

RESOLUTIONS OF THE

International Conference on “*Quality Timber Products of Teak from Sustainable Forest Management*”, held at Kerala Forest Research Institute, Peechi, Kerala, India, 2-5 December 2003

PREAMBLE

The excellent properties and versatile nature of teak (*Tectona grandis* L. f.) timber and its eminent suitability for an array of uses are well documented. The potential for raising and managing teak in different agro-ecological zones and under natural forests, plantations, and agroforestry situations as well as trees outside forests under varying intensities and mixtures is being increasingly recognized. This has led to intensive domestication and cultivation of teak in countries/regions beyond its natural habitat in the tropics. Despite the value of teak timber and its increasing demand, its full potential for providing revenue, rural income, employment opportunities and development of value-added down stream processing, and contributing to national income is not duly recognized.

Although considerable amount of research has gone into refining various aspects of teak silviculture, management and utilisation, knowledge on teak still suffers from serious gaps in certain vital aspects such as quality of planting stock, land categorization for site-species matching, short rotation intensive management, protection from pests and diseases, downstream processing with due respect to the environmental concerns, marketing and above all policy and institutional support including identification and action on research gaps as well as technology extension. Furthermore, the overall impact of range of benefits accrued from teak plantations to meet community requirements of wood products need to be better understood to ensure the long-term sustainability of teak wood resource.

Considerations

In line with the Conference theme - Quality Timber Products of Teak from Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) in meeting the growing teak wood demands of the modern society and taking cognizance of the dynamic nature of technology, socio-economics, market, institutions, governance, policy and policy instruments the following need to be considered.

- To regain the pre-eminence of teak in view of its sterling properties,
- To reduce production cost and improve the quality of teak wood and to adjust to the changing market requirements and specifications,
- To meet the existing and emerging demand for teakwood at prices fair to the consumer and remunerative to the producer,
- To keep the forest land under appropriate use “where it will produce most and deteriorate least” by adopting species/ provenances/varieties for their productivity, socio-economic benefits and utility,
- To install equity (social/gender) and sustainability as prime considerations without compromising on the imperative of efficiency (i.e., input-output relationship),
- To facilitate the involvement of different categories of investors (MNCs to local farmers), for mobilizing resources and to ensure adequate return on investment,
- To involve people, community, NGOs and other stakeholders in the process of planning and development of teak,
- To continuously enhance technology, management, value addition, marketing system and institutional support,
- To add incremental doses of competitive advantage (eg. reflected in efficiency of technology, human resource and governance) to the natural comparative

advantage of teak, and to guide the dynamism of the situation in positive and appropriate direction,

- To benefit from the valuable experience of other countries and institutions with the aim of avoiding duplications and supporting Sustainable Forestry Development.

KERALA CALL FOR ACTION

Sequel to the three Regional Seminars/Workshops held on teak in the Asia Pacific Region (Yangoon 1995, Chiangmai, 1999, Jakarta 2000) during the period 1995-2000, the International Conference on “Quality Timber Products of Teak from Sustainable Forest Management”, hosted by Kerala Forest Research Institute at Peechi, Kerala, India under the auspices of ITTO, was attended by 175 participants representing 14 teak producer countries and 12 teak consumer countries. As part of the resolutions/recommendations, the International Conference hereby strongly urge and call upon the National Governments, Institutions and Agencies, International Assistance and Donor Organizations, investors and funding agencies, to collectively and collaboratively strive for addressing the following 13 points which will promote the tropical timber development programme to meet the societal needs of quality timber products.

Policy

1. Formulate and enforce appropriate (sub) policy on teak within the national forest, land-use and economic policies ensuring sustainability and long term security of investments.

Research and Technology

2. Evaluate and document the present condition of the teak crop/resource, and critically appraise the technology in use in the context of the new developments in research and linkages of research findings on teak with field practices.

3. Undertake appropriate steps to refine and package up-to-date technology for application in realistic field conditions involving, for example seed technology, plant genetics, silvicultural practices, agroforestry systems, protection, harvesting, product development, processing and value addition.
4. Research efforts should be directed to improving the productivity with fast grown and quality timber and designing new products for new markets and address technology transfer issues and commercialization of innovative and new products and services with a role of intellectual property, patents and licensing practices for better encouragement and support.
5. Recognizing the need for new teak producer countries to be aware of the danger posed by potential outbreaks of the teak defoliator, *Hyblaea puera*, teak growers need to implement appropriate pest monitoring systems and work towards prevention of outbreaks and developing suitable non-chemical methods for control of the pest by taking advantage of research already carried out in Asia.
6. Conduct comprehensive studies on `socio-economics' of teak, under different technological systems (monoculture, mixed planting, agroforestry, etc.), in comparison to other forest crops/products to demonstrate its economic viability/superiority and potential (in terms of competitive and comparative advantages) – as a means to attract investment flows.

Sustainable management of timber resource

7. Design and disseminate guidelines and codes of best practices relating to various steps and stages of teakwood production and utilization, through adequate extension mechanisms.
8. Develop integrated research and education, and the link between education and sustainable forest management (SFM) with multidisciplinary and multifaceted approaches that establish SFM and build partnerships for training and evaluation

9. Identify and analyse unsolved and emerging problems (both technical and non-technical) and initiate and implement measures to address them adequately in a coordinated and collaborative manner.
10. Collect, develop and disseminate trade/market information to promote and facilitate market access and success for teak products.
11. Establish and implement a comprehensive system of planning (involving long, medium and short term plans; and sites/locations, systems and market and so on) to avoid arbitrariness and *ad-hocism* in teak resource development.
12. Promote/facilitate establishment of targeted financing (in terms of adequacy and timeliness) to ensure that plans on teak development is financially supported.

Networking

13. Strengthen the system of regional and international collaboration, co-ordination and networking to promote exchange of research results and experience, trainings and human resource development between countries of tropical Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, supported by private sector, including communities and relevant international agencies.