

Restoring forest landscapes

A partnership of international organisations, national governments and NGOs is promoting a landscape approach to forest restoration

THE TERM forest landscape restoration (FLR) was first coined in 2001 by a group of forest restoration experts meeting in Segovia, Spain, which defined it as:

a process that aims to regain ecological integrity and enhance human well-being in deforested or degraded forest landscapes.

Recently, ITTO coordinated the production of a book, *Restoring forest landscapes*, to illuminate the theory and practice of FLR. It draws on the ideas and needs of tropical forest restoration practitioners and is the outcome of close collaboration between a number of institutions, including ITTO, IUCN, the Forestry Commission of Great Britain, WWF International, Intercooperation, CIFOR and the University of Queensland, under the auspices of the Global Partnership on Forest Landscape Restoration. It builds on the ITTO *Guidelines for the restoration, management and rehabilitation of degraded and secondary tropical forests*, which were published by ITTO in collaboration with FAO, Intercooperation, IUCN and WWF International in 2002.

In this edition of the *TFU* we present some edited excerpts from the book, which can be ordered from ITTO (address on page 2).

What is FLR?

While the overall conceptual framework of FLR is new, virtually all the principles and techniques behind the approach have been around for some time and will already be familiar to many forestry practitioners. In essence, FLR is an approach to managing the dynamic and often complex interactions between the people, natural resources and land-uses that comprise a landscape. It makes use of collaborative approaches to harmonise the many land-use decisions of stakeholders with the aims of restoring ecological integrity and enhancing the development of local communities and national economies.

FLR differs from conventional restoration approaches in several ways:

- **it takes a landscape-level view:** this does not mean that every FLR initiative must be large-scale or expensive but rather that site-level restoration decisions need to accommodate landscape-level objectives and take into account likely landscape-level impacts;
- **it uses a 'double filter' approach:** that is, restoration efforts need to result in both improved ecological integrity and enhanced human well-being at the landscape level (see article page 4);
- **it is a collaborative process** involving a wide range of stakeholder groups collectively deciding on the most technically appropriate and socioeconomically acceptable options for restoration (see article page 9);
- **it does not necessarily aim to return forest landscapes to their original state**, but rather is a forward-looking approach that aims to strengthen the resilience of forest landscapes and keep future options open for optimising the delivery of forest-related goods and services at the landscape level; and



Safe hands: a child holds a 'sangre de grado' seedling to be used in the restoration of degraded forest land in an Ashaninka community in the Peruvian Amazon (ITTO project PD 14/98 Rev.1 (F)). Photo: R. Guevara/ITTO

- **it can be applied not only to primary forests** but also to secondary forests and degraded and deforested land.

The specific activities of any FLR initiative could include one or more of the following:

- rehabilitation and management of degraded primary forest;
- management of secondary forest;
- restoration of primary forest-related functions in degraded forest lands;
- promotion of natural regeneration on degraded lands and marginal agricultural sites;
- ecological restoration;
- plantations and planted forest; and
- agroforestry and other configurations of on-farm trees.

The book is composed of a series of 'essential reading' chapters on the key principles and techniques of FLR and will serve as a bridge between the policy-level guidance provided by the ITTO guidelines and the context-specific field guides that it is hoped will be developed following national-level FLR workshops to be held during 2005 and 2006.

To find out more about these workshops contact Mr Emmanuel Ze Meka, ITTO Secretariat; rjm@itto.or.jp