



EXPERT GROUP MEETING

UNLOCKING THE WEALTH OF FORESTS FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Commercializing products from community forests

FAO, Rome – Italy

26th - 28th March 2012.

BACKGROUND

Community forestry has the potential to deliver significant economic benefits for local communities. This however, requires that it moves beyond providing mainly subsistence goods, to becoming a vehicle for the development of forest enterprises which can contribute to a genuine new forest economy. A lot of effort has been devoted by countries to implementing the initial stages of community forestry processes, including formal recognition of rights to access, management and strengthening of local level institutions. There are significant challenges now faced by countries, in moving community forestry to full commercialization. There is urgent need to remove regulatory bottlenecks and strengthen community institutions to negotiate and tap into profitable markets.

FAO and its partners, ITTO and RECOFTC are interested in pursuing an international initiative to promote the potential of community forests in contributing significantly to sustainable development of community forestry and thus to wider national development. The Expert group meeting is therefore an opportunity to further concretize and develop a course of action.

OBJECTIVES

The goal of the meeting is to develop concrete strategies for an international agenda to promote commercialization of products from community forests in order to contribute to community and national economic development efforts.

Specific objectives:

1. Present and exchange views on key issues and suggestions outlined in the background paper;
2. Identify priority areas of action to promote effective commercialization of products from Community forestry;
3. Determine the scope (geographical, policy – field interface, etc), key actors, collaborators and potential partnerships; approaches (projects, etc) and modalities for resource mobilization;
4. Discuss appropriate organizational/institutional mechanisms for oversight, coordination, implementation, funding, and communication among the lead partners (FAO, ITTO RECOFTC) and with other collaborators.

EXPECTED OUTPUTS

- A proposed roadmap for taking forward the initiative, including priority areas of work, timeframes and geographical scope
- Proposals for partnership actions, project development
- A proposed framework of operation including mechanisms for coordination and implementation, roles and expectations of the partners and collaborators

Participants:

15-20 experts drawn from governmental institutions, implementing organizations, private sector, UN agencies and other international/or national organizations that have practical experience on the topic and who can substantially contribute to the discussion in a conceptual and strategic way. FAO will be able to support about 10 participants, mainly from developing countries.

Venue:

The meeting is proposed to be held at FAO in Rome.

Language:

The meeting will be conducted in English.

Draft Programme:

26th March 2012	
08:30 – 09:00	Registration
09:00 – 09:30	Opening and introduction
	∞ Presentation of participants ∞ Introduction to the workshop, objectives, approach, and expected outcomes
09:30 – 10:00	Overview presentation of the background paper
10:00 – 10:30	Coffee break
10:30 – 12:00	General discussion
	Introduction to working groups in afternoon session
12:00 – 13:30	Lunch
13:30 – 16:00	Working Group Session I: Priority action areas, scope and approaches
16:00 – 16:30	Coffee break
16:30 – 17:30	Plenary: report and discussion of Working Group Session I results
	End of Day 1
27th March 2012	
08:30 - 09:00	Recapitulation of the first day
	Introduction to working group sessions II and III
09:00 – 10:30	Working Group Session II: Partnerships and potential joint initiatives
	Working Coffee/tea
10:30 – 11:00	Coffee break
11:00 – 12:30	Plenary: report and discussion of Working Group Session II results
12:30– 14:00	Lunch
14:00 – 15:30	Working Group Session III: Implementation and coordination arrangements
15:30 – 16:00	Coffee break
16:00 – 17:30	Plenary: Report and discussion of Working Group Session III results
17:30	End of Day 2
28th March 2012	
08:30 - 09:00	Recapitulation of the first day
09:00 – 11:00	Discussion of immediate and long term steps
	Any other outstanding issues
	Working Coffee/tea
11:00 – 12:00	Closure of meeting