



Asia Pacific Forest Invasive Species Network (APFISN)

Supported by FAO & USDA Forest Service

A seminar and a meeting on forest invasive species organized by the Asia-Pacific Forest Invasive Species Network (APFISN)

A seminar and a meeting on forest invasive species (FIS) were organized by the Asia-Pacific Forest Invasive Species Network (APFISN) in collaboration with the Institute of Zoology (IOZ), Chinese Academy of Sciences, FAO/RAP and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Forest Service. The event was held in Beijing, China, 24-26 November 2014 in conjunction with the 6th International Symposium of Integrative Zoology.

The invasive species seminar on 24 November held as part of the Symposium featured presentations from six countries (India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, and Viet Nam). The presentations outlined the current status of FIS and key challenges in addressing the threats and impacts from FIS in the respective countries. The event helped to highlight and raise awareness of the threats posed by FIS among the Symposium participants.

On 25 November, the country representatives, key members and supporters of the Network, including the representatives of the APFISN Secretariat offices, FAO/RAP, USDA Forest Service and the Chinese Academy of Sciences, held an internal meeting to discuss the following topics:

- Current status of FIS in the participating countries, including key threats, priorities and challenges
- Ongoing work to address FIS related issues in each country and progress made in managing threats.
- Opportunities for collaborative efforts among a group of countries with shared FIS issues to work on the most immediate FIS threats in the region.
- Activities of the APFISN so far and suggestions for future work.

The discussions provided valuable inputs and perspectives to the APFISN Secretariat and FAO in guiding the future activities of the Network. Key comments and observations made by the participants include the following

- APFISN has made significant progress since its establishment in 2004 and has undertaken a number of useful activities.
- As the only network focusing on FIS in the region, APFISN has great potential and scope to further improve and expand. However, it needs to raise its profile to be recognized as the “forest invasives people” in the region. The ongoing regional GEF

project on invasive species was cited as one example of the type of activity in which APFISN should have played an important role.

- The Network should renew its focus on getting tangible results on the ground that are issue based.
- Given the enormous task of addressing threats from numerous invasive species, it was recognized that a few priority species should be identified at the regional level for the Network to focus on.
- Having two offices of APFISN is confusing to most people and the focal points are unsure which office to contact on related matters. It was suggested that the Forest Resource Officer at FAO/RAP serve as the first point of contact for the members seeking support, so he can engage the two offices as appropriate for follow-up.
- The establishment of the APFISN Beijing office has been a positive development, considering its access to financial resources, body of scientific knowledge and wealth of technical capacity. But it needs to be ensured that the two offices work in coordination with each other and FAO and keep the members well informed of its activities.
- It was recognized that having active Network focal points is critical in keeping APFISN active and relevant. Some of the focal points have not taken the initiative to share information regarding the Network (including the results of APFISN trainings and workshops) with their colleagues. APFISN Secretariat also pointed out that many of the focal points are passive and do not engage actively with the Secretariat. It was informed that FAO/RAP is in the process of obtaining focal point nominations from countries without officially nominated focal points. It was also agreed that the information sharing should be expanded to include key, non-focal point people dealing with invasive species in the countries.
- It was suggested that an Executive Committee of APFISN be formed to guide the Network, particularly in developing strategies and actions to raise the profile of APFISN (including development of partnerships beyond FAO).
- It was noted that constant flow of information among the Network members is critical. To this end, factsheets and newsletters of APFISN have value.

The following general workplan for 2015 was developed and agreed for the two APFISN offices:

- Kerala
 - Add new, relevant invasive species experts, researchers and practitioners to the Network mailing list and facilitate continuous exchange of relevant information related to invasive species.
 - Facilitate the process of and engage with the focal points (and non-focal points) through email correspondence to identify a list of priority species for

the Network to focus on in coordination with the Beijing office and key supporters of the Network.

- Upgrade the APFISN website (content and design) in consultation with FAO/RAP and explore linking it with the Beijing office/IOZ website.
 - Update the existing APFISN brochure
 - Continuously update the website by posting relevant information on FIS (information on projects, meetings and workshops, research findings, information on emerging threats, news clips, etc.)
 - Publish APFISN Newsletters and Factsheets (three issues of each in 2015). Species to be highlighted should be selected based on recent reports/presentations from the member countries and in consultation with members as appropriate.
 - Assist in the formulation of projects and facilitate cooperation among groups of countries with common issues and interests.
 - Identify and facilitate the participation of APFISN in relevant meetings and workshops.
- Beijing
- Facilitate continuous exchange of relevant information related to invasive species by circulating information through the mailing list, posting information on website, etc.
 - Develop a collaboration project with Viet Nam and the USDA Forest Service focusing on the management of Polyphagous shot hole borer (*Euwallaca* sp.)
 - Continue to assist Maldives in managing the coconut leaf beetle (*Brontispa longissima*) under the auspices of APFISN.
 - Share the database framework that had been developed among the Network members and explore how we can connect information between countries.
 - Assist in the formulation of projects and facilitate cooperation among groups of countries with common issues and interests.
 - Identify and facilitate the participation of APFISN in relevant meetings and workshops, particularly in China

APFISN Workshop

held in conjunction with the 6th International Symposium of Integrative Zoology and 125th Anniversary of International Congress of Zoology and 10th Anniversary of International Society of Zoological Sciences (ISZS)

24-26 November 2014, Beijing, China

Monday, 24 November

1510 - 1730	Symposium: Invasive Session (15 minutes plus 5 minutes Q&A on their invasive situation) Room: C101, IOZ, CAS Moderator: SFA Organizers: APFISN Beijing office
1510 - 1530	Opening remarks: Dr. Jianghua Sun
1530 - 1550	Presentation by India
1550 - 1610	Presentation by Indonesia
1610 - 1630	Presentation by Malaysia
1630 - 1650	Presentation by Myanmar
1650 - 1710	Presentation by the Philippines
1710 - 1730	Presentation by Viet Nam
1730	Concluding remarks: FAO and Dr. Jianghua Sun
1730 – 1930	Dinner

Tuesday, 25 November

0900 - 1600	APFISN Workshop: How to move the Network forward including more focused country to country approach Room: C101, IOZ, CAS Moderator: Kenichi Shono (FAO) Organizers: APFISN Beijing and Kerala, USDA Forest Service and FAO
0900 - 0910	Brief opening remarks by FAO, SFA
0920 - 0950	APFISN report on recent activities by the two Secretariats
0950 - 1030	Presentation of brief country reports by the U.S.
1030 - 1045	Break
1045 - 1200	Discussion on Member country needs, issues or concerns (led by Kerala Secretariat)

1200 - 1300	Lunch
1300 - 1400	Discussion on how the Network can assist member countries in addressing the identified priority issues (led by Beijing Secretariat)
1400 - 1530	Discussion on a program of work for the Network including Kerala and Beijing Secretariats (led by Gary Man, USDA Forest Service)
1530 - 1600	Concluding remarks and closing by the APFISN Secretariats

Wednesday, 26 November

0830 - 1000	Lecture on Invasive Species at International Training Course
0830 - 1000	Lecture: A gene conservation effort in part to mitigate the impacts of insects, diseases, and other stressors like climate change and drought (by Gary).