



▶ PROMOTING IMPROVED FOREST MANAGEMENT



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# Asia-Pacific *forestry focus*

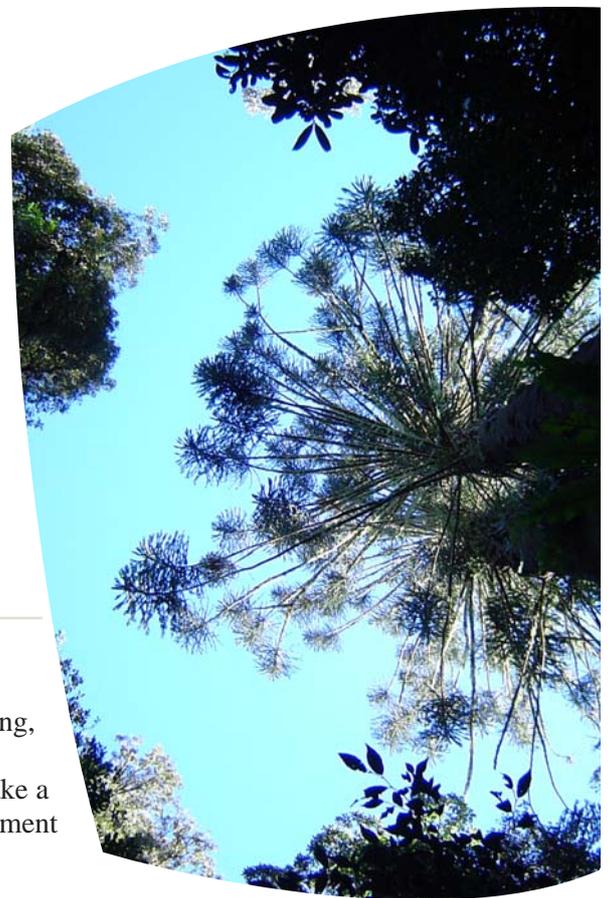
ADDRESSING THE FORESTRY NEEDS OF ASIA-PACIFIC COUNTRIES AND SOWING SEEDS FOR SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT

## Promoting improved forest management

Implementing sustainable forest management continues to be a critical challenge facing most countries in the Asia-Pacific region. FAO, working in collaboration with the Asia-Pacific Forestry Commission (APFC) and other partners, is assisting countries in implementing better forest management practices by developing standards and guidelines, providing training,

disseminating information and promoting better harvesting practices. Recent activities have focused on:

- reduced impact logging;
- codes of practice for forest harvesting; and
- criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management.



## Reduced impact logging

Reduced impact logging (RIL) involves a systematic approach to planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating forest harvesting to minimize associated environmental damage. It encompasses measures that can make a significant contribution to the achievement of sustainable forest management and, consequently, is a topic that has achieved considerable attention in international forestry fora.



Several activities relating to reduced impact logging are being implemented by the FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific:

- RILNET listserver, an e-mail distribution network, facilitated under the auspices of the APFC, established to distribute information, research results, and details of activities related to reduced impact logging.
- Study tours to observe various aspects of reduced impact logging and related training activities.
- Training courses in RILSIM (a software package for the financial analysis of logging practices) and methods in curriculum development.
- Organization of meetings such as the RIL Conference held in 2001.
- Coordination of a regional forest harvesting project in Myanmar, Lao PDR, and Vietnam.



## Codes of practice for forest harvesting

*Codes serve to promote sustainable forest management with emphasis on timber harvesting from natural forests.*

Recent FAO work on codes of practice in the region has largely centered the development and implementation of the *Code of practice for forest harvesting in Asia and the Pacific*.

The *Code* provides practical guidance toward sustainable forest management, with particular emphasis on timber harvesting in natural forests. The Asia-Pacific Forestry Commission (APFC) coordinated the development of the *Code*, which was subsequently endorsed by ASEAN Ministers for Agriculture and Forestry, and the ASEAN Senior

Officials on Forestry in 2001. A *Regional strategy for implementing the Code of Practice for Forest Harvesting in Asia-Pacific* has also been developed.

Since publication of the *Code* and the *Regional Strategy*, several national and international organizations have initiated activities to support and strengthen their implementation.

Activities include awareness raising and training, the preparation of national codes and reduced impact logging guidelines, targeted research and the dissemination of information related to better forest harvesting and management. FAO has recently supported activities in China, Fiji, Mongolia, Myanmar, Lao PDR, the Philippines and Viet Nam.

## IMPROVING FOREST MANAGEMENT Asia-Pacific



Support for reduced impact logging and for the implementation of criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management exemplify FAO's efforts to improve forest management.

Experiences in these areas are described in the following publications:

- *Applying reduced impact logging to advance sustainable forest management.*
- *Practical guidelines for the assessment, monitoring and reporting on national level criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management.*

## Support for criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management

*Criteria and indicators allow periodic assessment of local and national progress towards sustainable forest management.*

Clearly defined criteria and indicators (C&I) are now widely recognized as useful tools for monitoring progress toward sustainable forest management around the world. The International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO) pioneered the development of criteria for sustainable forest management and, within the Asia-Pacific region, a number of tropical countries use the ITTO criteria as a basis for national-level monitoring. Several temperate countries in the region have also adopted criteria and indicators developed through the Montreal Process for Temperate and Boreal Forests.

FAO, at the request of the Asia-Pacific Forestry Commission, has centered its work on promoting the use of C&I by countries and in forest types that were not previously included in other international C&I processes. Consistent with this, one of the main areas guided by FAO has been the development of criteria and indicators for dry forests in Asia.

FAO continues to support countries in implementing national-level criteria and indicators and assists in exchanging relevant information, methodologies and experiences.



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