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# Asia-Pacific forestry focus

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

## Forest and biodiversity conservation

There is increasing recognition of the value of forests in the Asia-Pacific region. The region contains 8 of the 20 richest countries, in terms of biodiversity, and as such, contributes significantly to global biodiversity – much of which is contained in its forests. In spite of the global value of biodiversity, forests continue to be under great pressure due to clearing for agriculture and other non-forest land uses and also due to poorly managed logging operations. This has led to a significant reduction in the region's forest area and substantial degradation and fragmentation of the remaining forests.

FAO's forest and biodiversity conservation activities largely focus on the provision of guidance

and policy advice on issues such as: forest rehabilitation, the role of forestry in increasing land productivity (through improved land-use planning, agroforestry and integrated watershed management), and in wildlife and conservation and protected area management activities.

Some of FAO's activities contributing to forest and biodiversity conservation include:

- forest rehabilitation and restoration;
- Asian elephant conservation;
- development of a regional conservation strategy;
- criteria and indicators;
- improved utilization of wood residues;
- codes of practice for forest harvesting; and
- reduced impact logging.



## Effectiveness of logging bans

*“Forest out of bounds: impacts and effectiveness of logging bans in natural forests in Asia-Pacific”* (FAO/RAP Publication 2001/08) reviews the region's experience in implementing logging bans and other restrictions on timber harvesting. The analysis reveals that the removal of natural forests from timber production has resulted in significant negative impacts on the forest products sector and often has not led to improved forest and biodiversity conservation. The study suggests that although logging bans can be an effective tool in selected instances, truly sustainable forest management provides a better long-term solution than more reactive measures.



## Forest rehabilitation and restoration

FAO's forest rehabilitation activities in Asia and the Pacific focus on information dissemination through:

- publications
- workshops
- demonstration field projects

The region is facing continuing degradation of its forest resources. FAO actively promotes forest rehabilitation and restoration. Some recent activities include:

- Support for *assisted natural regeneration (ANR)*, based on the ecological principles of secondary forest succession. ANR builds on natural processes and promotes the regeneration of indigenous species; it is therefore especially effective in restoring and enhancing biological diversity and ecological processes.
- The International Conference on *Bringing back the forests: policies and practices for degraded lands and forests* was organized to enable the exchange of experiences and knowledge among the various

stakeholders involved in forest rehabilitation and to promote successful (new) approaches to forest rehabilitation (FAO/RAP Publication 2005/14).

- *Helping forests take cover* (RAP Publication 2005/13) presents the basic issues of forest rehabilitation in a style suitable for a wide range of decision makers. It examines case studies and discusses the environmental and market forces that influence rehabilitation of landscapes.
- *Implementation of forest rehabilitation projects in China, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Philippines, Sri Lanka, and Vietnam*. Projects test and demonstrate innovative approaches such as ANR, coastal rehabilitation, agroforestry and participatory reforestation.

# TIGERPAPER

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON BRINGING BACK THE FORESTS

## TIGERPAPER

Regional Quarterly Bulletin on Wildlife and National Parks Management

Vol. XXXI, No. 1

Featuring

## FOREST NEWS

Vol. XXXI, No. 1

*Tigerpaper* is a quarterly news bulletin dedicated to the exchange of information related to wildlife and protected area management for the Asia-Pacific region. It was first produced in July 1975. Since 1987, it also incorporates *Forest News*, which details FAO's forestry activities in the region. It has a distribution of more than 2000 copies throughout the region.

## C&I for sustainable forest management

In the past, production forests were largely managed for wood production. In recent decades, however, there has been a change in perception regarding the importance of production forests for biodiversity conservation. As a result, various international processes have developed criteria and indicators (C&I) for sustainable forest management, based on the economic, ecological and social pillars of sustainability. FAO has supported the development of C&I here in the region by organizing meetings and producing publications including:

- *Development of national-level criteria and indicators for the sustainable management of dry forests of Asia: workshop report* (RAP 2000/07)
- *Development of national-level criteria and indicators for the sustainable management of dry forests of Asia: background papers* (RAP 2000/08)
- *Practical guidelines for the assessment, monitoring and reporting on national level criteria and indicators*

*for sustainable forest management in dry forests in Asia* (RAP 2003/05)

FAO also supports countries in the region in the development of national forest certification schemes by providing a neutral forum for discussion on the various different options for certification.

- *Forest certification in China: latest developments and future strategies*. (RAP Publication 2005/08). At the invitation of the State Forest Administration of China, FAO organized a meeting attended by representatives of all major national and international forest certification schemes active in the region.



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