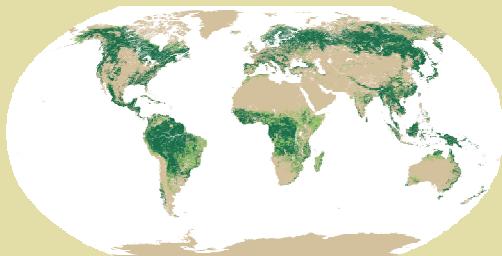


FRA 2010 Remote Sensing Survey

Working group issues



Wide range of issues raised

- Q. Most working groups wanted more information on the RSS – answered here briefly & will be put on FRA FAQ
- A. *It has just started - FAO will send out more details to National Correspondents on the RSS and expand info on the FRA website FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions)*
- Q. Some countries felt they were not adequately informed of the RSS in advance
- A. *RSS was discussed and agreed at Kotka in June 2006 but acknowledge gap since that time due to time taken to fund start up and also some NCC's have changed*



General issues - resources

- Q. Some countries disappointed they **did not get any points** (e.g. small island states)
- A. *Unfortunately a drawback of low overall plot numbers and sample grid design.*
- Q. Other countries concerned that they got **too many points**
- additional workload to process and handle data or conflict with other work priorities. Staff numbers not always proportional to number of samples per country.
- A. *FAO recognizes workload but hopes that the benefits of the data and results are also seen as worthwhile. In some cases where there are a particularly large number of plots beyond the countries capacity to process then FAO will consider options to assist with additional support to process or contracts with modest \$ to fund classification and/or validation of images*



Field work and varying country contributions

- Q. Is field work required to validate the sample tile areas (10,000 ha)?
- A. *FAO does not require that countries check the plots in the field – checking should be done using existing readily available information*
- Q. When can countries start?
- A. *Pilot stage for the RSS has only just begun this week – maybe 6 months for 20 countries, then remaining countries engaged*
- Q. Due to commitments and funding issues some countries will be interested in capacity building on the methods and techniques but not able to do the whole process – e.g. only validation phase
- A. *FAO recognises varying levels of capacity and will assist with training where required. Level of engagement and amount of work to be done can be determined by country*



Technical issues

- Q. Many countries don't have experience in remote sensing
- A. *This may be a good way to start with training and software provided by FAO.*
- Q. Definition and scale of the final products. Uncertainty over the scale and appropriate use of MODIS and LANDSAT imagery.
- A. *MODIS is coarse 250 m pixel size and LANDSAT is higher resolution 30 m pixels. Use will be further explained at training or through manuals.*
- Q. A standardised validation protocol needs to be devised by FAO / National etc. so as to ensure a common approach
- A. *Good point – noted, draft developed for pilot testing.*

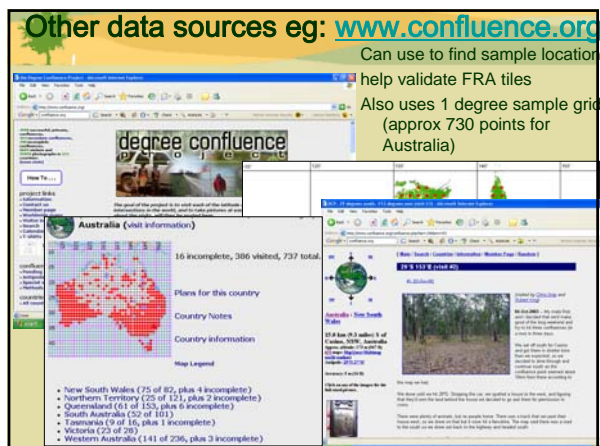


Caribbean

- Q. The Caribbean countries were disappointed that the remote sensing experts did not show up to assist them in their deliberations *[our apologies!]*
- However, the group did provide a list of issues so we can consider and respond:
- Q. Wanted more detailed information on the remote survey as it relates to methodologies
- A. See www.fao.org/forestry/fra
- Q. Where are the plots located?
- A. See www.confluence.org for points at junctions of 1 degree lat. and long. lines



Other data sources eg: www.confluence.org
 Can use to find sample location
 help validate FRA tiles
 Also uses 1 degree sample grid
 (approx 730 points for Australia)



degree confluence

Australia (what information?)
 16 incomplete, 386 visited, 737 total.

Plans for this country
 Country Notes
 Country Information
 Map Legend

- New South Wales (75 of 82, plus 4 incomplete)
- Northern Territory (25 of 121, plus 2 incomplete)
- Queensland (61 of 153, plus 6 incomplete)
- South Australia (52 of 101)
- Tasmania (9 of 16, plus 1 incomplete)
- Victoria (23 of 28)
- Western Australia (141 of 236, plus 3 incomplete)

Issues raised by Africa

Q. Does verification imply visiting all sites? or do we use ancillary data and local knowledge to undertake the verification?

Q. Access to field can be a problem in areas of civil unrest e.g. Dharfur – how to deal with these?

A. *FAO does not expect any countries to put staff at additional risk to undertake the RSS – mostly a desk exercise*

Q. Transfer from Land cover to Land Use is difficult.

A. *Agreed. Will need discussion at training and careful implementation*




Issues raised by Africa

Q. Is there any alternative survey method (e.g. aerial photography) to supplement the RSS?

A. *Countries should use all available ancillary information to improve the analysis and classification.*
Aerial-photos are often very useful if available but at this stage are not planned to be provided through the RSS.

Q. Is there a facility to allow countries with existing imagery to enter the process?

A. *Yes, existing imagery will be able to be used as well as that provided by FAO.*




Q. What assistance is available to countries?

A. *Assistance will be provided in the form of remote sensing images, training and software to download, view and do basic segmentation processing and classification of the images.*

Q. Uncertainty as FAO appeared to not have decided the final processing methodology.

A. *Fair comment. FAO and partners have been testing various methods and this will continue through the Pilot Study with the 20 countries. These aim to refine the process to a standard or set of processes that can be applied to a range of forest types to provide good results.*




Issues / questions

Q. Is software available to countries now?

A. *The software is still under development and is not ready for release but will be finalised soon and tested in the 20 pilot countries over next 6 months or so then released to all other countries as part of training process.*

Q. Some countries wanted extra software and equipment (egg computers GPS, digital cameras, etc) to do the RSS

A. *The RSS has limited funding for training workshops but not for equipment – no field work*




Near East RSS questions 2

Q. Why end RSS project in 2011 if to be used for FRA 2010?

A. *RSS is separate component of FRA and not directly linked to the tables or country reports. The dates are largely driven by the availability of the spatially rectified imagery which in most cases wont be available till late 2008 or early 2009. Training workshops will be run in 2009 and then analysis in 2010, and report in 2011.*

Q. What is required from countries, especially those who are not among the 20 pilot group? What should countries provide for in-kind support?

A. *Most countries do not need to do anything now except become informed of the RSS project and prepare for it by collating other ancillary information.*



Pacific RSS questions

Q. Many Pacific countries were interested in RSS and disappointed that many small island states would not be covered in the 1 by 1 degree sample plots.

A. *The wide spacing presents some problems for small islands but FAO will investigate obtaining imagery that does cover islands that may be able to be used instead.*

Q. Many countries expressed interest in receiving training on the GIS software.

A. *This was noted by FAO and will be considered in developing RSS training and workshop plans. Some FAO GIS software is available free for FAO projects.*



Q. Are countries going to be informed officially?

A. *Yes, you are all now informed. FRA NCC's agreed at Kotka June 2006 to RSS and now officially started at FRA launch March 2008.*

Q. What will happen if a country does not collaborate? FAO to clarify.

A. *Participation in RSS is voluntary. FAO will prepare imagery and undertake initial analysis and there will need to be a decision taken if a country is not able to do any classification or validation as to how to proceed in consultation with the country.*



Any further questions?

Please first look at:

www.fao.org/forestry/fra

or e-mail:

adam.gerrand@fao.org

Thank you.

