

# EC-FAO PARTNERSHIP PROGRAMME

## *INFORMATION NOTE 2* (March 2002)



### Information and Analysis for Sustainable Forest Management Linking National and International Efforts in South Asia and Southeast Asia

An initiative of  
the Asia-Pacific Forestry Commission (APFC),  
The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), and  
the European Commission (EC)  
Project GCP/RAP/173/EC - Project ASI/B7-6201/IB/98/0531

## **INFORMATION – A KEY TO SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT IN ASIA**

Achieving sustainable management of forests and tree resources is the expressed goal of most forest policies in Asian countries. Reliable information is required to assist decision-makers in designing appropriate responses to emerging problems in the forestry sector. Collecting data and disseminating timely information are challenging tasks for national systems with weak capacities in forestry statistics in South Asia and Southeast Asia. Hence the Asia-Pacific Forestry Commission (APFC) has emphasised the need for improving forestry statistics and the quality of information to prepare the sector for the changes foreseen by the Asia-Pacific Forestry Sector Outlook Study.

## **RESPONDING TO THE CHALLENGE**

The Asia-Pacific Forestry Commission (APFC), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the European Commission (EC) have formed a partnership with the overall objective of promoting sustainable management of trees and forests founded on policies that integrate and balance economic, environmental and social aspects. The three-year programme is implemented in Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Vietnam. It focuses on three inter-related themes, namely (i) problem-oriented data gathering and updating of information, (ii) pilot studies specifically directed at methodological approaches related to topics not traditionally dealt with while collecting forestry statistics and (iii) focused policy reviews.

## **OUTPUTS**

The Programme is now in its third year. It recently organised the third steering committee meeting to assess progress and to discuss activities for 2002. The meeting, which was combined with a workshop on forest policy reviews, was held from 22 to 24 January in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The participants expressed their satisfaction with the Programme and recommended additional support for training activities in 2002. Major outputs of the meeting were agreements on a common approach and outline for national forest policy studies and the need to establish a network of forestry statistical correspondents.

## PILOT STUDIES

Since the inception of the Programme, more than 60 studies have been initiated in various countries to improve forestry-related information and to develop more effective methods for collecting data on forest conditions, the extent of private sector plantations, the economic contribution of non-timber forest products (NWFPs) and the environmental and socio-economic impacts of biofuel use. Regional studies are designed to review data collection and analysis of NWFPs, statistics of forest products and trade, and national woodfuel and wood energy information. Most studies are still ongoing and expected to be completed during the second quarter of 2002.

## TRAINING

An integral component of the Programme is capacity building and the need and demand for training was reconfirmed during the steering group meeting in Kuala Lumpur. The Programme has commissioned the Forest Survey of India (FSI) to prepare a training manual for assessing trees outside forests. The training manual was completed in March 2002 and will be used during a training workshop (22 to 26 April 2002 in Dehra Dun, India) for 20 participants from the countries taking part in the EC-FAO Partnership Programme. From 20 to 24 May 2002, a training course on forestry statistics will be organised in Bangkok to enhance information flows and enable countries to fulfil their commitments under the various international agreements and processes. This meeting will also formally inaugurate the network of forestry statistical correspondents. Other training workshops are to build on pilot studies and will be held during the second half of 2002.

## POLICY REVIEWS

Appropriate policies are the cornerstone of sustainable management of forests and tree resources. The EC-FAO Partnership Programme supports two initiatives in this area. The first one addresses "*The Impacts of Incentives on Forest Plantation Resource Development in Asia-Pacific*". It is being conducted in close collaboration with various partners including the Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR) and the USDA/Forest Service. Preliminary results of the eight-country study will be discussed during a workshop from 19 to 21 March 2002 in Manila, Philippines. The final results will be presented during the 19<sup>th</sup> Session of the APFC in August 2002. Participants of the steering committee meeting agreed upon the second initiative when they decided on a common outline for national forest policy studies. The studies will be completed during the second quarter of 2002 and provide a significant input to the forestry country papers to be prepared for the Session. The close link to the APFC and its 2002 Session will enhance the impact of the Programme's outputs and provide a mechanism for immediate and direct feedback.

## FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

Information on the EC-FAO Partnership Programme and results of completed studies can be found on the following webpages:

[http://www.fao.org/forestry/foris/index.jsp?lang\\_id=1&geo\\_id=42&start\\_id=2711](http://www.fao.org/forestry/foris/index.jsp?lang_id=1&geo_id=42&start_id=2711) or  
[http://www.fao.or.th/Technical\\_Groups/Forestry/EC-FAO\\_programme/ec-fao\\_programme.htm](http://www.fao.or.th/Technical_Groups/Forestry/EC-FAO_programme/ec-fao_programme.htm)

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