



## 38TH INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON ESSENTIAL OILS

GRAZ, AUSTRIA  
9–12 SEPTEMBER 2007

The main topics covered by plenary lectures were:

- Recent developments in molecular biology and biosynthesis of terpenes
- Body(sweat) – fragrance – interactions
- New developments in quantitative essential oil analysis
- Essential oils in animal health and nutrition.

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**FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:**

the Organizing Secretariat, SEMACO GmbH,  
Firmianstr. 3, 5020 Salzburg, Austria. Fax: +43  
662 82 68 78 4; e-mail: congress@semaco.co.at;  
www.iseo2007.org/index.php?pg=home



## INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF NON-TIMBER FOREST PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

BEIJING, CHINA  
26–28 SEPTEMBER 2007

This conference, hosted by the Chinese Academy of Forestry and organized by the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO) in collaboration with the International Network for Bamboo and Rattan, the International Centre for Bamboo and Rattan and FAO, was attended by 120 people from 42 developed and developing countries, including officials from forestry agencies in tropical countries, researchers, project managers and representatives of national and international non-governmental and development assistance organizations.

The conference was convened at a time when some non-timber forest products (NTFPs) are emerging rapidly in the global marketplace and as markets for the environmental services of forests are being increasingly promoted. Many countries and organizations see a great deal of potential for these forest products and services to assist the process of sustainable development and to help alleviate poverty in some of the world's poorest places. The conference was held in China, a country that is at the forefront of many of the most dramatic developments in the utilization of NTFPs. A study visit to Anji Province in southern China

showed how a huge bamboo resource there is being used in a wide range of industrial processes, from reconstituted boards to rugs and curtains, aiding the province's rapid development process.

The papers presented at the conference and the discussions they provoked were wide-ranging. The conference received an overview of the global NWFP and services sector, considered the growing significance of community forest enterprises in the production of forest products and services, and discussed policy and practical issues related to the development of markets for carbon and other forest services. It also learned of experiences in a number of ITTO-funded projects and canvassed issues related to NTFPs and environmental services in Brazil, Cameroon, the Central African Republic, China, Colombia, the Congo, Germany, India, Indonesia, Liberia, Malaysia, Mexico, Myanmar, Peru and the Philippines.

During the conference, participants formed five break-out groups to reflect further on the ideas, experiences and issues raised during plenary sessions. The key issues and recommendations presented below were derived from the findings of these five groups.

### Key issues

- The NTFP sector is highly diverse and, often, region- or country-specific. While a great strength, this diversity has not been helpful in communicating to decision-makers the importance of NTFPs. There is also a wide diversity of definitions of NTFPs and environmental services, which hinders the development of the sector.
- Forests provide many services, including carbon sequestration (forest growth, protection); avoided carbon emissions; hydrological services; scenic beauty /recreation; biodiversity conservation; soil erosion control; disaster mitigation; climate buffering; environmental purification; and pollination. Payments for these services can help reduce both poverty and deforestation. Recent experiences in Mexico and China show that schemes to introduce such payments are feasible within a clear national legal and institutional framework and with start-up funding.
- Governments and forestry institutions have tended to neglect research and development into NTFPs and environmental services, although for some products and services this is changing rapidly.
- NTFPs are extremely important for many communities, particularly the rural poor and among women, probably much more important than available data would indicate. Some high-value, internationally traded NTFPs also make significant contributions to national economies. However, the benefits of the trade in NTFPs are not always distributed equitably and markets are often informal, disorganized and open to exploitation.
- For many NTFPs, the value chain is not well developed and more value-adding at the local level could provide forest-based communities with significant benefits.
- The sustainable use of NTFPs and environmental services are key elements of sustainable forest management (SFM), but this is not always clear to forest managers. There is a lack of normative guidance on the management of many NTFPs and a need to pursue the integrated ("multiple-use") sustainable management of forests for all goods and services.
- Information on the production, use and trade of NTFPs is generally very poor at all levels. It is known, however, that NTFPs are being extracted at higher than the sustainable rate in many forests.
- A lack of clear resource tenure, access and rights inhibits the development of community-based forest enterprises. Fiscal policies and regulations are also often counterproductive to the successful commercialization of NTFPs and environmental services.
- Many NTFPs and environmental services transcend national boundaries and offer an opportunity for strengthening trade and cooperation between countries. International legal mechanisms exist that play a role in the trade of NTFPs, but not all governments make full use of this role.
- There is a suspicion among some policy-makers and forest owners and users that payments for carbon credits will mean the exclusion of other uses, such as the extraction of timber and non-timber products. However, this is not necessarily true.

### Recommendations

Governments and international organizations should:

- fully recognize the huge existing and potential role of NTFPs and forest environmental services in sustaining

and adding wealth to people living in and around forests;

- improve the terminology and definitions of NTFPs and environmental services to ensure a consistent approach to their management and trade;
- where necessary, institute and support participatory processes to develop and improve legal and policy frameworks that support the production and trade of NTFPs and services, including by addressing land tenure, resource access and user rights;
- ensure that these laws and policies allow and assist indigenous and local communities, including women, to develop successful forest-based enterprises;
- ensure that such laws and policies also encourage the improved organization and equitability of markets for NTFPs and environmental services at the local, national and international levels;
- review the need for new and/or improved financial mechanisms to promote community-based enterprises based on NTFPs and environmental services with the objective of reducing poverty;
- develop cooperative agreements for the sustainable management of NTFPs within common biogeographic areas;
- develop guidelines for the sustainable and socially equitable use of NTFPs and environmental services in the context of SFM;
- strengthen capacity among local communities, government and the private sector to apply such guidelines;
- support the development of national and international standards and certification systems for different groups of NTFPs and environmental services;
- boost research and development into NTFPs and payments for environmental services, including by:
  - facilitating the collection and dissemination of applied research and knowledge
  - improving methodologies for assessing the social, economic and environmental importance of NTFPs and services in the context of SFM
  - encouraging the greater involvement of the private sector in technology development
  - identifying knowledge gaps and improving research into and the transfer of appropriate technology for value-adding to NTFPs, particularly post-harvesting and processing techniques at the village level

- clarifying the costs and benefits of certification for all stakeholders in the NTFP value chain

- strengthen international networks on NTFPs to improve the quality, availability and exchange of technical, marketing and management information; and
- support the development of:
  - capacities for monitoring and assessing environmental services and payments for them as a way of adding value to tropical forests and reducing poverty
  - effective procedures for the valuation of environmental services
  - better instruments for financing environmental services, especially from the private sector
  - integration in national development/sectoral planning and legal frameworks.

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**FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:**  
**ITTO Secretariat, Forest Industry Division,**  
**International Tropical Timber Organization,**  
**International Organizations Center, 5th Floor,**  
**Pacifico-Yokohama 1-1-1, Minato-Mirai,**  
**Nishi-ku, Yokohama, 220-0012 Japan.**  
**Fax: +81 45 223 1111; e-mail: fi@itto.or.jp**



### THE 8TH PACIFIC ISLANDS CONFERENCE ON NATURE CONSERVATION AND PROTECTED AREAS

ALOTAU, PAPUA NEW GUINEA  
22-26 OCTOBER 2007

The conference's theme, "Conservation serving communities, in a rapidly changing world" highlights the inextricable link between Pacific islanders and the natural environment, and the importance of strengthening networks in the climate of global change.

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**FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:**  
**Ruth Pune, Conference Coordinator, Secretariat**  
**of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme,**  
**PO Box 240, Apia, Samoa. Fax +685 20231; e-mail:**  
**ruthtp@sprep.org; www.sprep.org/roundtable**



### TRONDHEIM CONFERENCE ON BIODIVERSITY

TRONDHEIM, NORWAY  
29 OCTOBER – 2 NOVEMBER 2007

The fifth Trondheim Conference on Biodiversity, hosted by the Norwegian Government in collaboration with the

United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), was entitled "Ecosystems and people – biodiversity for development".

The conference provided input to the Convention on Biodiversity (CBD) and its preparations for the ninth Conference of the Parties (COP-9) in Germany in 2008. It focused on the critical role of biodiversity and ecosystems in providing goods and services that are necessary for human well-being and security and for economic development.

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**FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:**  
**Directorate for Nature Management, 7485**  
**Trondheim, Norway. Fax +47 73 58 05 01; e-mail:**  
**postmottak@dirnat.no;**  
**www.trondheimconference.org/**



### INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT AND POVERTY ALLEVIATION: ROLES OF TRADITIONAL FOREST-RELATED KNOWLEDGE

KUNMING, CHINA  
17-20 DECEMBER 2007

Traditional knowledge has greatly contributed, and still does, to the world's natural and cultural heritage by sustaining the production of multiple goods and services that enhance livelihood security and quality of life. This conference provided a platform for sharing of information and exchanging experiences related to traditional forest-related knowledge (TFRK) in the Asia-Pacific Region. The conference also highlighted the importance of TFRK in achieving the Millennium Development Goals and sustainable forest management. It also encouraged further development on incorporating TFRK in models of sustainable practices.

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**FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:**  
**Dr Liu Jinlong, Sustainable Forestry Research**  
**Centre, Chinese Academy of Forestry, Beijing**  
**100091, China. E-mail: liujl@caf.ac.cn;**  
**www.iufro.org/science/task-forces/traditional-**  
**forest-knowledge ♣**

