



**Regional Conference**

**“Strengthening resilient food and agriculture systems –Implementing the Sendai Framework for DRR in the Agriculture Sector in Asia and the Pacific”**

**15 - 16 March 2018, Ha Noi, Viet Nam**

**Session Concept Note**

<b>Session</b>	<b>Parallel Session S1 – Forestry</b>
<b>Title</b>	<b><i>Unpacking risks and pathways for resilient forestry in light of the 2030 Agenda</i></b>
<b>Date</b>	Thursday 15 <sup>th</sup> March 2018
<b>Time</b>	14.00 – 17.00 hours
<b>Venue</b>	TBC
<b>Organizers</b>	FAO RAP Contact: Thomas Hofer
<b>Background</b>	<p>Asia and the Pacific is the least forested region in the world with total forest area estimated at 740 million hectares, accounting for about 26% of total land area in the region.<sup>i</sup> Globally, forests account for 30.6% of global land area<sup>ii</sup>. Asia and the Pacific is home to 55% of the world population but accounts for only 18.5% of total forests.<sup>iii</sup> The forests also are not evenly distributed with South Asia accounting for 23% of the world population but only 2% of global forest area.</p> <p>Forests and trees play an important role in Asia-Pacific economies on account of their diverse economic, social, environmental and cultural values. Essential ecosystem services such as protecting bio-gene diversity and habitat, acting as carbon sinks, sustaining water supplies, arresting soil erosion, soil reinforcement and anchoring and slope stabilization, etc. contribute to food and nutrition security, provide recreation as well as livelihood opportunities.</p> <p>It is also well recognised that forestry sector plays an important role in reducing disaster risk, climate change mitigation and adaptation. Forests provide protective barrier to mitigate the force and effects of hazards like floods and landslides. Dense forest cover not only helps in arresting the force of storms and tsunami surges and thereby mitigating the effects but also provides timber (from felled trees) and space for temporary shelter and recovery. However, there is limited evidence of this role through analysis such as on the interactions between forest types and different hazards and underlying drivers of risks or the impacts of sustainable forest management in reducing risks and strengthening resilience of the ecosystems to support resilient livelihoods.</p> <p>The Asia-Pacific forestry sector is undergoing unprecedented changes as economies grow rapidly and demands on forests for goods and services accelerate. Already the impacts of these changes are being felt within and outside the region and in some cases the increasing demands and the absence of concomitant investments have undermined long-term sustainability.<sup>iv</sup> These anthropogenic factors, ranging from development priorities (roads, infrastructure, dams, and such), changing land-use priorities, increasing consumption of forest goods, human-animal conflict, as well as conflict and displacement have heightened the risks to forestry sector. This is reflected in the increasing number and scale of forest fires, landslides, and pestilence apart from hazards like floods, flash floods, droughts, and cyclones as well as increased incidents of deforestation for hosting of refugees and other conflict</p>

situations. These disaster events not only have direct adverse impacts on forests but also heighten prospective risks through dead wood accumulation and depletion of green cover and thereby increasing exposure. When the anthropogenic factors interact with changing characteristics of natural hazards, due partly to climate change and climate variability, the risks get exacerbated. Climate change further poses a peculiar juxtaposition to the forestry sector by necessitating special focus on increasing the forest cover and carbon sequestration capacity.

There is an urgent need to increase the understanding of the underlying factors of evolving risks facing the forestry sector in the changing contexts and climate change to accelerate actions to reduce risks and strengthen resilience of forests. Studies on impact of disasters on the forestry sector exist yet not much risk analysis is readily available. Further, systematic accounting of disaster damage and loss to the sector is lacking that limits proper analysis of risks and hinders risk-informed programming in the forestry sector. It also undermines the importance of forest and forestry sector in the overall DRM planning and programme prioritization.

The 2030 Agenda including the Sendai Framework for DRR (SFDRR) and Paris Agreement attach great importance to strengthening resilience of the agriculture sectors and livelihoods to achieve the SDGs. This is reflected in SFDRR Target-C with a specific indicator for reducing agriculture disaster damage and loss and the related SDG indicator 1.5.2.

Resilience of food and agriculture systems is instrumental for achieving several SDGs: no poverty, zero hunger, sustainable cities and communities and climate action.

To take forward the 2030 Agenda, specifically the implementation of the SFDRR, this parallel session will thus unpack the existing and anticipated risks facing the forestry sector; take stock of on-going efforts and share lessons learned by stakeholders in reducing risks to and strengthening resilience of the sector; and identify priorities in policies, programme and actions to further strengthen the resilience building efforts.

Guided by the four priorities for action of the SFDRR viz. (1) Understanding disaster risk; (2) Strengthening disaster risk governance to manage disaster risk; (3) Investing in disaster risk reduction for resilience and (4) Enhancing disaster preparedness for effective response and to “Build Back Better” in recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction, the session deliberations would focus on the following set of questions:

- What is the nature of existing and emerging risks (induced by natural hazards and human-induced hazards, climate change facing the forestry sector and their drivers? Are there any sub-regional (South-Asia, South-East Asia, North-Asia, and such) patterns evolving in terms of the nature of risks? Further, how do these risks vary across forest types like tropical, deciduous, evergreen, dry, plantation, reserve, coastal and mangroves, mountainous vs. plains, as well as national parks, protected areas, and such?
- How is the nature and manifestations of these risks evolving especially in the backdrop of rapid urbanization in the Asian region, globally connected economies and market forces, and national development priorities? What is the progress in risk analysis, challenges and gaps?
- What kind of policy, institutions and capacity exist and are needed for enhancing the forest sector’s resilience as well as its role in managing risks of disasters and climate change?
- What efforts / initiatives are on way to prevent/reduce risks and strengthen resilience

	<p>in the forestry sector? What are the lessons learned, opportunities and gaps for policy and programming? Further, what are the emerging priorities (at the policy, programme and actions levels) to strengthen these efforts?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How to build coherence in policies and investments pertaining forest development, food and nutrition security, DRR, and CCA as well as urban development to manage risks and strengthen resilience of the forestry sector as countries deliver on their commitments for the 2030 Agenda? Further, how should these policies be translated into a plan of action for the forestry sector to implement the SFDRR and Paris Agreement?</li> </ul>
<b>Session objectives</b>	<p>The session aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analyse the existing and evolving risks to the forestry sector;</li> <li>• Take stock of ongoing actions to manage risks to and build resilience of the forestry sector in light of the 2030 Agenda;</li> <li>• Deliberate on priority actions at policy, institution and programmatic level for strengthening the resilience of the forestry sector to further the implementation of the SFDRR and the overall 2030 Agenda.</li> </ul>
<b>Expected outcomes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identification of risks to the forestry sector and lessons learned on managing the risks and strengthening resilience of the sector and dependent livelihoods;</li> <li>• Identification of priority actions to be undertaken for further strengthening resilience of the forestry sector for implementation of the SFDRR.</li> </ul>
<b>Session format</b>	<p>The session could be a combination of a panel discussion and plenary and/or group discussion. The indicative schedule is below:</p> <p>14.00 – 14.05 Introduction by the Chair</p> <p>14.05 – 14.20 Keynote address</p> <p>14.20 – 15.20 Panel discussion, moderated by the Chair</p> <p>15.20 – 15.35 Round of question and answers with the panellists by the participants</p> <p>15.35 – 15.50 Coffee break</p> <p>15.50 – 16.50 Facilitated plenary discussion and/or 4 roundtable discussions to identifying priority actions for strengthening resilience in the forestry sector</p> <p>16.50 – 17.00 Wrap up by the Chair</p>

Participants who would like to contribute papers and/or speak as a panellist at this session,

*Please click here for contribution and send the information of your contribution to [kaustubh.devale@fao.org](mailto:kaustubh.devale@fao.org) and [agrisendai2018@gmail.com](mailto:agrisendai2018@gmail.com)*

<sup>i</sup> <http://www.fao.org/docrep/012/i1594e/i1594e00.pdf>

<sup>ii</sup> FAO, 2015, Unasylva: Vol. 66 2015/1-2, 243/244, <http://www.fao.org/forestry/unasylva/70547/en/>

<sup>iii</sup> <http://www.fao.org/docrep/012/i1594e/i1594e00.pdf>

<sup>iv</sup> *ibid*

<sup>v</sup> <https://www.unisdr.org/we/inform/publications/43291>