



Plantation incentives in Asia and the Pacific

What does it take? The role of incentives in forest plantation development in Asia and the Pacific. T. Enters, P.B. Durst, C. Brown, J. Carle and P. McKenzie. 2004. Bangkok, Thailand, FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific. ISBN 974-7946-60-2.

Historically, public-sector agencies have dominated forest plantation development in most countries in Asia and the Pacific. More recently, for a variety of reasons, it has been widely accepted that private small- and large-scale producers can grow trees and produce industrial wood in plantations with considerable comparative advantages over government departments. Consequently, there is a growing interest in involving the private sector directly in the development of forest plantations.

As the role of the public sector in forest plantation development is diminishing, governments are increasingly asking what incentives can most effectively encourage prospective small- and large-scale investors to grow trees. *What does it take? The role of incentives in forest plantation development in Asia and the Pacific* presents the results of a regional study carried out for the Asia-Pacific Forestry Commission to assess the impact of incentives on tree growing in nine countries. It helps fill a gap in knowledge about the role of direct and indirect incentives in influencing plantation development.

It is clear from the country case studies that what works in one country does not necessarily achieve the same outcome in another country, even if situations appear to be similar. Yet despite the diversity among countries and the different paths taken to expanding plantation areas, a common theme emerges: clear, consistent and stable policies and a favourable investment climate are essential to promote the development of forest plantations by both small- and large-scale producers. These factors are found to be more important than the provision of direct incentives such as free seedlings or tax deductions.

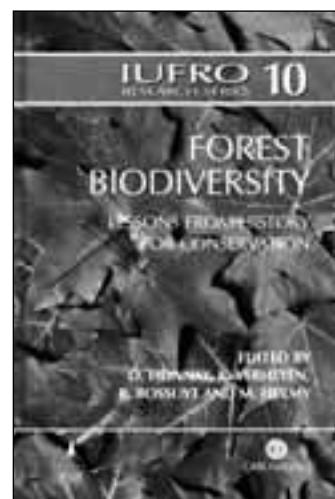
Those readers expecting clear guidance may be disappointed. A blueprint for stimulating investors to put their money and/or labour into trees does not exist. However, the overall picture that emerges is sufficiently coherent to outline a set of guiding principles that will contribute to achieving a viable forest plantation sector. These principles should help policy-makers and forest managers better understand the key issues, challenges and opportunities concerning private investment in forest plantation development.

Looking to the past to understand the present

Forest biodiversity: lessons from history for conservation. Honnay, O., Verheyen, K., Bossuyt, B., & Hermy, M., eds. 2004. IUFRO Research Series No. 10. Wallingford, Oxfordshire, UK, CABI Publishing. ISBN 0-85199-802-X.

The early 1980s brought about the idea of linking a thorough knowledge of forest history and past human disturbances to present-day vegetation patterns in forest ecosystems. Since this time, interest in the ecological history of forests has grown steadily which has triggered a new era of interdisciplinary research on forest history using both cultural evidence, such as written records and maps, and biological evidence, such as vegetation surveys and data from sedimentary records. Following this growing awareness of the long-term and often pervasive anthropogenic impacts on forest ecosystems, questions about the consequences for forest biodiversity were raised.

Forest biodiversity: lessons from history for conservation develops this field of interest by focusing on the diverse impact of forest history, forest continuity, fragmentation and past management on the diversity and distribution of species. The implications for the conservation of forest biodiversity are also



addressed. The emphasis is on temperate forests in Europe and North America, but the information may also be applicable to other regions.

The chapters have been developed from presentations given at a symposium History and Forest Biodiversity: Challenges for Conservation which was held in Leuven, Belgium in January 2003. The symposium was a joint initiative of the Laboratory of Forest, Nature and Landscape Research of the University of Leuven and the International Union of Forest Research Organizations (IUFRO) units on 'Ecological History' (6.07.04) and 'Biodiversity' (8.07.00).

Illustrating the evolution in forest historical ecological research over the past few decades, *Forest biodiversity: lessons from history for conservation* will be of significant interest to researchers working within the areas of forestry, ecology, conservation and environmental history.

What future for forest biotechnology?

The bioengineered forest – challenges for science and society. S.H. Strauss and H.D. Bradshaw, eds. 2004. Washington, DC, USA, Resources for the Future. ISBN 1-891853-71-6.

The controversial issue of bioengineering offers both opportunities and challenges for forestry. Bioengineering can produce more valuable wood, assist in reclaiming contaminated land, improve the health of urban trees and facilitate some kinds of pest management. However the ecological ramifications are complex, and strong public opposition has arisen against genetic modification.

The bioengineered forest provides a broad spectrum of opinion regarding bioengineering, gathered by two proponents of

biotechnology. The book offers a revised and updated selection of papers presented at an international symposium held in Stevenson, Washington, United States in 2001, with a few additional contributions included for balance and diversity.

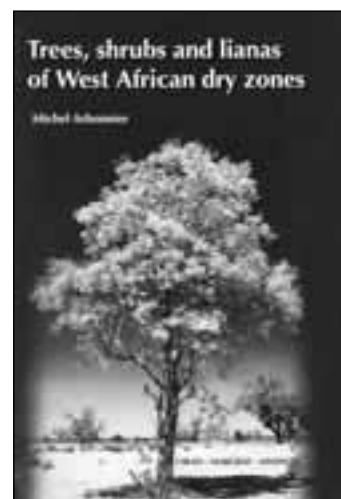
Part I explores the economic and technological choices related to biotechnology, by analysing the range of forestry practices that could adopt it. It examines the broad context of forestry and highlights the research needed to allow responsible use of genetically engineered plantation trees. Part II offers discussion on the environmental, political and economic advantages and disadvantages of biotechnology, underscoring the importance of results to date and the lack of concrete proposals with regard to commercializing forest biotechnology. Certain key themes emerge from the wide array of papers: the substantial communication challenges, the importance of social factors such as public opinion and trust, the significant legal obstacles, the important and diverse benefits and the complex risks.

Researchers, policy-makers, activists, managers and the public interested in forest biotechnology will find much relevant information and debate in this open-minded collection of papers.

Handbook of West African woody plants

Trees, shrubs and lianas of West African dry zones. M. Arbonnier. 2004. Montpellier, France, CIRAD/Weikersheim, Germany, Margraf Publishers/Paris, France, Muséum national d'histoire naturelle (MNHN). ISBNs 2-87614-579-0 (CIRAD), 3-8236-1419-3 (Margraf), 2-85653-571-2 (MNHN).

This colourful and meticulously detailed book is an essential reference on the trees and shrubs of West Africa. Previously published in French in 2000, and now available in English,





it is a field handbook offering ample scientific information on the species, their distribution and their uses. The publication covers 360 species, with more than 1 300 colour photographs of flowers, fruits, leaves and bark for use in identifying species. Comprehensive and easy-to-use determination keys based on leaves, flowers, fruit and spines precede the species descriptions. A classification by main uses – for example, in pharmaceuticals, foods, veterinary medicine, poisons and repellents, dyes and crafts – concludes the handbook. The book also includes useful glossaries of botanical and medical terms, information on climate and ecology of the region, a detailed bibliography, and indexes by common and taxonomic names.

The publication is the result of over 15 years' experience under projects conducted by the International Cooperation Centre of Agricultural Research for Development (CIRAD) and provides a useful tool for all in Sudano-Sahelian ecosystems and landscapes. It is a fine reference book and will be especially welcomed by technicians, teachers or students who wish to broaden their knowledge on the trees and shrubs of West Africa.

Asia and Latin America. It analyses the effect of different political, ecological, economic and socio-cultural factors, as well as issues of local heterogeneity and social differentiation. It also reviews current methodologies for assessing environmental income.

Results indicate that forest-related activities and products provide significant revenue for the rural poor, in some cases contributing 22 percent to household livelihoods. The main sources of income are fuelwood, wild foods and fodder for animals. However, it is necessary to develop clear and consistent research methodologies to enable accurate assessment of the role of environmental income in rural livelihoods. The book concludes by advising governments, donors and international agencies to include environmental income in national statistics, to allow policy-makers to consider this information in their policies.



Forests' contribution to rural income

Counting on the environment: forest incomes and the rural poor. P. Vedeld, A.

Angelsen, E. Sjaastad and G.K. Berg. 2004. Washington, DC, USA, World Bank.

The role of environmental income in the lives of poor people in rural areas is often underappreciated. Due to a lack of significant research, assessments of rural incomes have usually omitted the contribution of environmental income.

This study, carried out by the World Bank, investigates the dependence of rural people on environmental income based on a meta-analysis of 54 case studies from 17 countries in Africa,