

REPORT OF THE 12TH MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE ASIA-PACIFIC FORESTRY COMMISSION

13-14 October 2016

Le Méridien Hotel, Chang Mai, Thailand

1. Background

The Twelfth Meeting of the Asia-Pacific Forestry Commission (APFC) Executive Committee was held 13-14 October 2016 at the Le Meridien Hotel, Chang Mai, Thailand. The meeting was attended by 18 participants including four present officers of the Commission from the governments of Philippines (host of the 26th APFC session), Sri Lanka (forthcoming host), Mongolia (Vice-Chair) and Thailand (Rapporteur), five co-opted partners and six FAO staff members. The programme of the meeting and the list of participants are attached in Annexes 1 and 2, respectively. The meeting also included a field visit to a forest restoration project organized by the Forest Restoration Research Unit (FORRU), Chiang Mai University. Field visit program and photographs are provided in Annex 3 and 4. All presentations are available in Annex 5.

2. Introductory remarks by APFC Chair & APFC Secretariat

Mr. Marcial C. Amaro Jr., Chair of APFC, made brief welcoming remarks on behalf of the Commission. Mr. Patrick Durst, FAO Senior Forestry Officer and the Secretary of APFC, also welcomed participants and made brief opening remarks on behalf of FAO. Mr. Durst outlined the agenda for the meeting noting that a principal focus was to review the 26th session of APFC and Asia-Pacific Forestry Week 2016 and begin the planning for the next APFC session to be held in Sri Lanka in 2017.

3. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted without amendment.

4. Revisiting recent APFC-related events

a) Partners' Roundtable Meeting

Mr. Ben Vickers (Regional Programme Officer, UN-REDD) gave a summary of the Partners' Roundtable using slides prepared by Ms. Soojin Kim, FAO Junior Professional Officer, summarizing the discussions of the APFC-EC Partners' Roundtable Meeting held in the morning of 12 October 2016. The Roundtable was attended by representatives from 14 organizations, projects and programmes. Each representative gave a short summary of their recent and upcoming activities in the region.

The Partners' Roundtable meeting had an interactive session led by Mr. Yurdi Yasmi (Forest Policy Officer) to identify some key issues for APFC to consider working on in future. These included:

- Landscape approach and implementation strategies

- Integrated approaches for resource mobilization, including REDD+ result-based payment, inclusive approach for SMEs, and private sector financing through CSR and impact investment
- Collaboration between sub-sectors
- Bringing communities to value chain
- Improvement of governance, including improved legality assurance
- Awareness-raising on sustainable consumption and production
- Responsible investment standards
- Analysis of impacts on forest sector from the integrated economic planning
- Community-based forestry, value chain and tenure linking it to SDG 1
- Data and knowledge management
- Emphasis on gender and human rights

a) 23rd Session of Committee on Forestry (COFO 23) and the 5th World Forest Week

Mr. Durst reported on the 23rd Session of Committee on Forestry (COFO 23) and the 5th World Forest Week held in Rome, Italy, 18-22 July 2016, where participants engaged in a series of discussions and events under the theme ‘Shaping a new agenda for forests’. Potential contribution of forests and forestry to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) featured prominently in the discussions.

Mr. Durst noted the increased attention on how to better link the Regional Forestry Commission sessions to COFO. He also noted the discussion around the next World Forestry Congress (WFC) in 2021 and especially which country will host. There were proposals from the Republic of Korea, Italy and Peru. RoK was later confirmed as the host of XV WFC in 2021.

The Executive Committee discussions focused on not only the content of the COFO agenda but also how to get items of regional importance discussed at COFO. Doris Capistrano (ASFCC) noted the difficulty in getting new ideas into the COFO agenda. It is also difficult to get some older items dealt with and off the agenda to make space for new issues – the COFO agenda inertia is strong. She also suggested that there could be better use of the “any other business” item to allow space for discussions of new ideas.

Mr. Durst commented that it is important for countries and regions to be more active and assertive to push for issues that are important to the countries and regions, and there is an important role for the Chairs of the Regional Commissions to play in influencing the COFO Committee.

Ms. Caroline Liu (RECOFTC) noted the side event on communication was held and she re-iterated the importance of thinking about communication as being more important than just a press release or report at the end of a project.

b) 26th Session of APFC and Asia-Pacific Forestry Week 2016

Mr. Durst gave a short summary of the APFW evaluation results.

Mr. Amaro said that he was pleased that APFW went well because the Philippines had worked hard to make it run as well as possible, especially as it came quite close after APEC meeting. Cooperation and support from FAO was very valuable. One decision they made was to have a professional event organiser which had some costs but reduced the stress on the staff of the Forest Management Bureau (FMB) and the company did a good job for the price – something for future host countries to consider. The funding was difficult to arrange but in the end was able to be pulled together to make the event a success.

Several of the Stream leader organizations offered their thoughts and perspective on APFW 2016.

Mr. Gerrand (Forestry Officer, UN-REDD) reflected comments from CIFOR, as the main Stream 2 leader along with SPC. Overall, the APFW was considered a huge success and despite some initial uncertainties CIFOR was very happy with the final outcomes. There was good interest from partners to submit ideas for sessions and a wide-ranging programme was compiled covering major topics including REDD+, fires, deforestation, coastal forestry issues, mangroves, etc. It was a bit difficult to convince some partners to adopt the new funding model of paying USD 4,000 per two-hour session (some from academia with limited funds), but in the end, all session organizers were satisfied with the level of attendance and good “value-for-money”.

Ms. Liu (RECOFTC) said that although their session went quite well, there were some questions that we should think about. For example - Who did we really reach and what was achieved? Were we talking just among ourselves and “preaching to the converted”?

Ms. Capistrano felt the sessions went well, and from ASFN perspective, the process provided an opportunity to consult with a number of key partners. “Return on investment” for ASFN was quite high.

Ms. Wu (APFNet) said the event went well overall. It provided an excellent opportunity to promote various organizations’ activities. The funding model was difficult to agree on initially but worked quite well in the end. USD 4,000 per session model was quite reasonable and could be considered a base-price. She noted that condensing Stream discussions to one recommendation to APFC was too restrictive. Mr. Durst explained that this was needed to make the APFC recommendations manageable and more focused. There will also be a report that will include all the Stream recommendations so that they can all be seen and used by stakeholders who are interested in these details.

Ms. Capistrano noted that these detailed recommendations could lead to a new way of working among countries and partners to get work done between APFC sessions (not just to expect the work to be done by FAO and presented in the next session).

Mr. Bulai (SPC) said that from SPC’s point of view it was a bit harder to become engaged when they didn’t have the opportunity to meet with other partners during the preparation stages.

4. Updates and progress of ongoing APFC activities and initiatives, including review of recommendations of the 26th Session of APFC and related follow-up actions

Mr. Durst made a presentation on progress of ongoing APFC activities and initiatives. He briefly summarized the results of a traffic light assessment of progress in addressing recommendations from the 26th session of APFC.

Of 29 recommendations, 22 are ranked Green (concrete actions, progress on track); six ranked Yellow (concept notes developed, actions being explored or initial/partial action undertaken); and one red (no actions taken yet).

The Executive Committee’s deliberations focused on discussing the areas that have progressed least. On Recommendation 5 (regarding cross sectoral workshop on green-investment) it was noted that FAO is not able to do much on this on our own and that perhaps FAO should be partnering and building on work done by others noting the recent workshop held by USAID on a very similar topic.

Fire management is a challenging topic for FAO to address and the directly responsibilities clearly lie with countries. On Indonesia Mr. Gerrand informed the EC that FAO had drafted a proposal to do a report on “lessons learned on fire prevention and management”.

Mr. Amaro noted that the issue of fires and smoke haze is serious across a number of countries, and thus a wider regional approach should be considered. One way forward could be to try to engage through ASEAN to see if they want the issue taken up. Mr. Bulai noted that fire was an issue in Pacific countries and he recently was in Australia to discuss the issue. SPC is interested to pursue this as well.

Mr. Vickers made a suggestion to EC to consider asking the Green Climate Fund (GCF) to have a session at the APFC meeting to provide information about the GCF – a couple of hours or possibly a half-day side event. This could be a good opportunity and well located as Sri Lanka has a proposed GCF project that hopefully may be underway by then. Mr. Durst suggested the EC continue to pursue the idea as it is likely to be of interest to APFC members and participants at the meeting.

5. Update from APFC subsidiary groups

Mr. Kenichi Shono, FAO Forest Resources Officer, made a brief introduction on recent activities of four APFC subsidiary groups: Asia-Pacific Forest Invasive Species Network (APFISN); TEAKNET; Asia-Pacific Forest Policy Think Tank; and Asia-Pacific Forest Communication Network. Activities implemented by APFC subsidiary groups, with technical and financial support of FAO, were well appreciated overall.

6. Preparations for the 27th Session of the APFC

Mr. Anura Sathurusinghe (APFC Vice-Chair) made a presentation on preparations for the 27th session of APFC, including background information on the forestry sector in Sri Lanka and its current priorities, potential conference venues and field trip sites, as well as proposed dates of the 27th APFC session.

A number of suggestions, comments and items for follow-up were brought up during the discussion including:

- Developing the session agenda;
- Potential inclusion of an United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) session;
- Signing of hosting agreement;
- Assignment of a focal point from the government;
- Exploring the possibility of securing a high-level government representative (President) to open the meeting;
- The need to mobilize participants through parallel/side events working with partners; and
- Publicity and media engagement strategy.

It was agreed that the APFC Secretary will make a scoping visit to Sri Lanka early in 2017 and a second trip possibly in May to further discuss and finalize these arrangements. EC agreed on the week of 23 October 2017 as the dates of the next APFC session.

7. In-session seminar: Toward a regional strategy on forest and landscape restoration

Mr. Durst provided a presentation on the ongoing development of a Regional Strategy and Action Plan for Forest and Landscape Restoration (FLR) in the Asia-Pacific. Following the presentation, Mr. Yasmi facilitated a group discussion on the positive and negative aspects of the draft strategy and action plan.

Positives included the following:

- Potential to add value to national efforts;
- Comprehensive list of ideas organized under identified strategies; includes all relevant points;
- Can contribute to enhanced regional collaboration;

- Provides direction to guide the work of FAO, APFC member countries and other organizations; and
- Regional network is a good idea.

Areas for further consideration included:

- Need to make it flexible and adaptable, differentiated strategy at national level, reflecting countries' needs;
- Strategies and action statements need to be further refined;
- Inclusion of tenure issues;
- Identification of a regional coordinator;
- Potential partners including private sector;
- Reflect countries' needs;
- Lack of definitions and criteria (of successful restoration, degraded land, etc.);
- Involvement of non-forestry sectors; and
- Importance of having communication strategy from the beginning.

There was a general agreement on the value of the regional strategy and on having some kind of regional coordination mechanism. FAO will further refine and finalize the strategy and action plan, circulate among APFC member countries and partners to start operationalizing the strategy. The strategy/action plan will be tabled for discussion and endorsement at the next APFC session.

8. Other business

Mr. Durst commented on the need to strengthen linkages between APFC and the FAO Regional Conference, which is an FAO internal matter to be followed up by FAO forestry officers. Planned celebration for International Day of Forests 2017 was also discussed.

9. Closing of the 12th Meeting of the APFC Executive Committee

Mr. Amaro and Mr. Durst thanked the committee for its excellent input and participation. In closing the meeting, they emphasized the importance of partnership and collaborative effort in making the next APFC session a success.

ANNEX 1: AGENDA

Wednesday, 12 October 2016	
18:00-18:30	Welcome and introductions (informal session)
Thursday, 13 October 2016	
07.30 – 12.30	Field trip hosted by the Forest Restoration Research Unit (FORRU) to observe successful implementation of a payment for ecosystem services (PES) scheme.
12.30 – 13.45	Lunch at hotel
13.45 – 13.55	Welcome and introductory remarks by APFC Chair & APFC Secretary
13.55 – 14.00	Adoption of the agenda
14.00 – 15.00	Revisiting recent APFC-related events <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partners Roundtable Meeting • 23rd Session of Committee on Forestry (COFO 23) and the 5th World Forest Week • 26th Session of APFC and Asia-Pacific Forestry Week 2016
15.00 – 15.20	Coffee break
15.20 – 16.00	Updates and progress of ongoing APFC activities and initiatives, including review of recommendations from the 26 th Session of the APFC and related follow-up actions
16.00 – 16.30	APFC subsidiary groups: Asia-Pacific Forest Invasive Species Network'; TEAKNET; Asia-Pacific Forest Policy Think Tank; Asia-Pacific Forestry Communication Network. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update on recent activities • Key challenges and issues and measures taken to address them • Key opportunities
18.00	Depart for dinner (meeting at lobby)
Friday, 14 October 2016	
08.30 – 08.45	Recap of Day 1, housekeeping announcements, etc.
08.45 – 09.45	Preparations for the 27 th Session of the APFC <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update from the host country Sri Lanka • Update from the Secretariat • Others
09.45 – 10.30	In-session seminar: Toward a regional strategy on forest and landscape restoration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation of draft regional strategy and action plan • Discussion on additional aspects to be considered and approaches to rolling out the strategy
10.30 – 10.50	Coffee break
10.50 – 11.30	Other business <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Linkages between APFC and the FAO Regional Conference • International Day of Forests 2017 • Q&A
11.30 – 12.00	Closing of the Twelfth Meeting of the APFC Executive Committee
12.00 – 13.00	Lunch

ANNEX 2: LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

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ANNEX 3: FIELD VISIT PROGRAM

Date: October 13th, 2016			
Time	Activity	Place	Responsible person
07:30	Leaving from hotel	Hotel	FAO group
	Leaving from CMU	K-bank, CMU	FORRU
09:00	Visit 2015 BPK plot (1.5 growing seasons)	2015 BPK restoration plot	FAO and FORRU team
	Framework tree species technique	2015 BPK restoration plot	Dr. Steve
	Explain about the restoration activity and experiment	2015 BPK restoration plot	Duck
09:30	Visit 2016 BPK plot (newly planted last July)	2016 BPK restoration plot	FAO and FORRU team
	Explain about the restoration activity and experiment	2016 BPK restoration plot	Duck and Ben
10:00	Leaving from restoration plot	2016 BPK restoration plot	Duck
10:30	Meeting with PES committee (BPK community, OBT, AURA, LEAF, FORRU, RFD)	OBT meeting room	Duck
	Introduce the PES committee	OBT meeting room	The representative from each group
	Introduction to 1st PES in Thailand	OBT meeting room	Dr. Steve, Village head or AURA spokesperson
	Explain about the responsibility on PES project	OBT meeting room	The representative from each group
	The successful of PES/restoration	OBT meeting room	Dr. Steve, Village head or AURA spokesperson
11:10	Q and A	OBT meeting room	Duck
11:30	Leaving from OBT meeting room	OBT meeting room	FAO and FORRU team
12:30	Arrive Chiang Mai	Hotel, CMU	FAO and FORRU team

ANNEX 4: PHOTOGRAPHS FROM THE MEETING AND THE FIELD VISIT









ANNEX 5: PRESENTATIONS

<p>Future Direction for Forestry in the Asia-Pacific Region</p>  <p>Future Direction for Forestry in the Asia-</p>	<p>Asia-Pacific Forestry Week (APFW) 2016 and 26th Asia-Pacific Forestry commission (APFC) Evaluation</p>  <p>Asia-Pacific Forestry Week (APFW) 2016 e</p>
<p>Updates and progress of ongoing activities and initiatives since the 26th session of APFC (Clark, Philippines, February 2016)</p>  <p>APFC Update and progress of ongoing</p>	<p>APFC Subsidiary Groups</p>  <p>APFC Subsidiary Groups.pdf</p>
<p>27th Session of the Asia-Pacific Forestry Commission, Sri Lanka</p>  <p>Sri Lanka.pdf</p>	<p>Towards a Regional Strategy and Action Plan for Forest and Landscape Restoration (FLR) in the Asia-Pacific</p>  <p>Regional Strategy and Action Plan for</p>