Box 858, Canberra Act 2601	Australia	Office: +61-2-62723882	+61-0422637153	Geoffrey.Dunn@affa.gov.au	FRA
2	Mr. A.K.M. Shamsuddin	Chief Conservation of Forests	Bangladesh Forest Department	Bana Bhaban, Piot #E-8 B-2 Agargaon, Dhaka-1207	Bangladesh	Office: +88-02-8118671 Mobile: +88-017152989675	+88-02-8119453	ccf-fd@forestry.gov.bd	FRA/MAR
3	Ms. Dimple Thapa	Forestry Officer	Forest Resources Development Division, Department of Forestry, Ministry of Agriculture	P.O. Box 751, Thimphu	Bhutan	Office: +975-02-327723	+975-02-322560	dimple@mao.gov.bt	FRA
4	Mr. Pak Chealy	Deputy Chief of Watershed Management and Forestland Office	Forestry Administration Cambodia	#40 Preah Norodom Blvd, Penh District 12205, Phnom Penh	Cambodia	Office: +855-23-214614	+855-12885547	pak_chealy@yahoo.com	FRA
5	Mr. Horn Leang	Staff of Watershed Management and Forestland Office	Forestry Administration Cambodia	#40 Preah Norodom Blvd, Penh District 12205, Phnom Penh	Cambodia	Office: +855-23-214614 Mobile: +855-12674478	+855-23-214614	leanghorn_x@yahoo.com	MAR
6	Mr. Xia Chaozong	Senior Engineer	Academy of Forest Management, State Forestry Administration	18 Hepingli East street, Dongcheng District, Beijing 100714	China	Office: +86-10-84-238305	+86-10-84-238305	Xiachz1975@gmail.com	FRA
7	Mr. Yan Hongwei	Director	Department of Forest Management, State Forestry Administration	18 Hepingli East street, Dongcheng District, Beijing 100714	China	Office: +86-10-84-238409	+86-10-84-238495	Hwan@forestry.gov.cn	FRA
8	Mr. Qu Haihua	Secretary	National Bureau to Combat Desertification, State Forestry Administration	18 Hepingli Dongjie, 100714 Beijing	China	Office: +86-10-84-238831	+86-10-84-238828	quhaihua9@sina.com ; feifeilove2000@sina.com	MAR
9	Dr. Tuo Liu	Director General	National Bureau to Combat Desertification, State Forestry Administration	18 Hepingli Dongjie, 100714 Beijing	China	Office: +8610-84-238831	+86-10-84-238828	cciccd@forestry.gov.cn	MAR

10	Mr. Ri Yong Ho	Senior Desk Officer	International Organization Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs (National Committee of DPR Korea for FAO)	POB 44, Central District, Pyongyang	DPR Korea	Office: +850-2-382-7222	+850-2-381-4660	myonghyok.kim@fao.org	FRA
11	Mr. Chun Kwang Ryu	Senior Officer, External Forest Cooperation Department	Ministry of Land and Environment Protection (MoLEP), D.P.R. Korea	Gwangbok-dong, Mangyongdae District, Pyongyang	DPR Korea	Office: +850-2-756-1303	+850-2-381-4410	Guktodae@co.chesin.com	MAR
12	Mr. Devendra Pandey	Director General	Forest Survey of India	Kaulagarh Road , P.O. Box IPE 248195 Dehra Dun	India	Office: 91-1-3575-6139	+91-1-3575-9104	dpandeyifs@rediffmail.com	FRA
13	Mr. Hermawan Indarbudi	Director, Center for Forest Inventory and Mapping	Ministry of Forestry	7th Floor, Menggala Wanabakti, Jl. Gatot Subroto, Jakarta Pusat	Indonesia	Office: +62-21-573-0195	+62-21-573-4632	indrabudi@hotmail.com	FRA
14	Mr. Antung Deddy Radiansyah	Engineer	The State Ministry of Environment	Jl Di Panjaitan Kav 24, Jakarta Timur 13410	Indonesia	Office: +62-21-851-4771 Mobile: +62-811117050	+62-21-851-4771	deddyr2000@yahoo.co.uk	MAR
15	Mr. Reza Sohrabi	Director General	Engineering and Evaluation Bureau (Forest Range and Watershed Management Organization)	P.O. Box 19575/567 Shemiran, Tehran	Iran	Office: +98-21-2244-6600	+98-21-2244-6515	re_Sohrabi@yahoo.com	FRA
16	Mr. Hiroki Miyazono	Deputy Director	International Forestry Cooperation Office, Forestry Agency	1-2-1 Kasumigaseki, Chiyodo-ku, Tokyo 100-8952	Japan	Office: +81-3-3502-8111	+81-3-3593-9565	hiroki_miyazono@nm.maff.go.jp	FRA
17	Dr. Mohd Hizamri bin Mohd Yasin	Director of International Cooperation and Secretariat	Forestry Department, Peninsular Malaysia	Jalan Sultan Salahuddin 50660 Kuala Lumpur	Malaysia	Office: +60-3-2616-4488	+60-3-2692-5657	hizamri@forestry.gov.my	FRA
18	Ms. Rosaizan Haryani binti Rosli	Assistant Director	Forest Management Unit, Forestry Department Peninsular Malaysia	Jalan Sultan Salahuddin, 50660 Kuala Lumpur	Malaysia	Office: +60-3-2616-4488	+60-3-2692-5657	rosaizan@forestry.gov.my	FRA
19	Mr. Abdul Wahab Bujang	Forest Officer	Forest Department of Sarawak	Wisma Sumber Alam, Jalan Stadium Petra Jaya, 93660 Kuching, Sarawak	Malaysia	Office: +60-82-319101	+60-82-441377	webmaster@forestry.sarawak.gov.my	FRA
20	Mr. Ahmad Ashrin	Forest Officer	Forest Department of Sarawak	Wisma Sumber Alam, Jalan Stadium Petra Jaya, 93660	Malaysia	Office: + 60-82-442180 / 319102 / 319103	+ 60-82-441210 / 441377 / 319235	webmaster@forestry.sarawak.gov.my	FRA

				Kicking, Sarawak					
21	Mr. Ahmad Azhar Mohammed	Forest Officer	Department of Wildlife and National Parks	KM10, Jln Cheras, 56100, Kuala Lumpur	Malaysia	Office: +60-3-9075-2872	+60-3-9075-2873	azahar@wildlife.gov.my	FRA
22	Mr. Wan Abdul Hamid Shukri Wan Abd Rahman	Forest Officer	Forestry Department (Selangor)	Bangunan SAAs, 40000 Shah Alam, Selangor	Malaysia	Office: +60-16-9289790 045	+60-3-5510-2358	azahar@wildlife.gov.my	MAR
23	Mr. Foong Lai Hoy	Forest Officer	Forestry Department (Pulau Pinang)	Tkt. 20, Komtar, George Town, 10000 Pulau Pinang	Malaysia	Office: +60-4-6505-250	+60-4-263-6335	foonglah@yahoo.com	MAR
24	Mr. Mohd Rizal Razali	Forest Officer	Forestry Department (Negeri Sembilan)	JPNS, Tkt 4, Blk C, Wisma Negeri, 70503 Seremban, Negeri Sembilan	Malaysia	Mobile: +60-13-9715195	+60-6-762-3711	rizal_razali@yahoo.co.uk	MAR
25	Mr. Ismail Ali bin Kamarudeen	Forest Officer	Forestry Department (Perlis)	KM2, Jln Kaki Bukit, 01000 Kangar, Perlis	Malaysia	Mobile: +60-12-2986786	+60-4-976-7901	ismail_r7@yahoo.com	MAR
26	Mr. Helmy Tariq b. Othman	Forest Officer	Forestry Department (Pahang)	Tkt 5, Kompleks Tun Razak, Bandar Kluang, 25990 Kuantan, Pahang	Malaysia	Mobile: +60-19-6216735	+60-9-573-3355	helmy@forestry.gov.my	MAR
27	Mr. Rizal Sabran	Forest Officer	Forestry Department (Terengganu)	8th Floor, Wisma Negeri, 20200 Kuala Terengganu, Terengganu	Malaysia	Office: +60-9-622-2444	+60-9-623-6552	rizal@forestry.gov.my	MAR
28	Dr. Khamuruddin Mohd. Noor	Lecturer	Universiti Putra Malaysia	Faculty of Forestry, UPM, 43400 UPM Serdang, Selangor	Malaysia	Office: +60-3-8946-7167	+60-3-8948-3514	Kamardin@forn.upm.edu.my	FRA
29	Mr. Mohd Ridzuwan bin Endot	Assistant Director	Forestry Department (Johor)	Aras 2, Bgn Sultan Ibrahim, Jln Bukit Timbalan, 80000 Johor Bahru, Johor	Malaysia	Office: +60-7-224-3566 Mobile: +60-14-3838691	+60-7-224-3840	ridzuwan@forestry.gov.my	MAR
30	Mr. Mohd Radhuan Ramli	Assistant Director	Forestry Department (Kedah)	Aras 8, Bgn Sultan Abdul Halim, Jln Sultan Badlishah, 05000 Alor Setar, Kedah	Malaysia	Office: +60-4-733-3844 Mobile: +60-13-923-7107	+60-4-731-0610	radhuan@kedforestry.gov.my	MAR
31	Mr. Mohd Saman Mohd Sanget	Forest Officer	Forestry Department (Kelantan)	Blk 5, Tkt 1, Kota Darul Naim, 15503 Kota Bahru, Kelantan	Malaysia	Mobile: +60-19-3683711	+60-9-744-5675	saman@forestry.gov.my	MAR

32	Mr. Ismail Parlan	Research Officer	Forest Research Institute of Malaysia (FRIM)	52109, Kepong, Selangor Darul Ehsan	Malaysia	Office: + 60-3-6279-7000 / 7575	+60-3-6272-9852	ismailp@frim.gov.my	FRA
33	Mr. Almizi Ibrahim	Assistant Director	Malaysian Timber Industry Board (MTIB)	Level 13-17, Menara PGRM No.8, Jalan Pudu Ulu, Cheras 50728 Kuala Lumpur	Malaysia	Office: +60-3-9282-2235	+60-3-9285-1477 / 1744	almizi@mtib.gov.my	FRA
34	Mr. Paul Leo Lohuji	Head of Forest Mapping and Harvesting Section	Sabah Forestry Department	Beg Berkunci 68, 90009 Sandakan, Sabah	Malaysia	Office: +60-89-660811/660824/660125	+60-89-669170 / 669369	jhutan01@tm.net.my	FRA
35	Mr. Yusoff Bin Muda	Deputy Director	Forest Management Division, Forestry Department Peninsular Malaysia	Jalan Sultan Salahuddin, 50660 Kuala Lumpur	Malaysia	Office: +60-3-2616-4488 Mobile: +60-19-9851721	+60-3-2692-5657	yusoff@forestry.gov.my	MAR
36	Mr. Shahrul Nizam Kasmani	Forest Officer	Forestry Department Peninsular Malaysia	Jalan Sultan Salahuddin, 50660 Kuala Lumpur	Malaysia	Office: +60-3-2616-4544	+60-3-2692-5657	Sharulnizam@forestry.gov.my	MAR
37	Mr. Abang Ahmad Bin Abang Morni	Forest Officer	Forest Department of Sarawak	Wisma Sumber Alam, Jalan Stadium Petra Jaya, 93660 Kuching, Sarawak	Malaysia	Office: +60-82-319101	+60-82-441377	aahmad@sarawaknet.gov.my	MAR
38	Ms. Aishath Najaath Moosa	Assistant Agriculture Officer	Ministry of Fisheries, Agriculture & Marine Resources	Ghazee Building, Ameer Ahmed Magu	Maldives	Office: +960-332-2625	+960-332-6558	aishath.najaath@fishagri.gov.mv	FRA
39	Dr. Khijaba Ykhnbai	Director	Forest Policy and Coordination Division, Ministry of Nature and Environment: Mongolia	Baga Toiruu-44, Ulaanbaatar-11, Government bldng #3, 408	Mongolia	Office: +976-11-329619	+976-11-329619	Ykhanbai@magicnet.mn	FRA
40	Mr. Maung Maung Pyone	Assistant Director	Forest Department	Building 39, Forest Department, Nay Pyi Taw	Myanmar	Office: +95-67-405109	+95-67-405016	mngmgyone@gmail.com	FRA
41	Mr. Maung Maung Than	Deputy Director	Forest Department Myanmar	Building 39: Forest Department, Nay Pyi Taw	Myanmar	Office: +95-67-405109 Mobile: +951-62981	+95-67-405016	maungmaungthan@gmail.com	MAR
42	Mr. Pem Narayan Kandel	Under-Secretary (Forest Research)	Ministry of Forest and Soil Conservation	Sinha Darbar Kathmandu	Nepal	Office: +977-1-421-1864	+977-1-421-1703	pkkandel@gmail.com	FRA

43	Mr. Sahas Man Shrestha	Deputy Director General	Department of Forest Research and Survey, Ministry of Forest and Soil Conservation	P.O. Box 3339, Babar Mahal, Kathmandu	Nepal	Office: +977-1-4220493/4220482/4269491	+977-1-422-0159	foresc@wlink.com.np dfers@ecomail.com.np	MAR
44	Mr. Abdul Munaf Qaimkhani	Deputy Inspector General- Forests	Ministry of Environment	Enercon Building, Ataturk Avenue, Sector G-5/2, Islamabad	Pakistan	Office: +92-51-924-5585 Mobile: +92-3215259339	+92-51-924-5585	amqaimkhani@yahoo.com	MAR/FRA
45	Mr. Jose Callanta Cabanayan	Assistant Director	National Mapping & Resource Information Authority	Lawton Avenue, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City 1634	Philippines	Office: +63-2-810-4831 (ext. 701)	+63-2-816-1033	jccabanayan@yahoo.com	MAR/FRA
46	Mr Kim Sung Ho	Senior Researcher	Korea Forest Research Institute	57 Hoegiro, Dogdaemun-gu, Seoul 130-712	R. Korea	Office: +82-2-961-2842	+82-2-961-2869	shkimfri@forest.go.kr	FRA
47	Mr. Hyo Tae Hwang	Deputy Director	Korea Forest Service	Government Complex-Daejeon, 139 Seonsa-ro, Daejeon Metropolitan City 302-701	R. Korea	Office: +82-42-481 4166 Mobile: +82-11-9728-0631	+82-42-471-1443	h581@forest.go.kr	MAR
48	Mr. Anura Sathursinghe	Conservator of Forest	Forest Department	P.O. Box 3, Battaramulla	Sri Lanka	Office: +94-11-286-6635	+94-11-286-6628	tree@slt.lk	FRA
49	Mr. Anawat Sukhotanang	Senior Forestry Official	Royal Forest Department	61 Phaholyothin Rd, Chatuchak, Bangkok 10900	Thailand	Office: +66-2-561-4292	+66-2-579-5412	anawat2001@hotmail.com	FRA
50	Dr. Sirikul Bunpapong	Director of Biological Diversity Division	Office of Natural Resources and Environmental Policy and Planning	60/1 Soi Pibulwattana 7, Rama VI, Phayathai Bangkok 10400	Thailand	Office: +66-2-265-6637	+66-2-265-6638	sirikb@yahoo.com	MAR
51	Mr. Manuel Mandes	Director for Protected Areas and National Park	National Directorate of Forestry, Ministry of Agriculture and Fishery	Fomento Building, Dili	Timor Leste	Office: +670-331-0052 Mobile: +670-727-5236	+670-331-0025	lai_luhath78@yahoo.com	FRA
52	Mr. Luis Godinho	Director for Reforestation and Forest Rehabilitation	National Directorate of Forestry, Ministry of Agriculture and Fishery, Timor-Leste	Dom Aleixo Cortereal Fomento Building Post 670	Timor Leste	Office: +670-331-0052 (ext. 0) Mobile: +6707369660	+670-331-0025	alba_god@yahoo.com	MAR
53	Dr. Dinh Huu Khanh	Vice Director	Forest Inventory and Planning Institute	Vien Dieu tra quy hoach rung, Thanh Tri, Hanoi	Vietnam	Office: +084-4-861-7958	+084-4-861-2881	vienkhanhfi@yahoo.com	FRA

54	Dr. Ty Xuan Hoang	Researcher in Forestry and Environment protection	Vietnam Forestry Association, Viet Nam Ministry of Natural Resource and Environment/ Climate Change Project	No. 114, Lane 381, St. Nguyen Khang, Cau Giay, Hanoi	Vietnam	Office: +84-4-784-0076 Mobile: + 84-0912154436	n.a.	hoangxuanty@gmail.com	MAR
55	Mr. Lijie Cai	Programme Officer	SCBD/UNEP (Convention on Biological Diversity)	413 St. Jacques Street, Suite 800, Montreal, Qc, H2y 1n9	Canada	Office: +1-514-287-7016	+1-514-288-6588	lijie.cai@cbd.int	MAR
56	Mr. Htain Lin	Senior Officer	ASEAN Secretariat (Association of Southeast Asian Nations)	70A Jalan, Sisangamangaraja, Jakarta 12110	Indonesia	Office: +62-21-726-2991 ext. 497	+62-21-739-8234	hchain@asean.org	MAR
57	Dr. Steve Johnson	Communications Manager	ITTO (International Tropical Timber Organization)	1-1-1 Minato Mirai, Nishi-Ku, Yokohama	Japan	Office: +81-45-223-1110	+81-45-223-1111	johnson@itto.or.jp	MAR
58	Ms. Løyche Wilike Mette	Senior Forestry Officer	Forest Assessment and Reporting Service (FOIM), FAO-Headquarters	Viale delle Terme di Caracalla 00153, Rome	Italy	Office: +39-06-5705-2091	+39-06-5705-5137	Mette.LoycheWilike@fao.org	FRA/MAR
59	Ms. Monica Garzuglia	Forestry Officer	Forest Assessment and Reporting Service (FOIM), FAO-Headquarters	Viale delle Terme di Caracalla 00153, Rome	Italy	Office: +39-06-5705-5789	+39-06-5705-5138	monica.garzuglia@fao.org	FRA
60	Mr. Masato Okabayashi	Associate Professional Officer	Forest Assessment and Reporting Service (FOIM), FAO-Headquarters	Viale delle Terme di Caracalla 00153, Rome	Italy	Office: +39-06-5705-2091	+39-06-5705-5137	okap19722000@yahoo.co.jp	FRA
61	Mr. Masakazu Kashio	Forest Resources Officer	Forestry Department (RAPO), FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific	Maliwan Mansion, 39 Phra Athit Road, Bangkok 10200	Thailand	Office: +66-697-4000 ext. 4141	+66-2-697-4445	Masakazu.Kashio@fao.org	MAR
62	Mr. Masahiro Otsuka	Forestry Officer	Forestry Department (RAPO), FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific	Maliwan Mansion, 39 Phra Athit Road, Bangkok 10200	Thailand	Office: +66-697-4000 ext. 4130	+66-2-697-4445	Masahiro.Otsuka@fao.org	MAR

Appendix 3 – Opening address

Forest Department Peninsular Malaysia (Dato' Razani Ujang, Deputy Director General (Forest Operations))

It is my pleasure to be here today on the occasion of the official opening of the Regional Workshop on Strengthening of National Reporting and Other International Processes on Forest in Asia Harmonization of National Forest Resource Assessment. Let me, first of all, thanks the organizers, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of United Nations with cooperation from the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment Malaysia and the Malaysian Forestry Departments for inviting me to address and officiate the opening of this important workshop.

Distinguished Participants, Ladies and Gentlemen

We are honoured to be given this opportunity to host such an important workshop in our country and it is a privilege to have so many distinguished professionals from different countries attending in this workshop. To the participants and foreign guests, I would like to bid you a very warm welcome and wish you 'Selamat Datang' and hope that you will also take this opportunity to enjoy the many tourist sites which Malaysia has to offer including our natural forests.

I also wish to congratulate the organizers, for their effort in organizing this workshop. This workshop marks yet another important milestone in the history of collaboration between the Government of Malaysia and the FAO, particularly in the area forest management. As a result of this collaboration, especially in the area of capacity building and technical assistance, since in the early seventies, Malaysia has enjoyed tremendous success in the development of its forest sector. I hope this cooperation would further develop into stronger ties in the coming years.

Distinguished Participants, Ladies and Gentlemen

Malaysia has always been committed on global issues concerning forest and environment. We participated actively in the negotiations leading to UNCED, which encompasses Agenda 21, the Non-legally Binding Authoritative Statement of Principles for a Global Consensus on the Management, Conservation and Sustainable Management of all types of Forest, also known as the "Forest Principles," the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). Apart from that, Malaysia is signatory to a number of existing Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) that have been formulated for the protection of biological diversity. In the conservation of flora and fauna, Malaysia has demonstrated its commitment by signing most of the MEAs including the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, the Bonn Convention for the protection of migratory species; World Heritage Sites Convention; and has embarked on the protection of wetlands sites in accordance with Ramsar Convention.

Having served in the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment Malaysia, it gives me great satisfaction to inform this gathering today that 55.8 percent or 18.31 million hectares of Malaysia's total land area is still under forest cover. With the inclusion of agriculture tree crops of 5.55 million hectares, Malaysia has a total tree cover of 23.86 million ha, or 72.7 percent of its total land area.

One might argue that agriculture tree crops are not forests. Even though they do not have the same range of biodiversity as the natural forests, they do contribute to the photosynthesis process, the water cycle and other natural functions of greening the earth. In this context, under FAO's

definition, a forest is defined as an area of more than half a hectare, with more than 10% of canopy cover and tree heights at maturity of more than 5 meter.

Of the total forested areas, Malaysia has designated a total of 15.30 million hectares (46.62 percent) as Permanent Reserved Forests or PRFs which is managed under sustainable forest management. Approximately 12.19 million hectares (37.15 percent) are production forests with the remaining 3.11 million ha (9.48 percent) being protection forests.

It is also great to note that Malaysia's efforts to protect and conserve the environment and biodiversity has gained world acknowledgement as one of the 12 mega diversity countries of the world. Currently Malaysia has 2.44 million hectares of conservation areas which are totally protected by legislation. Of these, 2.05 million hectares are located outside the PRFs, whilst another 0.39 million ha are located within the PRFs. Hence, with the protection forests of the PRFs of 3.11 million ha, the totally protected areas in Malaysia are now estimated to be 5.16 million ha, representing 28.2 percent of its total forested land or 15.7 percent of its land area.

To date, Malaysia has also declared a total of five RAMSAR sites covering 48,029 hectares, while the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has also recognized and declared the Kinabalu Park, Sabah, which covers an area of 75,370 hectares, and an area of 52,865 hectares in Sarawak as World Heritage Sites. In addition, UNESCO has also listed the Langkawi Geopark, covering 47,800 ha in the island of Langkawi, in its global network of Geoparks 2007. In addition, to ensure adequate supplies of water to meet the varying demands of the population, agriculture and industry, Malaysia has also gazetted watershed areas covering 5.16 million ha within their permanent reserved forests thus far.

Distinguished Participants, Ladies and Gentlemen

I have been informed that this workshop came to light with the introduction of MAR project ("Strengthening Monitoring, Assessment, and Reporting (MAR) on Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) in Asia." I understand that the MAR project was created due to the difficulties and constraints faced by most Asia-Pacific countries in the reporting the extent of forest and other wooded land, their condition, management uses, which covers the seven thematic elements of SFM under FRA 2010. Limited technical and financial capacities, disagreement over certain terms and definitions and method and processes of reporting are a few of the constraints faced by the Asia-Pacific countries in providing up-to-date data as required by FRA 2010.

In line with this, the FAO project "Strengthening Monitoring, Assessment and Reporting (MAR) on Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) in Asia" was launched. The project seeks to establish a functioning national network in each project country. It attempts to institutionalise the process of co-ordination, standardization and harmonization of the national MAR system by promoting frequent technical dialogue among various stakeholders.

The project aims to reduce the reporting burden on countries and to build up more precise, consistent, and useful national information on forests plans, to organise expert consultations, training workshops and thematic studies at national and regional level in order to achieve its objectives.

I believe with this given framework, the MAR project will enhance better decision-making in the formulation of forest policies and expedite planning and implementation in achieving sustainable forest developments at the national level.

Distinguished Participants, Ladies and Gentlemen

The forest resource of is an important renewable asset which has contributed significantly to the socio-economic development of the country. It also generated revenue and enhanced industrial development for the country. As a renewable resource, it should be planned and managed sustainably so that the benefits generated from forestry and forest industries will continue to sustain.

In the pursuance of sound and effective forest management, assessment on the quantitative and qualitative information pertaining to the resource is required. Reliable data on location, extent and composition of the forest resource is in a prerequisite. This data could only be generated by quantifying the forest resource base through some form of monitoring, assessment and reporting.

Although we do have available data on the various parameters, their adequacy and reliability are often insufficient and assessing them has been difficult due to lack of a proper information management system. Therefore, as I have said earlier on, this workshop would serve a very useful purpose in addressing these shortcomings. I hope that it would not only expose participants to advanced planning tools, data base management and networking in other countries, but would also come up with concrete recommendations for improvement of our forest management planning.

I must say that this workshop is indeed timely for us to share views and our concern on issues affecting the forestry and timber sector globally such as combating deforestation, forest degradation, conservation of biological diversity and mitigation of climate change.

Distinguished Participants, Ladies and Gentlemen

Malaysia's commitment to the cause of sustainable management of our forest resources is reflected with the amendment of the National Forestry Policy in 1992. The revisions include the importance of biological diversity conservation and the sustainable utilisation of forest genetic resources, as well as the role of local communities in forest development. Furthermore, the National Forestry Act 1984 was amended in 1993 to include provisions for the Police and Armed Forces to undertake surveillance of forestry activities, especially in curbing illegal logging, encroachment of forested areas and timber theft.

In managing the natural tropical forests of Malaysia, the Dipterocarp and Peat Swamp Forests are selectively harvested which are based on prescribed minimum cutting limits with cutting cycles varying from 25 to 55 years. In this context, all forest harvesting operations have to be carried out in accordance with the adopted Forestry Departments' specifications, rules and guidelines, particularly those pertaining to reduced impact logging (RIL) activities such as road alignment and construction, gradient, drainage, density, the setting up of log-yards, and worker's quarters; tree marking, direction of felling, cutting regimes base on Pre-Felling Inventory. In order to take into account all these functions in the Harvesting Plans, it is crucial to enhance our capacity for planning, data collection and information management.

After harvesting, the post-felling forest inventory is carried-out to determine the regeneration status of the harvested forest in terms of stocking, composition, size and distribution in order to consider appropriate silvicultural treatments, including enrichment planting, for the logged-over forest.

Malaysia has also developed a set of Malaysian Criteria and Indicators for Sustainable Forest Management (MC&I), which were formulated for monitoring and assessing sustainable forest management practices at the forest management unit level. In this context, Malaysia has developed a set of internal assessment procedures for monitoring, evaluating and reporting on SFM based on the MC&I, which is now fully operational. Currently, nine forest management units in Malaysia

have been certified by independent third party assessors covering 4.73 million hectares of the Permanent Reserved Forests.

Distinguished Participants, Ladies and Gentlemen

I am grateful to have this opportunity to meet researchers, scientists and forest managers in this workshop today. I believe that there many challenges and difficulties that we face in the implementation of SFM. However, with your vast experiences on issues related to SFM, I am confident that the workshop would definitely be useful in arriving at a fruitful conclusion on the matters that will be discussed.

Let me once again offer my warmest welcome to our colleagues from outside and wish them a very pleasant stay in Kuala Lumpur. I hope that you will find time to absorb some of our tradition and culture, while you are here and leave Kuala Lumpur with pleasant memories. Once again, I wish you all a fruitful and successful deliberation.

With these remarks, I now have the pleasure to declare the Forest Resource Assessment (FRA) – Monitoring, Assessment, and Reporting (MAR) Workshop officially open. Thank you

Appendix 4 – Summary presentations on of other international reporting processes on forests

(1) CBD

Mr. Cai introduced the concept of the CBD reporting since 1997 and its linkage with forest-related reporting. The main objective of the CBD reporting is to provide information on measures for implementation of the CBD and their effectiveness in meeting its objectives. National reporting is essential to review the implementation of CBD and identify gaps, challenges and future priorities and mobilise public participation. The CBD report consists of 4 main portions with 3 annexes and an executive summary, including:

1. Overview of biodiversity status, trends, and threats: implications of changes in all biomes;
2. Current status of national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAP);
3. Sectoral/cross-sectoral integration or mainstreaming of biodiversity considerations; and
4. Conclusions: progress towards the 2010 target and implementation of the strategic plan

One of the major elements of the report is to assess national capacities to achieve the 2010 Biodiversity Target of a significant reduction of the current rate of biodiversity loss at global, regional, and national levels by 2010. Several guidelines, manuals and training modules were developed to facilitate national reporting.

Mr. Cai suggested several opportunities for synergies among other processes and sectors. All completed and ongoing assessments at various levels in Chapter I can be included in other assessments such as FRA 2010. All relevant sectors need to be involved for reporting in other chapters. He concluded that the CBD national reporting always stresses the importance of multi-stakeholder participation and increasing synergies among relevant sectors for planning, implementation and reporting. Preparation of the CBD report is an important opportunity to increase such synergies at the national level and contribute to harmonisation of international reporting.

He also highlighted the Forest Biodiversity Programme of Work with 3 elements, 12 goals, 27 objectives, and 129 activities to be implemented according to national priorities. During 2006 - 2008, 134 national reports were submitted to the CBD. A peer-reviewed technical background document was then prepared based on the national reports, submitted to SBSTTA 13. This information will be used in COP9 to discuss future priorities and obstacles.

(2) UNFF

Mr. Otsuka presented the reporting scheme of the UNFF since 2001 on their behalf. He reported on the Global Objectives on Forests (GOF) which aim to reverse the forest cover loss, enhance forest benefits, promote forest conservation, and reverse the decline in official development assistance for SFM by 2015. The non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests (NLBI) was adopted in December 2007 to strengthen political commitments and action for SFM in line with the GOF, providing a framework for international cooperation and national action and contributing to the Millennium Development Goals (MDG). The voluntary reporting for the UNFF 8 aims to assess progress made in the implementation of the NLBI and achievement of the GOF with 25 national policies and measures as well as 13 categories of action. Non-quantitative information is requested on the GOF, such as description of any national measures, policies, and action taken. The report consists of the implementation of the NLBI, tropical thematic elements, progress towards achieving the GOF, and conclusions with annexes.

(3) UNFCCC

Mr. Masakazu Kashio (FAO) introduced the framework of the UNFCCC reporting since 1994 on their behalf. The UNFCCC reporting is comprised of: 1.) national circumstances covering development priorities/objectives, natural and human factors and issues on climate change; 2.) national greenhouse gas (GHG) inventory by type, source and sector using the IPCC guidelines; and 3.) steps envisaged to implement the Convention, including measures to mitigate climate change, programmes to facilitate adequate adaptation to climate change, environmental/socio-economic scenarios, and policy frameworks, strategies, and plans for adaptation. Forest-related UNFCCC reporting includes geographical characteristics (climate, forests, and land use), deforestation and its link to climate and socio-economic conditions, environmental and socio-economic scenarios referring to forest cover and arable land, and mitigation assessment on land use change and forestry. The UNFCCC reporting builds on several IPCC guidelines, including the Good Practice Guidance on Land Use, Land-Use Change and Forestry (LULUCF). The LULUCF aims at consistent estimation of land areas and their changes, using different approaches depending on available data in countries.

(4) ITTO

Ms. Wilkie presented the scope of ITTO reporting on behalf of Dr. Steve Johnson (ITTO). The C&I scheme first developed in 1992 is comprised of 7 criteria and 59 indicators, covering environmental, socio-economic, and institutional aspects. The revised C&I attempted to reduce duplication, improve simplicity or conciseness and enhance clarity, taking into account the forest policy and incorporating country experiences with C&I. It can be applied to forest management in both natural and planted tropical forests at national and FMU levels. Twenty-three workshops have been organised for training on C&I. Using data from C&I reports, the Status of Tropical Forest Management was published in 2006 and aimed to estimate areas of tropical forest under SFM in 33 tropical countries accounting for over 80% of the tropical forest area. However, data provision from the countries is not yet sufficient in terms of quantity and quality.

She also highlighted collaboration between ITTO and FRA 2005. Around half of the ITTO's 57 indicators are included in the FRA 2010 tables. However, the extent, designated functions, and characteristics of forests, biomass, and wood removals under the Joint Forest Sector Questionnaire (JFSQ) appear less relevant. Ownership, growing stock, carbon stock, disturbances, tree species, growing stock composition, Non-wood Forest Products (NWFPs), and employment are relevant. Yet there will be lots of potential for ITTO and FAO to work together. The Joint Forest Sector Questionnaire (JFSQ) approach could be used to combine data requests with the addition of thematic tables, and facilitate joint publications.

(5) UNCCD

Ms. Monica Garzuglia presented the framework of the UNCCD reporting since 2000 on their behalf. The focus of reporting is on impacts achieved, with the use of quantifiable indicators to measure progress in strategies and action programmes. Importance has also been given to the preparation of user-friendly and comprehensive guidelines and synergies with other reporting processes. Reporting principles include: consistency with the Convention to improve the effectiveness of monitoring of implementation; indicator-based analysis and assessment to measure progress against objectives of the strategy; attentiveness to resources, capacities, and institutional constraints; coherence and comprehensiveness of financial information; and consistency with work of the Committee on Science and Technology (CST). A simple, comprehensive, standardised and flexible reporting format is designed, encompassing best practices and descriptions of programmes. Country profiles cover climate, vegetation cover, land use, surface albedo, water resources, energy,

types of land degradation, rehabilitation, socio-economic factors, and science/technology. In implementation of the convention, reports should deal with the status of sub-regional/national action programmes and their actors, national coordination bodies, the number of partners including NGOs, the number of related laws, consultative process, and list of projects under implementation.

(6) CITES

Ms. Garzuglia introduced the CITES reporting comprised of an annual report on trade in species on the CITES list, a biennial report on measures taken to enforce the Convention, and special reports required by resolutions, decisions, or committees on their behalf. Under the annual report, each Party shall maintain records of trade in certain species and provide to the Secretariat a summary report as to the number and type of permits, states in which trade occurred, species, quantities and types of specimens. In a biannual report, the Party needs to provide information on legislative, regulatory and administrative measures to enforce provisions of the Convention. Specific CITES information collected for the FRA 2010 and from national forest inventories is helpful for its implementation. Data on tree density and timber yields can form the basis of a Non-detriment Finding (NDF) for tree species listed on CITES. The Secretariat shall continue to collaborate with secretariats of other biodiversity-related conventions, UNEP and other bodies in order to facilitate harmonisation of knowledge management and reporting. Results of this collaboration will be reported during the the 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP) in 2010.

(7) Ramsar

Ms. Garzuglia provided information on the current Ramsar Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar) reporting related to the COP 10 meeting in Korea in 2008 on their behalf. Objectives of the Ramsar reporting are to: (i) provide information on implementation of the Convention; (ii) capture lessons and experience for future action; (iii) identify issues and challenges requiring attention; (iv) provide a means for Parties to be accountable against their obligations; (v) provide Parties with a tool to monitor and assess their progress in implementation and plan future action; and (vi) provide an opportunity for Parties to draw attention to their achievements. The report consists of: (a) institutional information about administrative authority and national focal points for implementation of the Convention; (b) various aspects of national implementation and recommendations for the future; and (c) 66 implementation indicator questions with free text allowing the inclusion of additional information.

She also explained that FAO had already collected information on costal wetland resources through the FRA 2005 thematic study on the world's mangroves. This study was prepared in collaboration with specialists to provide an overview of the current status of mangroves as well as trends over the last 25 years. A comprehensive survey of mangrove resources all over the world was undertaken and the results will be incorporated into the World Atlas on Mangroves that is currently being developed in collaboration with various organizations and which will be published in 2009.

Appendix 5 – FRA 2010 Country reporting process

Two groups of 10 FRA 2010 National correspondents each were created as follows:

Group A	Group B
Australia	
Bangladesh	Cambodia
China	Indonesia
DPR Korea	Japan
Bhutan	Malaysia
India	Philippines
Iran	Republic of Korea
Maldives	Singapore
Mongolia	Thailand
Nepal	Timor Leste
Sri Lanka	Vietnam

The technical deliberations in the working groups were very intensive and participative. The following tables summarises the main issues raised during these deliberations.

Reporting Table	Issues and suggested solutions
T1	<p>Issues and concerns</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Definition of forest: the minimum extent of forest differs from the FRA 2010 threshold. 2. Zagrosian forest (Iran), less than 5 m in height <p>Suggested solutions</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The general definition of Forest in FRA is “Land spanning more than 0.5 hectares...” and this should be the basis for country reporting whenever it is possible to obtain this figure from the national data sources. However, sometimes the national data sources do not allow obtaining estimates with exactly this size limit. In such cases the countries should report to whatever size limit that is closest to this threshold and clearly document the size limit used. The same threshold should be used consistently throughout the time series 2. If the woody vegetation has more than 10% canopy cover of tree species with a height or expected height of 5 m or more, it should be classified as “forest,” otherwise it should be classified as “Other wooded land”. In the case of areas composed of tree species (e.g., oak, in this case) where the height in some areas may reach 5 m (but not in all areas) and where existing data does not allow for a separation between these since the country uses a lower threshold, it was recommended to include these areas under forest area.
T2	<p>Issues and concerns</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Forest Concession: Ownership of trees - Private or Public? 2. Planted forests by private companies on government land 3. Tree harvesting restriction: Trees planted on private land but permit needed to cut it, so private or public ownership? <p>Suggested solutions</p>

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Public forest 2. Private forest 3. Private forest
T3	<p>Issues and concerns</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Definition of PFE 2. Forest Area designated for the protection of soil & water: access/topography can be used as a criterion <p>Suggested solutions</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What we want to get here is the <u>area of forest where a legal decision has been taken that it should remain under forest i.e. where the land use may not be changed</u> unless special permission is granted 1. Yes, if there is an active decision on for what purpose the forest should be managed.
T4	<p>Issues and concerns</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. ITTO definitions of primary forest. <p>Suggested solutions</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. ITTO defines primary forest as follows: <i>Forest which has never been subject to human disturbance, or has been so little affected by hunting and gathering that its natural structure, functions and dynamics have not undergone any unnatural change.</i> This category can be considered equivalent to the FRA 2010 definition of primary forest. ITTO defines a degraded primary forest as follows: <i>primary forest in which the initial cover has been adversely affected by the unsustainable harvesting of wood and/or non-wood forest products so that its structure, processes, functions and dynamics are altered beyond the short-term resilience of the ecosystem; that is, the capacity of the forest to fully recover from exploitation in the near to medium term has been compromised).</i> This definition falls within the FRA 2010 definition of other naturally regenerated forests. ITTO defines a managed primary forest as follows: <i>Forest in which sustainable timber and non-wood harvesting (e.g., through integrated harvesting and silvicultural treatments), wildlife management and other uses have changed forest structure and species composition from the original primary forest. All major goods and services are maintained.</i> Also this definition falls within the FRA 2010 definition of other naturally regenerated forests.
T5	<p>Issues and concerns</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How to define natural expansion of forest <p>Suggested solutions</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. If a change in the land use occurred from non-forest to forest through natural regeneration (so excluding afforestation)
T6	<p>Issues and concerns</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Conifer versus gymnosperm: Ginkgo, Agatis, Casuarina <p>Suggested solutions</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All the three species above should be included under conifers
T7	<p>Issues and concerns</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How to estimate below ground biomass <p>Suggested solutions</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Below ground biomass can be estimated using IPCC guidelines, if above ground biomass is known

T8	No raised issues
T9	No raised issues
T10	<p>Issues and concerns</p> <p>1. Nematode: where to include.</p> <p>Suggested solutions</p> <p>1. Nematode should be included under the category “disturbance by other biotic agents”</p>
T11	<p>Issues and concerns</p> <p>1. Republic of Korea raised an issue concerning the FRA 2005 results for fuelwood that were incorrect</p> <p>Suggested solutions</p> <p>1. The problems has been reported to the forest products group</p>
T 12	No raised issues
T13	<p>Issues and concerns</p> <p>1. Drivers? should be included? Transport in forest, if mill is in true forest (Sawmills: log mills in the forest – part of forest’s contribution to economy / employment)</p> <p>2. How to include casual and season labour/employment?</p> <p>Suggested solutions:</p> <p>1. The limit is set at “farm border,” i.e. at the log landing places in the forest before they are transported to a sawn mill. Transport within the forest until it reaches permanent road should be included. Employment in permanent sawmills within the forest should not be included, however small scale work with portable sawmills is a borderline case and countries may decide to include such employment.</p> <p>2. Seasonal labour should be recalculated into Full Time Equivalent during the year (see guidelines)</p>
T14	No raised issues
T15	No raised issues
T16	<p>1. Education: Include veterinary sciences (Many are employed in protected areas)</p> <p>Suggested solutions</p> <p>1. No since the primary focus of those studying veterinary sciences is not aimed at work in the forestry sector, they should not be included. If they work in protected areas they are, however included in the employment table.</p>
T17	<p>Issues and concerns</p> <p>1. Penalties: should be included?</p> <p>2. State corporation.</p> <p>Suggested solutions</p> <p>1. Yes, penalties and fines should be included</p> <p>2. The FRA specifications stipulate that figures on revenues and expenditures should exclude revenues and expenditures from publicly owned business entities. If it is possible to separate the revenues and expenditures related to the business operations, these should be left out. If that is not possible, report the figures including the business operations and make a note in appropriate comment field.</p>