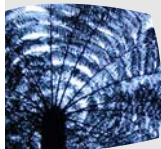




► FOREST POLICIES AND INSTITUTIONS



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► REINVENTING FORESTRY AGENCIES

Asia-Pacific forestry focus

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

Forest policies and institutions

In many countries, forest policies have failed to produce intended results as a result of poor formulation, lack of human capacity, scarcity of funding, inadequate regulatory environment and ineffective enforcement.

To address this situation, the FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific is supporting initiatives to strengthen institutional capabilities and policy implementation in forest management. Initiatives presently under development or implementation include a proposed Asia-Pacific forest policy network, a forest policy short course and studies on “reinvention” of forestry agencies.

FAO also provides more general policy and institutional support in the Asia-Pacific region by facilitating networks, providing technical advice and organizing

training activities. Considerable efforts are directed towards analysis and dissemination of information on key issues affecting forestry in the region. Recent publications addressing policy issues in the region include:

- *Forests out of bounds: impacts and effectiveness of logging bans in natural forests in Asia-Pacific*
- *Forests and floods: drowning in fiction or thriving on facts?*
- *What does it take? The role of incentives in forest plantation development in Asia and the Pacific*

Regular publications that provide advice to policy makers and planners include *State of forestry in Asia and the Pacific* and the *Asia-Pacific Forestry Sector Outlook Study*.



Asia-Pacific forest policy network

FAO is providing support for the development of an Asia-Pacific forest policy network that aims to bring together policy makers and analysts from the region to promote discussions and develop practical proposals to support sustainable forest management. The network will analyze forest policy issues of regional significance by drawing together policy experts and identifying appropriate responses.

To assess the need for the establishment of such policy network, FAO organized an expert consultation in Manila, Philippines, in March 2006, to explore options and recommend measures for eventual establishment of a network.



Forest policy short course

The forest policy short course brings together experienced international foresters, policy makers and professional educators to teach a curriculum that integrates analytical and communication skills with an in-depth exploration of the economic, environmental and social issues that make forestry a uniquely challenging area for effective policy making.

The forest policy short course is designed for policy analysts and policy makers in the region and is founded on the belief that only through implementation of effective policies can forestry contribute to protecting key economic, social and environmental values. The course aims to impart skills and knowledge necessary to:

- recognize where policy analysis is appropriate;
- apply different approaches for forest policy analysis;
- implement, monitor and evaluate policy; and
- effectively communicate results of policy analysis.

Devolution of forest management

Many countries in the region are decentralizing forest management to local governments and devolving decision-making powers to local people. This paradigm shift opens new avenues for more equitable distribution of benefits from forest management and more effective forest protection.

FAO supports this transition by promoting the sharing of information on approaches toward decentralization and devolution of forest management. In collaboration with the Regional Community Forestry Training Center (RECOFTC) and other partners, FAO is establishing a participatory forestry network “community of practice” in the Asia-Pacific region. Its goal is to promote sharing of experiences in the implementation of participatory forestry approaches.

The course employs a range of teaching methods in an intensive two-week session specifically tuned to the requirements of different countries or groups of countries. The first part of the curriculum focuses on understanding the policy process, especially formulation, implementation, evaluation and monitoring. During the second week, participants gain familiarity with tools used in the policy process. The central importance of consultation and participation throughout the policy process is also given prominence.

Reinventing forestry agencies

Forestry institutions in the Asia-Pacific region are confronted by rapidly changing expectations and demands. Most forestry agencies in the region are, however, still struggling to come to terms with their new roles and responsibilities. In many instances, structures and capacities are outmoded and ineffective.

If government forestry agencies are to grasp opportunities and remain relevant in serving the public need, many need to go through a process of “reinvention.”

To provide countries with sound recommendations for appropriate national forestry institutional structures, FAO has been working through the Asia-Pacific Forestry

Commission (APFC) to conduct case studies in countries that have undertaken major forestry sector restructuring. The studies will identify and consider factors that contributed to success or failure. Comparative analysis is expected to reveal commonalities from which countries planning to undertake significant transitions may draw lessons.

The overall goal of the initiative is to assist countries in re-aligning their forestry institutions so they can better meet the changing demands placed upon them.

FOREST OWNERSHIP AND TENURE Asia-Pacific



Under the umbrella of the Asia Forest Partnership, and in collaboration with other partners, FAO has initiated a policy study to better understand the relationships between forest resource tenure and forest management, and in particular the implications for poverty alleviation.



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