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Forest Genetic Resources Working Papers

Report of the Regional Training Workshops to support the preparation of The State of the World's Forest Genetic Resources in Africa

27-29 April 2011, Nairobi, Kenya

Prepared by:

the World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF)
United Nations Avenue, Gigiri, PO Box 30677, Nairobi, 00100, Kenya

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For further information please contact:

Oudara Souvannavong
Senior Forestry Officer
Forest Assessment, Management and Conservation Division
Forestry Department
FAO, Viale delle Terme di Caracalla
00100 Rome, Italy
Fax: + 39 06 570 55 137
Email: oudara.souvannavong@fao.org

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Summary

This document describes the proceedings of a three-day regional workshop to support the preparation of the *State of the World's Forest Genetic Resources* (SOW-FGR) in Africa. The primary objective of the meeting was to train African National Focal Points in the preparation of work plans for the production of Country Reports which will then be synthesised to produce the SOW-FGR report. This involved providing information on the SOW-FGR preparation process, reviewing the Guidelines for the content of Country Reports, drafting work plans for developing Country Reports and discussing possible sources of support. During the meeting there was the opportunity for participants to present to, and receive feedback from, plenary, in order to improved draft work plans.

The meeting was hosted by the World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF) in Nairobi, between 27 and 29 April 2011. It involved participants from 33 African countries, as well as from various other institutions, including Bioversity International, FAO, Forest and Landscape Denmark and ICRAF. The proceedings of the meeting in plenary were simultaneously translated into English and French for Francophone and Anglophone participants, respectively.

In the introductory session of this report, the context for the meeting is described in relation to the forthcoming SOW-FGR. The subsequent sections of this report relate the proceedings and outcomes of the three days of presentations, working group exercises and plenary discussions. Key points raised during the meeting are summarised in the box below.

Key issues raised at the regional workshop to support the preparation of the State of the World's Forest Genetic Resources in Africa

- Country Reports should be based on collecting and collating existing information, not on generating new information specifically for the SOW-FGR
- The compilation of Country Reports should be seen as a strategic planning exercise to allow gaps and opportunities in current activities on FGR at a national level to be identified and acted on
- The method by which Country Reports are complied will vary by nation because of the different ways in which countries operate. However, the Country Report is an official document that must be approved by government before submission to FAO
- Some countries plan to use their own funding sources for the development of Country Reports. Others (the majority) will seek funding to support development from FAO and elsewhere. National-level FAO TCP funds are one opportunity for funding but resources are limited and application is competitive: good support from national government is required. National Focal Points are resolved to prepare proposals to support the development of Country Reports that will be submitted by their governments for TCP consideration
- Completed Country Reports should be submitted by the end of December 2011

Introduction

At its Eleventh Session in June 2007, the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (CGRFA) acknowledged the urgency to conserve and sustainably utilise forest genetic resources and requested that a *State of the World's Forest Genetic Resources* (SOW-FGR) report be prepared and presented to the Commission for consideration at its Fourteenth Session, in 2013. The Commission recommended that FAO's Committee on Forestry (COFO) and FAO Regional Forestry Commissions be involved in the preparation of this document.

The preparation of the SOW-FGR was welcomed by the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) in May 2008 and FAO Regional Forestry Commissions were informed of the plan to prepare the report. At its Nineteenth Session in March 2009, COFO urged member countries to collaborate with FAO and partner organisations in the preparation of the SOW-FGR.

In December 2008, FAO's Panel of Experts on Forest Gene Resources defined the scope of the report and proposed a structure. Country Reports that compile available national-level information, the development of which reports will be coordinated by National Focal Points, will be the main source of data for the SOW-FGR. A number of cross-cutting, thematic studies were also defined to support synthesis. Regional workshops in the tropics were held in 2008 and 2009 to develop proposals further and consultations were also held in Europe and North America.

At its Twelfth Session in October 2009, the CGRFA endorsed the proposed outline and tentative list of thematic studies for the SOW-FGR. The Commission stressed that the preparation should be based primarily on Country Reports, with support from thematic studies. The Commission called for assistance and capacity building in developing countries for the preparation of Country Reports and appealed to FAO and donors to provide the required resources. The tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties of the Convention on Biological Diversity in October 2010 also invited donors to support the development of the SOW-FGR.

The Twelfth Session of the CGRFA established the Intergovernmental Technical Working Group on FGR (ITWG-FGR), one role of which will be to review drafts of the SOW-FGR report. Intergovernmental Working Groups played important roles in the preparation of the first report on the *State of the World`s Animal Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture* and the second report on the *State of the World`s Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture*.

Regional workshops to assist National Focal Points in the preparation of Country Reports for the SOW-FGR were organised for Latin America (in Colombia) in November 2010, for the Pacific (in Fiji) in January 2011 and for Asia (in Malaysia) in March 2011. The current report is an account of the next of these meetings, for Africa, held in Kenya in April 2011.

Proceedings of Wednesday 27 April

Opening session

Participants introduced themselves before a number of welcoming statements and an opening address were given. Oudara Souvannavong gave a statement on behalf of the FAO Representative for Kenya, while Ramni Jamnadass spoke on behalf of ICRAF's Director General. Joseph Jojo Baidu-Forson spoke on the part of Bioversity International and Ian Dawson read a statement from the Executive Secretary of the CBD, Ahmed Djoghlaf, which welcomed participants to the meeting. All welcome statements stressed the significance of producing the SOW-FGR.

The Honourable Noah Wekesa, the Minister of Forestry and Wildlife for Kenya, opened the meeting. He stressed that FGR are a priceless treasure for humanity, whose sustainable use requires national and international action. The environmental risks of disease, alien invasives, genetic modification (GM), genetic pollution and climate change, with extended droughts and occasional flooding in Kenya, are all issues of concern for FGR. Kenya's forest cover is low compared to other African countries and there is a need to increase planting on arid lands, but the mechanisms for doing so are unclear. Problems of charcoal and woodfuel production are also paramount, as most households still rely on these for cooking.

Keynote presentations

Bradnee Chambers read a prepared statement on behalf of Bakary Kante, the Director of UNEP's Division of Environmental Law and Conventions, stressing the interconnectedness between deforestation, climate change and biodiversity loss with impacts on human wellbeing. The importance of reducing emissions from deforestation and ecosystem degradation (REDD schemes) was stressed. In response to a question from Benin, it was related that one of the key issues in obtaining carbon credit funds is having the capacity nationally to know what is required to do so. At the moment, there is no proper strategy within the UN system on capacity building and a more coherent approach is needed between UN agencies.

Emilio Mugo gave a presentation on behalf of David Mbugua, the Director of the Kenya Forest Service titled *'Celebrating the International Year of Forests: milestones within the forest sector in Kenya'*. Kenya has around 1.2 million hectares of gazetted natural forests and approximately 9.5 million hectares of farmlands containing trees and forest fragments in various configurations. Key challenges include the need to bridge the gap between the supply and demand of forest goods and services, competing demands for land, weak governance and reliance on a narrow (exotic) species base for most on-farm planting.

Ben Chikamai, the Director of the Kenya Forestry Research Institute gave a presentation titled *'The development of indigenous fruit trees in Eastern Africa for improved livelihoods'*, which described a project on this topic in Ethiopia, Kenya, Sudan and Tanzania. The project is concerned with the domestication of priority, higher value species and considers that other species are adequately protected in natural forest stands. The project works with others – such as the Kenya Forest Service and farmers – to ensure implementation of conservation strategies based on research results.

Lars Gradual, the Head of Division, Forest Genetic Resources and the Hørsholm Arboretum, Forest and Landscape Denmark presented a talk on *'Tree seed supply for agroforestry smallholders in support of poverty reduction and food security in Africa'*. Almost half of the agricultural land in the world (more than 1 billion hectares) has tree cover of more than 10 percent. The contribution of trees outside forests to people's livelihoods and national economies is expected to dramatically increase in the current context of deforestation, climate change and food insecurity. However, the methods for delivering tree planting material to smallholders are ineffcient. Key is the use of local, decentralised, private-enterprises to deliver seed and seedlings. This requires a transformation in roles of the various actors currently involved in the tree germplasm sector. The modelling of current and future distributions of tropical tree species is also essential for appropriate zoning during germplasm delivery.

Lolona Ramamonjisoa, the Director of the Silo National des Graines Forestières, Madagascar, gave a presentation on *'Tree seed centres for food tree species sustainable use and genetic conservation'*. This described a project designed to enhance the role of tree seed centres as tools for the conservation and sustainable use of genetic resources of food tree species in seven countries in Africa: Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, Senegal, Tanzania and Togo.

Paul Smith, Head of the Seed Conservation Department at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew gave a talk on *'Kew's Millennium Seed Bank Partnership in Africa: achievements and challenges'*. The Millennium Seed Bank is the largest wild plant seed bank in the world and currently holds around 30,000 species, including 8,500 from Africa. Between 2010 and 2020 in Africa it will concentrate efforts on work with communities for domestication, reintroduction and sustainable use of wild plant species. By 2020 the intention is to conserve 10,000 wild species from Africa towards a global target of 45,000 species, so that 25% of the world's flora is in safe storage. Research on the germination of so-called 'difficult' tree species indicates that many are not as hard to propagate as first thought. Kew works with public sector *bona fide* research institutions in order to facilitate benefit sharing and avoid irresponsible introductions that could lead to alien species invasions.

Preparation of the SOW-FGR

Oudara Souvannavong described the process behind the preparation of the SOW-FGR (as already outlined in the introduction of this report). The primary input to the SOW-FGR will be Country Reports, with extra information provided by thematic studies and reports from international organisations. The purpose of the current meeting is to train National Focal Points in the preparation of work plans for the production of Country Reports.

As well as contributing to the SOW-FGR, Country Reports should form the basis of national action plans for work on FGR. Developing reports is therefore an important strategic exercise. Country Reports should be based on existing information rather than new research. Some nations have existing reports on FGR that were compiled over the last decades (most African reports are about 10 years old; www.fao.org/forestry/fgr/50371/en/). Other important documents include FAO's Global Forest Resources Assessment 2010 (www.fao.org/forestry/fra/fra2010/en/), FAO's Panel of Experts on Forest Gene Resources reports, and the SOW reports on animal and plant (excluding forest) genetic resources. In

Africa, resources developed by the sub-Saharan Africa Forest Genetic Resources Programme (SAFORGEN) are also useful.

Oudara described the timetable for the production of the SOW-FGR. Completed Country Reports will be due at the end of December 2011 as otherwise they will not be able to be included in the next stage of the process. Country Reports will be analysed and synthesised with thematic studies that are also due by December 2011. The resulting draft of the SOW-FGR produced in 2012 will be reviewed and presented to the CGRFA at its fourteenth session in 2013 and may lead to the adoption of a *Global Plan of Action for Forest Genetic Resources*. In 2014 the report will be presented to COFO, the CBD and the United Nations Forum on Forests.

Judy Loo presented the topics of the thematic studies that will support Country Reports in the compilation of the SOW-FGR. These are:

- Indicators of forest genetic diversity, erosion and vulnerability
- Understanding genetic diversity of tropical species in natural forests
- New technologies and approaches to support conservation of FGR
- Use and transfer of FGR
- FGR role in adaptation to biotic and abiotic factors, with a focus on climate change
- Use of FGR in decentralised development for food security, poverty reduction and livelihood improvement
- Effects of management practices on forest genetic diversity
- Use of native species in biodiversity restoration and management
- Trends in management of FGR by the private/corporate sector

As well as contributing to the SOW-FGR, the intention is that thematic papers will be published as reviews in a special edition of a forest management journal.

Preparation of the SOW-FGR: main discussion points

The inter-relationship between national reports and thematic studies was discussed and whether individual countries will be able to explore the results of the thematic studies in order to inform their Country Reports. However, because of the timing of reporting it will be difficult to provide thematic studies to countries before Country Reports are due. It will therefore fall on the editors at FAO to integrate the Country Reports with thematic studies in the SOW report.

Participants at the current meeting were invited to present information on thematic studies to Bioversity International (Judy Loo), who will ensure that it is passed to the relevant thematic study coordinator. Furthermore, participants were invited to volunteer or suggest relevant experts, from their country or region, to contact FAO (Ouadara Souvannavong), Bioversity International (Judy Loo) or the relevant theme coordinator to get involved in the writing of thematic studies.

Guidelines for Country Reports

Oudara Souvannavong described the Guidelines that have been developed for the preparation of Country Reports. These aim to assist countries to undertake a strategic assessment of their FGR in the framework of their national forest programmes, and thereby identify gaps and needs in national plans. The Guidelines are important for placing information in a common framework that will allow later analysis and synthesis so that wider regional and global conclusions can be made. Focus should be on those perennials (trees, but also palms, etc., may be included) that are national priorities as defined by a range of users. The compilers of the SOW-FGR will assess country priorities and determine which species are of wider regional and global priority. Country Reports should follow the structure of chapters as outlined in the Guidelines (www.fao.org/forestry/fgr/64585/en/) as follows:

Chapter 1. The current state of the forest genetic resources

Chapter 2. The state of *in situ* genetic conservation

Chapter 3. The state of *ex situ* genetic conservation

Chapter 4. The state of use and sustainable management of forest genetic resources

Chapter 5. The state of national programmes, research, education, training and legislation

Chapter 6. The state of regional and international collaboration

Chapter 7. Access to forest genetic resources and sharing of benefits arising from their use

Chapter 8. The contribution of forest genetic resources to food security, poverty alleviation and sustainable development

Recommended steps for the production of country reports are given in Part IV of the Guidelines, and details on the information being sought are given in the Annexes to the Guidelines. For many countries, information will not be available to answer all of the questions raised in the details of the Guidelines, but countries are asked to address what they can.

The compulsory step in the production of Country Reports is to have a National Focal Point to lead the process, while the details of other steps will depend on the country in question. FAO's experience with related initiatives is that appointing a National Committee to oversee work that is then undertaken by subject-specific Working Groups can be an effective way to proceed.

In order to give an initial insight into the development of work plans for preparing Country Reports, Lolona Ramamonjisoa (Madagascar) and Siima Salome (Tanzania) presented their draft plans and progress in developing reports. In Madagascar, constraints to reporting are the lack of accurate statistics and the slow pace of government processes. Madagascar has obtained financial support to develop their Country Report through an application to the FAO national Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP) facility. Importantly, this application was supported by an official covering letter from the Ministry of Forestry to the FAO representative in Madagascar – the support of the highest level of government increases the likelihood of obtaining funds. A junior graduate consultant is being mobilised to liaise with different institutions to collect information. In Tanzania, a workshop has already been held to develop a 'draft zero' of the Report.

Guidelines for Country Reports: main discussion points

The problem of (limited) access to information at a national level was raised. It is important to liaise between all relevant partners to collect data, but it was stressed that Country Reports should be based on existing information, not on research to generate new knowledge. Compiling Country Reports is a way of identifying gaps in current knowledge.

The structures needed at a national level to compile Country Reports were discussed. It was stressed that these will be different between countries because of the different ways in which nations operate. Some countries may require a high level National Committee in order to obtain approval from different ministries to allow their staff to participate in the production of the Country Report. Other countries may rely on informal contacts between institutions. However, the Country Report is an official document that must be approved by government before submission to FAO.

In some countries, existing National Committees and/or Working Groups on FGR may be used for compiling Country Reports and no new structures may be necessary. Working Groups, if deemed necessary for the compilation of a Country Report, should be composed of technical specialists who can actually contribute knowledge on the topic in question.

The question of how FAO can support National Focal Points in establishing National Committees was raised. Focal Points were advised to refer their governments to the correspondence on the SOW-FGR, which outlines the possible means for the compilation of Country Reports, including through the establishment of National Committees.

Proceedings of Thursday 28 April

Developing work plans for the preparation of Country Reports

In an introductory presentation in plenary, Oudara Souvannavong described the objectives of the meeting today to develop draft national work plans for the preparation of Country Reports and to determine (if needed) funding requirements. An example of a work plan – from Indonesia – was shared as a PowerPoint presentation. Important points to remember include the following:

- Country Reports are to be based on the collection of work that has already been done, not on new research
- Based on the categories of information that are required for Country Reports (as given in the Guidelines), determine the institutions and individuals that can contribute and where in published and grey literature information is likely to be found. Include a wide range of partners in consultations
- Make sure that any previous relevant reports on forests and genetic resources are considered
- Establish what kind of organisational structure is needed to do the work. For each country, this may be different
- A timeline and – if necessary – a budget should be attached to the work plan

The meeting then divided into Anglophone and Francophone working groups for the preparation of work plans, supported by resource persons (Anglophone group: Judy Loo [Bioversity International] and Ian Dawson [ICRAF]; Francophone group: Oudara Souvannavong [FAO] and Albert Nikiema [FAO]).

Printed examples of work plans from Madagascar (in French) and Pakistan (in English) were shared with groups. The Pakistan proposal is a useful example because it places the Country Report within the context of other relevant reports and national strategies that need to be considered in developing a position on FGR.

At stages through the day, draft work plans for the preparation of Country Reports were presented within working groups for further refinement.

Proceedings of Friday 29 April

Draft work plans for the preparation of Country Reports
A selection of draft work plans were presented in full plenary session by National Focal Points in order to inform on progress and guide on future development. Presentations were first given (in listed order) by a selection of Francophone countries – Burkina Faso, Benin, Niger, Congo-Brazzaville, Gabon, Guinea Bissau – and then Anglophone nations – Lesotho, Nigeria, Swaziland, Uganda, Kenya, Zambia and Seychelles.

Draft work plans for the preparation of Country Reports: main discussion points

Some countries plan to use their own funding sources for the development of Country Reports. Others (the majority) indicated that they will seek funding to support development from FAO and elsewhere. National-level FAO TCP funds are one opportunity for funding but resources are limited and application is competitive: good support from national government is needed.

There was a concern that some funding requests appeared to include new research. It was again emphasised that the purpose of this exercise is to collate existing data. A suggestion was made by some countries that a set amount of financial support should be given to each country and 'top–up' funds could then be sought by each nation as required. The size of some countries means that simply bringing people together into meetings can be a costly exercise.

There was a concern that funding requests will hold up the development of Country Reports. In the absence of funding, it will be important to do as much as is possible, based on existing resources.

Some countries plan to assign individual chapters of the Country Reports to particular experts for compilation. Others will assign particular chapters to Working Groups. In some cases, particular experts/Working Groups will consider a series of related chapters (e.g., chapters 1-4 in one batch; 5-7 in another; and chapter 8 treated separately).

Some countries plan to recruit consultants to compile information, others to just use 'in house' staff. It may be that newly-graduated researchers can work as consultants to collect data that can then be complied by more experienced staff.

Some countries did not consider a National Committee essential for the production of their Country Report because the relevant experts that will compile chapters have good linkages with the formal structures of government.

Some countries expressed a need for specific technical backstopping from FAO and/or assistance in translating documents into/from national languages other than English and French (e.g., Portuguese in Guinea Bissau). These concerns should be included in the work plan and related budget.

Some nations did not consider an initial launch workshop to present the initiative to country stakeholders to be necessary, only a validation workshop once the Country Report had been drafted.

Some countries will use existing policy and technical groups as their 'National Committee' and 'Working Groups' for coordinating the development of their Country Report.

There were concerns that some work plans were unduly 'administrative' and that all the steps required would take longer than the time available to compile Country Reports.

Conclusion and next steps

Oudara Souvannavong thanked participants for their efforts during the meeting to develop work plans for the preparation of Country Reports for the SOW-FGR. Several countries had already begun activities to develop Country Reports even before this workshop. Important points to reinforce include the following:

- The development of Country Reports is a national exercise and will help design more effective national resource management plans
- It is important to use a participatory approach to provide depth and breadth in the information presented in Country Reports
- Work plans for preparing Country Reports need to be adapted to a country-specific setting
- Country Reports should be based on existing knowledge; gaps will indicate areas for further work
- Country Reports should make use of available expertise at the regional level. For example, SAFROGEN, an expert network on FGR in Africa
- The time frame for the delivery of Country Reports is the end of December 2011

Countries are encouraged to finalise there work plans for Country Reports and submit proposals for funding – if required – as soon as possible. Countries are encouraged to ensure good knowledge of FGR issues by delegates to the next (thirteenth) session of the CGRFA in July 2011, where progress on the SOW-FGR will be raised.

The meeting concluded with thanks to participants for their contributions, thanks to Oudara for leading the meeting, and thanks to ICRAF for hosting it.

Conclusion and next steps: main discussion points

The issue of funding was again raised. FAO have not been able to obtain 'extra-budgetary' funding. It is important to approach the FAO national TCP facility with a good supporting case from the highest level of government. National Focal Points are resolved to prepare proposals for submission by their governments to the TCP facility.

REGIONAL WORKSHOP TO SUPPORT THE PREPARATION OF THE STATE OF THE WORLD'S FOREST GENETIC RESOURCES IN AFRICA

Nairobi, Kenya 27-29 April 2011

PARTICIPANTS

Country representatives / National Focal Points

1. **Angola**
   Mateus Simão André
   Chef du Département Forestier de l'IDF
   IDF/MINADERP
   Tel: +244 923586744
   Email: mateusngamba@yahoo.fr

2. **Benin**
   Simon Kodjoli Awokou
   Assistant du Directeur
   Centre d'Etudes, de Recherches et de Formation Forestières
   06 BP 707 PK 3, 5 Cotonou
   Tel: +229 97572465 / 95466913
   Email: simawkou@yahoo.fr

3. **Botswana**
   Motsereganye Sekgopo
   Principal Scientific Officer
   Department of Forestry and Range Resources
   PO Box 602170, Gaborone
   Tel: +267 71468870
   Email: msekgopo@gov.bw

4. **République du Congo (Brazzaville)**
   Joseph Léon Samba
   Coordonnateur National du Programme sur les ressources génétiques forestières en Afrique subsaharienne (SAFORGEN)
   Ministère du Développement Durable, de l'Economie Forestière et de l'Environnement
   85, Rue Mpissa, Makalékélé, Brazzaville
   Tel : +242 055603858 / 068917272
   Email: sajoleo2003@yahoo.fr

5. **Burkina Faso**
   Sibidou Sina
   Directeur Général
   Centre National de Semences Forestières
   01 BP 2682 Ouagadougou 01, Route de Kaya
   Tel: +226 50356110 / 70258574
   Email: sib_sina@yahoo.fr; sibsina@fasonet.bf

6. **Burundi**
   Claire Kayoboke
   Chef de Service
   Développement et Extension des Ressources Forestières
   BP 631 Bujumbura
   Tel: +257 22246783/ 78816155
   Email: clakayoboke@yahoo.fr

7. **Djibouti**
   Youssouf Daher Robleh
   Chef de service
   Service de la Production Vegetale
   Djibouti ville, cite barwaaqo
   Email: youssouf_daher@yahoo.fr

8. **Eritrea**
   Mr. Estifanos Bein
   Director
   Natural Resource Regulatory Division
   Tel: +291 108370705
   Email: estbein@moa.gov.er

9. **Ethiopia**
   Dr Tesfaye Awas Feye
   Curator of Gene Bank
   Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Use Directorate
   PO Box 30726, Addis Ababa
   Tel: +251 911678069
   Email: tesfayeawas@gmail.com

10. **Gabon**
    David Ingueza
    Directeur Générale des Eaux et Forêts
    Chargé d'Etudes Cab. Min/DGEF
    Tel: +241 05 920 920
    Email: inguezadavid@yahoo.fr

11. **Gambia**
    Ousainoyu A.R. Cham
    Director of Forestry
    Department of Forestry
    5 Marina Parade, Banjul
    Tel: +220 4224307 / 9757583 / 7123332 / 6390596
    Email: ousainoyc@yahoo.com

12. **Ghana**
    Edward Obiaw
    Director, Resource Management Support Centre
    P.O. Box 1457, Kumasi
    Tel: +233 242174587
    E-mail Address: konamventures@yahoo.com

13. **Guinea**
    Research Scientist
    Ibrahima Bangoura
    Forestry Department
    Tel: +224 62571088
    Email: iboubang2003@yahoo.fr

14. **Guinea Bissau**
    Justino Nelson Gomes
    Director General
    Fauna Department
    Email: nelsonjustinog@yahoo.com.br

15. **Kenya**
    Philip Ireri
    Chief Officer Ecotourism
    Kenya Forest Service
    P.O Box 30513-00100, Nairobi, Kenya
    Tel: +254 203754904/5/6, 2014663, 2020285
    Email: pireri@kenyaforestservice.org

16. **Lesotho**
    Tlotliso Ramanyaka
    Principal Forestry Officer (Research)
    Department of Forestry
    P.O. Box 774 Maseru 100
    Tel: +266 2232600 / 22322754
    Email: forestrydepartment@leo.co.ls

17. **Madagascar**
    Lolona Ramamonjisoa
    Director Silo National des Graines Forestières, Antananarivo
    Tel: +261 202241230
    Email: lolona.sngf@moov.mg

18. **Malawi**
    Clement Chilima
    Deputy Director of Forestry Research
    Forestry Research Institute of Malawi
    PO Box 270, Zomba
    Tel: +265 999270170 / 01524866
    Email: cchilima@gmail.com

19. **Mauritanie**
    Ethmane Ould Boubacar
    Chef de Service
    Forests et Paturages a la Direction Protection de la Nature
    Email: ouldboubacar@yahoo.fr

20. **Mozambique**
    Cacilda João Chirinzane
    Probationary Researcher in forestry
    Directorate of Agronomy and Natural Resources
    Maxaquene B, home nº 23
    Tel: +258 824837930
    Email: dinhala2009@gmail.com

21. **Namibia**
    Lisias Tjaveondja
    Senior Forester
    Division of Forest Research, Directorate of Forestry
    PO Box 151, Okahandja
    Tel: +264 62501925
    Email: Tjaveondjalt@mawrd.gov.na

22. **Niger**
Ahmed Oumarou
Directeur du Centre National des Semences Forestières
Department Environnement et Eaux et Forêts
Tel: 22720370773 / 96978334
Email: ahmedoumarou@yahoo.fr

23. **Nigeria**
Stephen Olufisayo Aluko
Assistant director
Forestry Department
Tel: +234 8033815659
Email: olustep@yahoo.com

24. **Rwanda**
Rutonesha Freddy Gashamura
Research Scientist
Forestry Department
Email: gashafreddy@yahoo.fr

25. **Senegal**
Abibou Gaye
Chef Programme Amélioration et Valorisation des produits forestiers
Ministère de l'Agriculture/ISRA/CNRF
Tel: +221 776398560
Email: gayeabibou@yahoo.fr

26. **Seychelles**
Eric Marc Sophola
Senior Forestry Officer
National Parks Authority
Tel: +248 722114
Email: ericsey@hotmail.com

27. **South Africa**
Goodness Sindiswa Boqo
Assistant Director
Department of Agriculture, Forestry and fisheries
Tel: +278 28032988
Email: Boqos@dwa.gov.za

28. **Swaziland**
Zachariah Dlamini
Assistant National Herbarium curator
Forestry Department
Email: solnh@africaonline.co.sz

29. **Tanzania**
Siima Salome
Acting Director
Forest Production Research
Tel: +255 754784545
Email: siima_b@yahoo.com

30. **Tchad**
Hamid Taga
Tel: +235 99940188
Email: Achta.MadToingue@fao.org

31. **Uganda**
John Francis Esegu
Director
National Forestry Resources Research Institute
Tel: +256 772470764
Email: naforridir@infocom.co.ug; esegujfo@yahoo.com

32. **Zambia**
Lishomwa Mulongwe
Principal Research Officer
Forestry Department
Email: lishomwam@yahoo.com; lishomwam@yahoo.co.uk

33. **Zimbabwe**
Mduduzi Cardinal Tembani
Seed Physiologist
Research and Training Department
Email: tembani@frchigh.co.zw; tembanie@yahoo.com

Guest of honour

The Honourable Noah Wekesa,
Ministry of Forestry and Wildlife
Teleposta Towers, Kenyatta Avenue
PO Box 41394-00100, Nairobi, Kenya
Email: ps@forestryandwildlife.go.ke

Other participants: keynote speakers (that are not otherwise listed above)

Bradnee Chambers
United Nations Environment Programme
United Nations Avenue, Gigiri
PO Box 30552-00100, Nairobi, Kenya

Ben Chikamai
Director
Kenya Forestry Research Institute
P.0. Box 20412–00200, Nairobi, Kenya
Email: director@kefri.org

Lars Gradual
Head of Division
Forest Genetic Resources and the Hørsholm Arboretum
Forest and Landscape Denmark at the University of Copenhagen, Copenhagen, Denmark
Email: lgr@life.ku.dk

Paul Smith
Head of the Seed Conservation Department
Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, London, UK
Email: p.smith@kew.org

Other participants: countries

Stephen Fredrick Omondi
Research Assistant
Kenya Forestry Research Institute
PO Box 20412–00200, Nairobi, Kenya
Tel: +254 722671027
Email: stephenf.omondi@gmail.com

Bernard Kigomo
Deputy Director
Kenya Forestry Research Institute
PO Box 20412–00200, Nairobi, Kenya
Tel: +254 722791656
Email: bkigomo@kefri.org

Other participants: international institutions

Ian Dawson
Associate Fellow
The World Agroforestry Centre
c/o PO Box 30677-00100, Nairobi, Kenya
Tel: +44 1904628367
Email: iankdawson@aol.com

Judy Loo
Senior Scientist
Forest and Other Wild Plant Resources, Understanding and Managing Biodiversity Programme
Bioversity International
Via dei Tre Denari, 472/a, 00057 Maccarese, Rome, Italy
Email: j.loo@cgiar.org

Ramni Jamnadass
ICRAF Global Research Project Leader, Tree Genetic Resources, Tree Improvement and Sustainable Seed Seedling Systems
The World Agroforestry Centre
PO Box 30677-00100, Nairobi, Kenya
Email: r.jamnadass@cgiar.org

Albert Nikiema
Forestry Officer, Forest Genetic Resource Management, FAO
Forest Assessment, Management and Conservation Division, Forestry Department
Viale delle Terme di Caracalla, 00153 Rome, Italy
Tel. +39 0657056417
E-mail: Albert.Nikiema@fao.org

Oudara Souvannavong
Senior Forestry Officer, Biological Diversity and Conservation, FAO
Forest Assessment, Management and Conservation Division, Forestry Department
Viale delle Terme di Caracalla, 00153 Rome, Italy
Tel. +39 0657054750
E-mail: Oudara.Souvannavong@fao.org

REGIONAL WORKSHOP TO SUPPORT THE PREPARATION OF THE STATE OF THE WORLD'S FOREST GENETIC RESOURCES IN AFRICA

Nairobi, Kenya 27-29 April 2011

REVISED AGENDA

Wednesday 27 April

Facilitator: Daniel Ofori

08.30 – 09.00 Registration

09.00 – 10.30 Opening session

Welcome statements *by the co-organisers*:

- Statement on behalf of the FAO Representative in Kenya by Oudara Souvannavong
- Statement on behalf of the Director General of ICRAF by Ramni Jamnadass
- Statement by the Regional Director of Bioversity International for sub-Saharan Africa, Joseph Jojo Baidu-Forson
- Statement on behalf of the Executive Secretary of the CBD by Ian Dawson

Opening statement by the Minister of Forestry and Wildlife for Kenya, the Honourable Noah Wekesa

10.30 – 11:00 Photo and Coffee break

11:00 – 13:00 Keynote presentations

11:00 Statement by Bakary Kante, the Director of UNEP's Division of Environmental Law and Conventions, given by Bradnee Chambers

11.20 ***Celebrating the International Year of Forests: milestones within the forest sector in Kenya***

Presentation by David Mbugua, the Director of the Kenya Forest Service, given by Emilio Mugo

11.40 ***The development of indigenous fruit trees in Eastern Africa for improved livelihoods***

Presentation by Ben Chikamai, the Director of the Kenya Forestry Research Institute

12.00 ***Tree seed supply for agroforestry smallholders in support of poverty reduction and food security in Africa***

Presentation by Lars Gradual, the Head of Division, Forest Genetic Resources and the Hørsholm Arboretum, Forest and Landscape Denmark at the University of Copenhagen

12.20 ***Tree seed centres for food tree species sustainable use and genetic conservation***

Presentation by Lolona Ramamonjisoa, the Director of the Silo National des Graines Forestières, Madagascar

12.40 ***Kew's Millennium Seed Bank Partnership in Africa: achievements and challenges***

Presentation by Paul Smith, Head of the Seed Conservation Department, the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, London, UK

13.00 – 14.15 Lunch

14.15 – 15.15 Information and update on the SOW-FGR preparation process, including background and workshop objectives, by Oudara Souvannavong

15.15 – 15.45 Information and update on the SOW-FGR thematic studies, by Judy Loo

15.45 – 16.15 Coffee break

16.15 – 18.00 Information and update on the SOW-FGR preparation process, including guidelines for the preparation of Country Reports, by Oudara Souvannavong

18.00 Cocktail

Thursday 28 April

Facilitator: Oudara Souvannavong

09.00 – 09.45 Introduction to working group sessions, by Oudara Souvannavong

09.45 – 16.15 Anglophone and Francophone working groups sessions on the preparation of Country Reports on FGR. Supported by resource persons (Anglophone: Judy Loo and Ian Dawson; Francophone: Oudara Souvannavong and Albert Nikiema)

Coffee breaks from 10.15 to 10.45 and from 16.15 to 16.45; lunch break from 12.45 to 14.00

16.45 – 18.00 Presentation of draft work plans for the preparation of Country Reports by National Focal Points within separate working groups. Discussion

Friday 29 April

Facilitators: Ian Dawson and Judy Loo

09.00 – 12.30 Presentation of draft work plans for the preparation of Country Reports by National Focal Points in full plenary session. Discussion

Coffee breaks from 10.45 to 11.15 and from 16.15 to 16.45; lunch break from 12.45 to 14.15

14.15 – 16.15 Conclusion, follow-up and next steps by Oudara Souvannavong. Closure