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y la
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REPORT ON THE PROGRESS AND IMPLEMENTATION OF APFC AND FAO-SUPPORTED ACTIVITIES AND INITIATIVES (including follow-up to recommendations of the 22nd Session of the Commission)

SECRETARIAT NOTE

INTRODUCTION

1. This note reports on progress in implementing APFC and FAO-sponsored activities and initiatives since the Twenty-second Session of the Asia-Pacific Forestry Commission held in Hanoi, 21-26 April 2008. It serves as a basis for reviewing follow-up to the specific requests and recommendations of the 22nd Session of the Commission (listed in Annex A).

ASIA-PACIFIC ACTIVITIES AND INITIATIVES

2. FAO and APFC forestry activities in the Asia-Pacific region can be grouped into three broad categories:

- activities in the areas of economics, policies and institutions;
- activities designed to promote improvement in forest management for multiple benefits; and
- activities designed to foster greater involvement of people in forestry.

Activities in the areas of economics, policies and institutions

3. *The second Asia-Pacific Forestry Sector Outlook Study (APFSOS II)* was initiated in 2006 under the auspices of APFC. The wide-ranging outlook study aims to provide an overview of status and trends in the forestry sector and highlight issues that will shape the future of forestry in the region. Preparation of the various APFSOS reports is largely complete, with the Main Report of the APFSOS prepared for release at the Twenty-third session of APFC. Twenty-eight country outlook reports have been prepared, complemented by 17 thematic study reports and 5 subregional overview reports. It is

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envisaged that all outstanding papers will be published and distributed by August 2010. A strong emphasis has been placed on supporting APFC countries in making effective use of the findings of the outlook study. In this regard a *Workshop on Strategic Planning for South Pacific Forestry* was convened in Nadi, Fiji, 21-23 April 2010.

4. A major APFC/FAO publication, *The Future of Forests: Proceedings of an International Conference on the Outlook for Asia-Pacific Forests to 2020*, was released in March 2009. The publication describes main findings from a conference held in association with APFSOS II, *The Future of Forests in Asia and the Pacific: Outlook for 2020*, which was convened in Chiang Mai, Thailand in late-2007. Topics covered in the publication include land-use dynamics and underlying forestry trends, key drivers of change in forestry, shifts in forest policies and institutions, efforts to balance social, environmental and economic functions of forestry, globalization and national outlooks, and civil society and private sector perspectives on forestry.

5. The APFC-nurtured *Asia-Pacific Forest Policy Think Tank* continued its formative steps. The Think Tank stems from concerns that forest policies in Asia-Pacific countries have not kept pace with rapidly evolving issues and the changing demands placed on forests, and that many policies have not been implemented effectively. The expectation is that the Think Tank will function as a “virtual network”, supporting efforts in the region to adjust institutions, strategies and policies towards improved efficiency and effectiveness. The FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific will coordinate the Think Tank during the establishment phase (2009 – 2012). Several activities and programmes are ongoing or anticipated during this establishment phase.

6. The Asia-Pacific Forest Policy Think Tank is expanding the series of regional forest policy studies initiated by FAO and APFC during the past decade. Currently, a regional study on *Removing Constraints to Private Investment in Forestry* is nearing completion. In collaboration with RECOFTC, FAO organized a workshop in Khon Kaen, Thailand, 5-7 August 2009, to discuss the key findings and conclusions from the study. Case studies and policy briefs for 9 countries (Australia, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Philippines, USA and Vietnam) have been written and are expected to be published in mid-2010. A new regional policy study on forest tenure and poverty reduction is currently being conceptualized and is expected to begin in mid-2010. Additional support for the Think Tank is being planned in collaboration with the Asia-Pacific Network for Sustainable Forest Management and Rehabilitation (APFNet) and the National Forest Programme Facility.

7. The *Third Forest Policy Short Course* was conducted 8-19 March 2010, with a focus on issues and challenges in the Mekong countries. It is anticipated that the forest policy short course will continue as a regular activity of the Asia-Pacific Forest Policy Think Tank, aimed at strengthening policy capacity in the region.

8. In collaboration with APFNet, a new regional forest policy study on *Making forestry work for the poor: adapting forest policies to poverty alleviation strategies in Asia and the Pacific* will be initiated in 11 selected countries during 2010 and 2011. The study will be complemented with capacity-building efforts and policy reform, aimed at strengthening the contributions of forestry in reducing poverty.

9. Recognizing the importance of creating environments conducive for forestry investment, a *National Forum to Strengthen Policies and Opportunities for Forest Investment in the Philippines* was held in Manila, Philippines, 12-14 August 2009. The event was a joint effort by FAO, ITTO, the Philippines Department of Environment and Natural Resources and the Philippines Wood Producers Association. The meeting discussed constraints and opportunities related to investments in forestry, and identified ways to stimulate investment in the sector. It is anticipated that additional work on forest financing in the Asia-Pacific region will be supported in the future, in collaboration with ASEAN and other partners.

10. In partnership with RECOFTC, ICRAF and other partners, FAO is currently assessing developments and opportunities in forestry-related climate change mitigation and adaptation in the Asia-Pacific region. This work is set to be completed in 2010. The National Forest Programme Facility is also assisting Cambodia by supporting multi-stakeholder consultations and field testing of guidelines for incorporating climate change issues and strategies into the country's national forest programme.

11. To help facilitate the involvement of local forest-dependent people in climate change initiatives, the project *Linking communities to forestry-related voluntary carbon markets* has been formulated and approved under FAO's Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP). The project has been endorsed by Cambodia, Lao PDR and Philippines (endorsement by Indonesia and Thailand pending).

12. In collaboration with The Centre for People and Forests (RECOFTC), FAO convened a workshop on *Forests and climate change in Asia and the Pacific - Assessing COP 15 and the road ahead*. The workshop was held in February 2010 in Bali, Indonesia, and gathered leading forestry and climate change experts to discuss the issues and formulate concise explanations on the implications of COP15 for the region.

13. Recent interest by many APFC countries in bioenergy development has prompted FAO to devote considerable attention to policy and technical aspects of this emerging field. Special attention has been given to food security and rural development concerns associated with bioenergy production. In the second half of 2008, the FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific recruited two officers to work specifically on bioenergy-related matters. FAO is collaborating with the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) in examining the potential opportunities and risks related to bioenergy development in the Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS). The FAO-supported *Biofuel and Renewable Energy for Rural Development and Poverty Reduction in the GMS Project* is FAO's main contribution to this partnership. The project is conducting studies and analyses on various aspects of bioenergy production and is supporting policy dialogue and consultations with concerned stakeholders.

14. With support from the German-funded Bioenergy and Food Security Project (BEFS), FAO is assessing impacts of biofuels production on food security, rural development and land use. One component of this study involves a life-cycle analysis of greenhouse gas emissions related to palm oil production in Thailand. The BEFS project will terminate in the middle of 2010, and major technical and policy consultations will be convened to assess and provide inputs to the final report.

Activities designed to promote improvement in forest management for multiple benefits

15. The *Asia-Pacific Forest Invasive Species Network* (APFISN) was established in 2004, under the auspices of APFC, to respond to incursion threats by forest pests and diseases in various countries in the region. Since its inception, the network has carried out a myriad of activities designed to increase awareness of the threats to forests posed by invasive species and strengthen capacities for addressing associated challenges. Networking activities and information exchange is a priority of APFISN, with regular dissemination of an APFISN newsletter *Invasives* and the publication of a series of *Pest Notes* on critical forest invasive species in the region. APFISN coordination support is provided by the Kerala Forest Research Institute.

16. Since the 22nd Session of APFC in 2008, APFISN has supported several workshops, meetings and projects in collaboration with a wide range of partners. These include:

- Asia and the Pacific Forest Health Workshop (Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, December 2008);
- International Workshop and Training Course on Invasive Species (Wuhan, China, October 2008);
- Forest Health in a Changing World (Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, December 2008);
- Invasive Plants in the Tropics: Ecology, Management and Livelihoods (Bangalore, India, January 2009);

- Plant Invasion and Forest Ecology: Concerns and Solutions (Chandigarh, India, March 2009);
- Restoration after Ice-snow Disaster and Forest Health Restoration (Lijiang, China, May 2009).

17. A Global Environmental Facility funded project is also being developed in collaboration with UNEP on *Removing Barriers to Invasive Species Management in Production and Protection Humid Forests in Southeast Asia*. The 4-year project, to be initiated in 2010 in Indonesia, Cambodia, Philippines and Vietnam, will aim at reducing the negative environmental and social consequences of invasive species. Additionally, through support of the TCP Facility of FAO, a detailed needs assessment in South Asian countries is currently being conducted by APFISN.

18. In Thailand, a TCP-funded project on *Participation of Tree Plantation Farmers in Sustainable Forest Management* commenced at the end of 2009. The focus of the project is to create awareness and capacity for utilizing high-value, long-rotation tree species for enhancing agro-biodiversity and diversifying income of rural farmers.

19. The FAO-supported *Advancing the Application of Assisted Natural Regeneration (ANR) for Effective Low-Cost Forest Restoration in the Philippines Project* drew to a close in mid-2009. This TCP project was highly successful in building awareness and capacity for using ANR to rehabilitate highly degraded forest and grasslands. Building on the success in the Philippines, a new regional project is being formulated to extend awareness and ANR application techniques to Cambodia, Lao PDR, Indonesia and Thailand.

20. A publication entitled *Forest Insects as Food: Humans Bite Back* was released at the beginning of 2010. The publication summarises discussions from a workshop with the same title, organized 19-21 February 2008 in Chiang Mai, Thailand. A new project, recently initiated in Lao PDR with funding from FAO's Technical Cooperation Programme, aims to build awareness of the potential edible insects as a safe and nutritious food source, and promote sustainable insect collection and insect farming.

21. APFC promotes the adoption and effective implementation of national codes of practice for forest harvesting and reduced impact logging (RIL) through various training and awareness-raising activities. Funding from the *FAO-Norway Project Cooperation Agreement* has been used to strengthen implementation of codes of practice. Funding also has been secured from the Australian *Asia-Pacific Forestry Skills and Capacity-Building Programme (APFSCBP)* to carry on this important work.

22. In the middle of 2009 a series of workshops were organized under APFSCBP, focusing on strengthening implementation of codes of practice for forest harvesting. This included the regional workshop on *Strengthening implementation of codes of practice for forest harvesting through effective systems of monitoring and evaluation* that took place in Beijing and Yanji, China, 22-24 June 2009. National workshops, dealing with monitoring and evaluation of codes of practice were conducted in Papua New Guinea and Malaysia.

Activities designed to foster greater involvement of people in forestry

23. As a founding partner in the *Mangroves for the Future* initiative, FAO supports coastal restoration and conservation activities alongside livelihood aspects in coastal ecosystems of India, Indonesia, Maldives, Seychelles, Sri Lanka and Thailand. Similar coastal management activities are being supported in Myanmar by the *Sustainable Community-based Mangrove Management in Wunbaik Forest Reserve Project*, funded by FAO's Technical Cooperation Programme. The 2-year project, initiated in March 2009, aims to establish a locally relevant management model combining livelihood development with sustainable resource conservation and management in mangrove forests along the Rakhine coast.

24. In Mongolia, the Netherlands-funded *Capacity Building and Institutional Development for Participatory Natural Resources Management and Conservation in Forest Areas Project* started full-fledged operations in 2008. The project is pioneering participatory forest management in Mongolia through forest user groups at the field level and policy reform at national and regional levels. The project will continue until 2012.

25. Similar approaches are being supported in the Philippines through the New Zealand-funded *Enhancing Natural Resources Management Through Enterprise Development Project*. The 3-year project is building capacities among community-based organizations, cooperatives and associations engaged in natural resources-dependent rural enterprises. A *Guidebook on ENR-Community Enterprise Development and Management* will be produced to document experiences from eight pilot sites.

26. A TCP-supported *Institutional and Technical Capacity Building in Support of Leasehold Forestry Project* in Nepal concluded in 2009. The project continued FAO's long-running support for leasehold forestry as a poverty reduction strategy in Nepal. The TCP project has set the stage for a new Finland-funded *Technical Assistance for Leasehold Forestry and Livestock Development Programme*.

27. The Italian-funded *Market-Oriented Agroforestry to Reduce Poverty in Quang Nam Province (Viet Nam) Project* was initiated in 2008 with the aim of enhancing the quality of agroforestry and strengthening market linkages. Innovative micro-finance mechanisms are also being explored. The project will operate until 2011 and builds on the experiences of an earlier Italian-funded project in the same Vietnamese province that concluded in 2007.

28. The *First Regional Forum for People and Forests: Carbon Financing and Community Forestry* was organized in collaboration with RECOFTC (The Center for People and Forests), and the Government of Viet Nam, in Hanoi, Viet Nam, 17-21 August 2009. The forum emphasized the need for giving stronger voice to forest-based communities in negotiations related to climate change and produced a Call for Action, widely distributed to policy makers and media in the region.

29. In collaboration with the Southeast Asian Network for Agroforestry Education (SEANAFE), FAO continues to compile and publish *APANews*, a regular newsletter featuring technical notes, research results, project experience and other information of relevance to agroforestry extensionists and practitioners in the region.

30. Under the Global Environment Facility's Pacific Alliance for Sustainability, the *Forestry Conservation and Protected Area Management Project* is being initiated in Fiji, Niue, Samoa and Vanuatu. It promotes best conservation and protected area management practices and, as such, the project is enhancing income generation from ecotourism and other non-wood forest products.

FAO GLOBAL INITIATIVES

31. The Global Forest Resource Assessment Programme 2010 (FRA 2010) is the most comprehensive assessment of forests and forestry to date – both in terms of scope and number of countries involved. It presents information from 233 countries along 90 variables. With the purpose of reviewing draft country reports and clarify issues related to the reporting methodology FRA 2010 workshops on FRA 2010 were held in all corners of the world during 2008 (in the Asia-Pacific region they were convened in Hanoi, Vietnam and Nadi, Fiji). The main findings were presented at a press conference in FAO HQ on March 25 and the main report will be released in October 2010 (refer to FO:APFC/2010/3).

32. As part of FRA 2010, FAO is also carrying out a Remote Sensing Survey (RSS), in collaboration with the Joint Research Centre of the European Commission (JRC) and South Dakota State University, USA. This survey will substantially improve the knowledge on land use change dynamics over time, including deforestation, afforestation and natural expansion of forests. The remote sensing survey is expected to be completed by the end of 2011.

33. Working in collaboration with FAO's FRA and National Forest Monitoring and Assessment Programmes, the Japan-funded *Strengthening Monitoring, Assessment and Reporting (MAR) on Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) in Asia Project* works with countries in Asia and the Pacific in harmonizing approaches to forest-related monitoring, assessment and reporting. The 5-year project examines and disseminates manuals and guidelines, builds stakeholders' networks, and supports countries' efforts to study and elaborate national monitoring, assessment and reporting systems. This project will be completed in December 2010.
34. The National Forest Programme Facility (NFP Facility) assists the development and implementation of national forest programmes (NFPs) as dynamic processes for supporting sustainable forest management – including on forest-related climate change issues. The NFP Facility particularly stresses the importance of effective stakeholder participation in forestry decision making, and strengthening national capacities through training, knowledge management and awareness raising. Since 2002, the NFP Facility has served as a key mechanism for supporting countries in developing and implementing national forest programmes through 75 partnerships established globally. To date, 13 countries and 1 regional organization in Asia and the Pacific have established partnerships with the NFP Facility. These are: Bhutan, Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Mongolia, Nepal, Pakistan, Palau, Philippines, Thailand, Vanuatu and Viet Nam, and the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC). Of these partnerships, China and Pakistan have already entered Phase II.
35. FAO's Forests and Climate Change programme works to help strengthen countries' capacities in climate change adaptation and mitigation. Furthermore, it provides technical input to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) on issues related to forests. It provides information and awareness-raising through publications, a website, the monthly list-server "CLIM-FO-L" presentations and seminars. FAO is providing technical input to the UNFCCC deliberations on "reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries" (REDD). In July 2008, FAO in collaboration with UNDP and UNEP launched the United Nations Collaborative Programme on Reducing Emission from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries (UN-REDD). This \$52 million programme provides financial and technical support for with the aim of creating "REDD-readiness" in selected countries.
36. FAO's Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (CGRFA) has requested a *State of the World's Forests Genetic Resources* report to be prepared and presented to the Commission in 2013. The six regional forestry commissions (including APFC) and the Committee on Forestry (COFO) are involved in the preparation of the report, in collaboration with various other partners.
37. FAO organized the *XIII World Forestry Congress*, in Buenos Aires, Argentina, 18-25 October 2009. Over 7 000 participants from international organizations, governments, academia, the private sectors and civil society came together for the event, which is held every six years.
38. The *State of the World's Forests* reports every two years on the status of global forests. The report makes current, reliable and policy-relevant information widely available to facilitate informed discussion and decision-making with regard to the world's forests. As such, the report serves as a source of information to support forest-related policy and research. It is hoped that it will also stimulate creative thinking and debate to enhance the future of the world's forests. The eighth edition of the publication was released in 2009 with the theme "*Society, forests and forestry: adapting for the future*".
39. FAO published a *Global review of forest and pests diseases* in 2009 with the objective to assist forest health specialists, forest managers and policy-makers worldwide to make informed decisions. The publication addresses forest pests and diseases comprehensively at the global level. It summarizes the results of a thematic study reviewing forest pests in 25 countries. The study also presents profiles of some globally-important forest pest species, and discusses selected forest trees species and their associated pests.

40. *Forests and water* was published by FAO in 2008, as a thematic study initiated under the Global Forest Resources Assessment. The publication highlights the need for holistic management of complex watershed ecosystems, taking into account interactions between water, forests and other land uses.

41. Another report published in 2008 was *Forests and energy*. It discusses the present and future contribution of wood in the production of bioenergy, as well as the effects of liquid biofuel crop developments on forests. This publication targets both specialized and general audiences interested in learning more about the role of forests in energy production.

42. *Strategies and financial mechanisms for sustainable use and conservation of forests: experiences from Latin America and Asia* was published in early 2010. The report presents various examples of innovative forestry financing from both Latin American and Asian contexts. The publication seeks to identify possible avenues of financing for sustainable forest management and its successful implementation. The material presented is derived from a regional workshop held in Chiang Mai, Thailand, in late-2006.

FAO FIELD PROGRAMME

43. Through its *Field Programme*, FAO provides direct assistance to member countries in policy development, forestry development and capacity building. The focus of field projects in recent years has been predominantly on: i) sustainable forest management through improved forest harvesting; ii) implementation of participatory approaches in forest management; iii) sustainable development of non-wood forest products; iv) improvement of forest policy, information and statistics; and v) forest-based livelihoods. After a period with significant decline in funding and number of Asia-Pacific forestry projects this trend has reversed in the past several years.

PRIORITIES FOR FUTURE WORK

44. In reflecting upon the work carried out during the past two years, and considering the array of needs facing the region, delegates are invited to identify priorities for the future work of the Commission, FAO and partner organizations.

Recommendation of the 22nd Session of the APFC

For the attention of Governments and FAO

The Commission recommended:

Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) and climate change

- be cognizant of complex ecological factors and risks attendant to forest land-use change
- employ the principles, approaches and tools of sustainable forest management in climate change projects and REDD demonstration activities
- maintain a strong emphasis on capacity building and requested specific assistance to strengthen national capacities for dealing with climate change issues
- strengthen efforts to help countries integrate policies and strategies on climate change mitigation and adaptation into national forest programmes (NFPs)
- support work on methodological issues related to REDD, including the definition of “forest degradation.”
- assist with REDD-readiness and demonstration activities in developing countries by enhancing transfer of knowledge and technology, particularly with regard to monitoring and accounting of forest carbon, in addition to strengthening monitoring, assessment and reporting on sustainable forest management in Asia and the Pacific
- develop tools that could assist countries to address other ecosystem services and livelihood benefits in their REDD strategies
- assist developing countries in securing financial resources for carrying out REDD-readiness and demonstration activities
- help strengthen countries’ analytical capacities, and to assist by summarizing and clarifying the complexities of climate change mechanisms
- prepare guidelines for developing national forest climate change adaptation plans
- use opportunities presented by United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) and the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF) to convey the forestry communities’ perspectives on forests and climate change to UNFCCC

Enhancing forest-based livelihoods

- ensure secure forest tenure and provide other enabling factors that facilitate improvements in livelihoods for forest-dependent people
- develop guidelines to assist countries in developing policies and practices relating to social aspects of sustainable forest management and poverty alleviation
- assist countries in developing effective mechanisms, as appropriate, to collect and distribute payments for environmental services

Combatting illegal logging and associated trade

- strengthen discussion and collaborative action to enhance regional and national actions to combat illegal logging and associated trade
- implement a stock-taking review of national forest law compliance and governance activities and initiatives

- assist countries in strengthening capacity and securing financial resources to enable effective implementation of measures to combat illegal logging and improve forest law compliance
- assist member countries in developing and implementing simple and practical tools and mechanisms for combating illegal logging and associated trade, including voluntary forest and chain-of-custody certification (including mutual recognition), legality verification systems, national standards and codes of practice, criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management, and reviews of legislation and governance-related initiatives

Strengthening partnerships and collaboration

- strengthen partnerships with relevant organizations, and continue to participate in and inform international forestry processes
- explore modalities to establish closer collaborative links with RECOFTC to support issues related to sustainable forest management and improved livelihoods
- give high priority to building and strengthening capacities for the transfer of skills and information, and to promote international and inter-sectoral cooperation and collaboration in developing responses to emerging forestry challenges
- carefully assess priorities and potential synergies so that activities could be focused on the most critical issues
- enhance sharing of information and experiences across the region and to improve access to relevant data
- international agencies should coordinate closely to minimize overlaps in work programmes and ensure maximum efficiency in resource utilization

Others

- ensure that the findings of the outlook study are incorporated into strategic planning processes and used to guide reform and re-invention of forestry agencies
- promote investment in forestry education and to support collaborative efforts such as this network
- provide policy support to member countries in assessing the potential social, economic and environmental implications of biofuels production
- continue providing support for effective implementation of national forest programmes
- continue support for executive training in forest policy, forestry education networks, the regional forest policy initiative, follow-up to the second Asia-Pacific Forestry Sector Outlook Study, national forest programmes, and monitoring, assessment and reporting for sustainable forest management activities
- study mechanisms that might enable the realization of “green premiums” for sustainable forest management
- facilitate reporting of the outcomes of international forestry processes to UNFCCC
- assist forestry agencies to review structures, policies and functions to better align these with new demands, objectives and expectations
- support member countries in maximizing the use of the findings of the Asia-Pacific Forestry Sector Outlook Study and the APFC study on re-inventing forestry agencies