

	منظمة الأغذية والزراعة للأمم المتحدة	联合国 粮食及 农业组织	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	Organisation des Nations Unies pour l'alimentation et l'agriculture	Продовольственная и сельскохозяйственная организация Объединенных Наций	Organización de las Naciones Unidas para la Alimentación y la Agricultura
ASIA-PACIFIC FORESTRY COMMISSION						
TENTH MEETING OF THE APFC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE						
Chiang Mai, Thailand, 21-22 October 2014						
PREPARATION FOR THE THIRD ASIA-PACIFIC FORESTRY WEEK						

Perspectives from the APFC Secretariat

1. The main *objective* for organizing the third Asia-Pacific Forestry Week (APFW) would be to create a forum for governments, practitioners, academic and research institutions, NGOs, private sector, youth and other actors in the region to exchange experiences and perspectives on the latest developments in forestry and related sectors, and work on shaping the future agenda of forestry in the region in the context of sustainable development by addressing relevant topics with fresh perspectives.
2. In preparing for the third APFW, the APFC Secretariat should, in dialogue with APFC members and the host country, select a *suitable date for the event*, considering other major events taking place in the region and globally. It is critical that the date is set as soon as possible to allow proper planning, publicity, and mobilization of resources.
3. In preparing for the third APFW, the APFC Secretariat should, in dialogue with APFC members and the host country, select an *overall theme* that embodies the essence of the message that the event wants to transmit to its participants and the outside world. In that respect, the overall theme should be short, attractive, broadly encompassing, and one that captures the imperatives of the time. The previous two themes were: *Forestry in a Changing World* and *New Challenges – New Opportunities*.
4. Similarly, there is a need to develop *major thematic topics* for discussion that will set the stage for the plenary sessions during APFW. Following the reasoning outlined for the overall theme, it is important that the selected topics represent a diverse range of interests. In practice, the broad range of issues in forestry can be accommodated through the following three topics, viz.: environmental, economic/financial, and livelihood issues. It would be desirable that all participants of the third APFW take home with them one extraordinarily inspiring idea or one very practical new skill that they can use in their normal work.
5. Once identified, it falls on the APFC Secretariat to conduct a stocktaking exercise on the selected topics to identify recent events that have taken place in the region or globally, and the main actors and stakeholders in the relevant fields. The APFC Secretariat will then organize several plenary sessions under the various topics, in collaboration with relevant partners and organizations.
6. With both the overall title and major thematic areas in mind, potential *keynote speakers* shall be identified and invited. The keynote speakers should be individuals able to make presentations relevant to the topics, and who are also able to draw participants to the APFW. The process of inviting and confirming keynote speakers can be challenging, both in terms of the time required, and also in keeping costs manageable.

7. In addition to the plenary sessions, it is proposed that a wide range of parallel events will be convened by international organizations, host country organizations, member countries, private sector entities, regional bodies and initiatives, etc. The Secretariat will develop a procedure for inviting partners to organize partner events. The issues would include independence with management of the events, choice of topics, contributions, etc. Involvement of students and youth in partner events will be encouraged.
8. Participants' evaluations of the first two APFWs gave high marks for the ample opportunities for networking and informal person-to-person discussions the events provided. This feature should therefore be retained as an important feature for the third APFW.
9. Keeping in mind that the XIV World Forestry Congress with the theme "Forest and People: Investing in Sustainable Future," will be convened in September 2015, the third Forestry Week provides a good opportunity to consolidate emerging issues and needs from the region and link them with globally important issues discussed at the World Forestry Congress.
10. The choice of a suitable venue will be of importance given the expected large number of participants. In addition to hosting a sufficient number of people, the selected venue should possess enough meeting rooms and provide the right ambience for large events. The venue should also have sufficient space for posters and exhibits. The responsibility for selecting the venue lies with the host country, but the APFC Secretariat would be available to assist in the selection of the venue. This should happen soon so that news about the event can be distributed widely.
11. Another matter that should be addressed soon is to develop a holistic approach to promotion and marketing of the third APFW. This includes establishing a website, designing notifications for newsletters, formulating press releases and sending e-mails to potential participants. It could also entail the use of social media channels such as blogs, Facebook and Twitter.
12. The responsibilities for participant registration should be clarified (could fall to host country or another organization). It is recommended that registration be facilitated online.
13. Securing adequate budget for the third APFW will be a particular challenge for the Secretariat and the host country. It is advisable that the APFC Secretariat and hosting country in collaboration develop and pursue a strategy for attracting funding from potential sponsors and partners.
14. The success of the third APFW will, to a large extent, depend on close collaboration between the APFC Secretariat and the host country organizing officials. The host country is requested to establish an APFW Organizing Committee and nominate a Liaison Officer at the earliest opportunity to coordinate with the APFC Secretariat. It is imperative that the host country and the APFC Secretariat establish well-functioning communication and coordination mechanisms. E-mail correspondence should be used for updates and stocktaking purposes, while telephone and skype linkages will be important for clarifying issues and resolving problems. To the extent that budgetary and time constraints allow, personal meetings between staff are encouraged.
15. A list with suggestions on overall theme, thematic plenary sessions and keynote speakers received by the APFC Secretariat will be compiled and discussed with Committee members separately in 2015.

Reflection and lessons learned from the previous Asia-Pacific Forestry Week

1. The first Asia-Pacific Forestry Week was organized 21-25 April 2008 in Hanoi, Vietnam anchored around the 22nd Session of the Asia-Pacific Forestry Commission. The overall theme was *Forestry in a Changing World*.
2. The second Asia-Pacific Forestry Week was held 7-11 November 2011 in Beijing, China in conjunction with the 24th Session of the Asia-Pacific Forestry Commission. The overall theme was *New Challenges - New Opportunities*.
3. A number of lessons learned from the previous two APFWs offer insights for the preparation of the upcoming event. Below are some of these lessons – in no particular order of importance:
 - a. *Theme*: It is important to have an overarching and appealing main theme to ensure that the event attracts a wide range of interest and participation. A good theme is one that is easy to remember, attention-catching, concise, and directly linked to current and emerging issues.
 - b. *Keynote speakers*: High profile and internationally recognized speakers from different backgrounds, e.g. international organizations, NGOs, civil society, private sector, and research institutions were highly appreciated. Keynote speakers are usually one of the factors that motivate people to attend the event. Individuals with “celebrity” profiles may command significant speaking fees and APFW organizers should be careful not to lose precious time approaching potential speakers that are beyond reach of available budget resources.
 - c. *Mobilization of resources*: The APFW is a large gathering, requiring significant financial resources. A good resource mobilization strategy is needed. It is critical that the host country and FAO work jointly to mobilize required budgetary resources. It may be useful to discuss early on with key potential collaborators to agree on sharing responsibilities and costs in organizing various partner events to help defray overall costs of APFW.
 - d. *Publicity*: As the event is one of the most important forestry events in the region, its publicity needs to be ensured right from the beginning. Information should be distributed widely, for example using posters, booklets, mailing-list, webpages, etc. Partners and collaborators can and should support the publicity. Working with media is often important to improve the visibility of the event. Media coverage of the event should be planned.
 - e. *Logistics*: Asia-Pacific Forestry Week usually attracts large number of participants. Some 600 - 800 participants have participated in previous APFWs. This demands a great deal of logistical work prior to and during the event. Good Secretariat facilities are essential to facilitate the work of the Secretariat during APFW.
 - f. *Length of the event*: In recent years, there have been efforts to reduce the duration of APFC sessions. This should be possible within the context of APFW, but for practical reasons, it is anticipated that APFW itself would run for 5 days, with the possibility of pre- and post-APFW activities in addition. However, for the most part, the duration of APFW should be maintained at 5 days.
 - g. *Volunteers*: The event can benefit from volunteer organizations and other individuals who are willing to support the event.
4. The Executive Committee is invited to:
 - a. Provide overall suggestion regarding the preparation of the third APFW

- b. Suggest specific suggestions on theme, keynote speakers, resource mobilization, publicity, key partners and sponsors, etc.