



FORESTRY DEPARTMENT

COFO 2009/World Forest Week:
"Forests in a changing world"



The Committee on Forestry (COFO) is the highest FAO forestry statutory body. The biennial sessions of COFO (held at FAO headquarters in Rome, Italy) bring together heads of forest services and other senior government officials to identify emerging policy and technical issues, to seek solutions and to advise FAO and others on appropriate action. Other international organizations and, increasingly, non-governmental groups participate in COFO.

Participation in COFO is open to all FAO member countries.

The two main themes of COFO 2009/World Forest Week are:

- Sustainable forest management and climate change
 - Keynote: Gro Harlem Brundtland, Nobel Laureate
 - Presentations by heads of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests on the CPF Strategic Framework for Forests and Climate Change
 - Financing sustainable forest management (SFM) and Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries (REDD)
 - Local forest management: the key to REDD success
 - Ecosystem-based adaptation to climate change
 - Fire and climate change
- Institutional change in a dynamic world
 - Heads of Forestry dialogue: managing change
 - Who are our customers, and what are their needs?
 - The future of forestry research and education
 - Impacts of economic turbulence on the forest sector

There will also be sessions covering policy and information issues, including: Collaborative Partnership on Forests Regional Forestry Commission bureaux;

Fire Management Actions Alliance and International Liaison Committee; UNFF Ad Hoc Expert Group on Finance; FRA Advisory Group; World Forestry Congress External Advisory Group; and Advancing SFM – a review of project experience.

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- a global framework and common methodology for monitoring forest change;
- an information gateway providing easy access to remote sensing imagery;
- enhanced capacity in all countries for monitoring, assessing and reporting on forests and land use changes.

"The need to improve national forest monitoring is overwhelming as the demand for information has never been greater," noted Jan Heino, FAO Assistant Director-General for Forestry: "National policy processes are striving to address cross-cutting issues such as poverty alleviation and food security related to forests."

FRA 2010 will improve the capacity of all countries to self-monitor. Both FRA and FAO's national forest monitoring and assessment (NFMA) programmes strengthen the ability of developing countries to manage their information base to improve knowledge on social, economic and environmental aspects of forests. A global network of forest monitoring specialists in 176 countries shares information and experiences. National experts lead the assessments. Field teams carry out all fieldwork and national experts interpret remote sensing imagery.

"Deforestation continues at an alarming rate of about 13 million ha annually at the global level. By combining remote sensing technology with field data collection, we improve the quality of both methods. This provides more accurate information on forest trends and new information on the drivers of deforestation and forest degradation," concludes Jan Heino.

In 2008, countries and FAO reconfirmed their commitment to prepare jointly the next Global Forest Resources Assessment (FRA), a comprehensive data collection on the state of the world's forests, scheduled for release in 2010.

As part of FRA 2010, FAO, its member countries and partner organizations will undertake a global remote sensing survey of forests. The assessment will cover the whole land surface of the Earth, with over 10 000 samples. The FRA 2010 survey will generate:

- baseline information at the global and regional level on trends in rates of deforestation, afforestation and natural expansion of forests over the past 30 years;



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FAO IN THE FIELD

Formulation d'une stratégie nationale de promotion et de valorisation des Produits Forestiers Non Ligneux (projet TCP/BKF/3201)

Au Burkina Faso, pays Sahélien, ce sont les produits forestier non ligneux (PFLN) qui constituent une importance capitale dans la vie quotidienne des populations, d'abord dans sa valeur primaire comme aliment très nutritif ou remède contre les maladies, mais aussi sur le plan économique car ils contribuent entre 16 et 27 pour cent du revenu des femmes rurales, fait encore plus important car ces femmes utilisent ces revenus pour fournir une meilleure alimentation et scolarité à leurs enfants. (A noter que les amandes de karité (un PFLN) représentent le troisième produit d'exportation du Burkina Faso.)

Récemment, plusieurs organismes de coopération technique présents au Burkina Faso ont inscrit la promotion des PFLN dans leurs priorités.

La FAO, en 2004-2006, a appuyé le projet pilote Analyse et développement des marchés (ADM) de micro-entreprises de promotion des PFLN, un partenariat entre le Ministère de l'environnement, l'ONG Tree Aid et elle-même. C'est, par ailleurs, cette expérience qui a révélé la nécessité de disposer d'une stratégie nationale en matière de PFLN, et qui a déclenché la requête du Gouvernement burkinabé auprès de la FAO pour ce projet qui commence aujourd'hui. En 2007, une autre initiative FAO dénommée *Forest Connecta Burkina Faso* a été mise à l'ordre du jour, dans le but d'appuyer les petites entreprises basées sur les produits forestier non ligneux. *Forest Connecta* a l'intention de servir de réseau national de communication et s'adresse surtout au problème d'isolement des petits entrepreneurs forestiers, isolement qui fait qu'ils ne se connaissent pas entre eux et n'ont aucune influence sur les politiques forestières, qu'ils ont des difficultés à accéder aux marchés, et que les prestataires de services s'intéressent peu à eux.

Malgré l'intérêt actuel porté aux PFLN au Burkina Faso, il subsiste un certain nombre de contraintes d'ordre social, légal, politique et scientifique. A savoir: les possibilités économiques ont entraîné des interventions disparates avec le risque de destruction de la base des ressources

naturelles impliquées et l'inorganisation des filières PFLN, souvent faite dans un cadre informel ou peu structuré. Quant aux technologies de collecte et de transformation, elles restent artisanales et souvent laborieuses pour les producteurs et productrices, et la sous-évaluation de la contribution des PFLN dans l'économie nationale a eu comme résultat immédiat un manque d'appui politique au secteur, un manque de textes législatifs spécifiques aux PFLN et une faible approche multidisciplinaire.

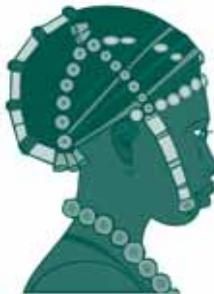
Pour toutes ces raisons, le Gouvernement du Burkina Faso a présenté une requête auprès de la FAO pour appuyer le développement et la mise en œuvre d'une stratégie nationale pour les PFLN et adapter le cadre national juridique correspondant, en vue de coordonner les initiatives, d'harmoniser les interventions des différents acteurs et d'offrir un cadre approprié de promotion et de valorisation des PFLN pour le bénéfice direct des populations les plus pauvres.

La FAO se réjouit de voir l'intérêt sincère démontré par les différentes parties prenantes. La réussite de ce projet ambitieux dépend largement de leurs disponibilités et de leur enthousiasme de porter à terme les objectifs établis.

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Enhancing the contribution of non-wood forest products to poverty alleviation and food security in Central African countries (project GCP/RAF/441/GER)

The Congo Basin is among the world's major reservoirs of biological diversity and is the home of some 60 million people. The agricultural resource base is poorly developed and insufficient to feed the fast expanding population. The forest sector plays an essential socio-economic role in the Congo Basin countries and provides a significant direct contribution to the food and income-generation needs of the rural people. Poor people, and particularly women, gather edible plants, bushmeat, insects, rattan and other non-wood resources for their subsistence and for income. However, the fast increasing



commercial exploitation of several NWFPs in the region is not only threatening the survival of many species but also the livelihoods of the poorest of society.

A key to improve the food security for forest-dependent people in Central Africa is to have appropriate and socially equitable legislation elaborated, tested and implemented. An example of such a set of legislation (called "subregional directives") has been developed through the German funded project "Enhancing food security through sustainable use of non-wood forest products in Central Africa" (GCP/RAF/398/GER), which was operational from 2005 to 2008.

The Central African Forests Commission (COMIFAC) Executive Secretariat and its member countries have officially endorsed these subregional directives and requested support from FAO for their implementation in all Congo Basin countries.

The Government of Germany has recently pledged additional support of US\$3.8 million for a new three-year FAO-implemented regional forestry project "Enhancing the contribution of non-wood forest products to poverty alleviation and food security in Central African countries" (GCP/RAF/441/GER), which will help COMIFAC and the Governments of Gabon, the Central African Republic and the Republic of the Congo to implement national level policies and legislation aiming at improving the food security and livelihoods of forest-dependent people through a more sustainable and socially equitable use of forest-gathered NWFPs. At pilot sites, the project will strengthen NWFP-based small- and medium-scale enterprises to benefit poor, local communities by promoting more value-added processing, marketing and by capacitating producers' support networks. The project will also better integrate NWFPs into national level socio-economic planning processes and strategies for poverty alleviation, food security and the right to food.

The Governments of Cameroon and the Democratic Republic of the Congo already receive FAO support for their implementation at the national level (through the ongoing project GCP/RAF/408/ECV), while assistance to the other COMIFAC member countries is envisaged with the support of the Congo Basin Forest Fund.

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THE XIII WORLD FORESTRY CONGRESS

The first World Forestry Congress was held in Rome in 1926 and since then has generally taken place every six years under the auspices of FAO and organized by the government of the host country.

The previous XII World Forestry Congress, held from 21 to 28 September 2003 in Quebec, Canada, attracted 4 061 participants from more than 140 countries. The main output of the congress, the Final Statement, identified areas of priority concern to encourage decisions and actions by those involved in various aspects of forests and forestry, and in other related sectors, including NWFPs. In eastern Canada, for example, not only are the forests a source of materials for fuel and shelter, but also of food and medicine with more than 170 plant species documented as food sources.

For the XIII World Forestry Congress, Argentina has been selected to host the

event, which will be held in its capital city of Buenos Aires from 18 to 25 October 2009. The theme of this XIII Congress, *Forests in development: a vital balance*, will be tackled from the social, environmental and economic perspectives, thus providing an opportunity to analyse the various functions of the natural resources in local, regional and global contexts.

In particular, this event constitutes a forum for sharing knowledge and experience from developed and developing countries, regarding the conservation, management and use of the world's forests, and covers issues such as the international dialogue, socio-economic and institutional aspects, and forest policies.



A DVD showing Argentina and its forests has been produced by the Congress organizers and is available in eight languages (English, French, Spanish, Italian, Russian, Portuguese, Arabic and Chinese). Copies are available from the address below.

Internationally, renewed speakers will be called upon, representing academic and scientific organizations, the private sector, civil society, indigenous and rural communities, and public institutions connected with the forest sector, with the aim of offering a comprehensive, global view of forests.

Prominent guest speakers will treat conceptual aspects in plenary sessions concerning the seven thematic areas of the Congress and, in high-level round tables, covering issues of particular concern today, such as "forests and energy" and "forests and climate change" will be discussed.

Experts from every part of the world will have an opportunity to present voluntary papers also directly related to NWFPs, in the context of biodiversity conservation, small-scale forest enterprises, community forestry or trade and discuss them in simultaneous technical sessions under the various thematic areas of the programme.

Thus, the XIII Congress provides a unique and timely opportunity to examine the subject of trees and forests, with their multiple functions and role as suppliers of NWFPs and their social, economic and cultural contributions to sustainable development.



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INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF NATURAL FIBRES 2009

The International Year of Natural Fibres (IYNF) will be officially launched at FAO in Rome on 22 January 2009.

The objectives of this special initiative are to:

- raise awareness and stimulate demand for natural fibres;
- promote the efficiency and sustainability of the natural fibre industries;
- encourage appropriate policy responses from governments to the problems faced by natural fibre industries;
- foster an effective and enduring international partnership among the various natural fibre industries.

A newsletter is being produced by IYNF. To subscribe, please send an e-mail to mailserv@mailserv.fao.org, leave the subject line blank, and put the text *subscribe IYNF-2009-L* in the body of the message.

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When planning for a year, plant corn. When planning for a decade, plant trees. When planning for life, train and educate people.

Chinese proverb