

## More support wanted

### 15th Session of the African Forestry and Wildlife Commission

27 March–1 April 2006

Maputo, Mozambique

This session of the African Forestry and Wildlife Commission (AFWC) was attended by about 120 delegates from government institutions, international organizations, non-governmental organizations and the private sector. It addressed the following main forest policy issues that affect the region:

- progress towards sustainable forest management (SFM);
- accessing funds for SFM;
- contributing to the millennium development goals (MDGs) through regional cooperation;
- forest law compliance;
- climate change issues;
- management of wildlife and protected areas; and
- forestry, wildlife and poverty alleviation.

The AFWC session was preceded by the 16th session of the Working Party on the Management of Wildlife and Protected Areas and the Workshop on Forestry, Wildlife and Poverty Alleviation. The recommendations of these informed the deliberations of the AFWC.

The AFWC session concluded with the identification of regional issues for the attention of the FAO Committee on Forestry. It emphasized the need for: renewing the vitality of the AFWC; strengthening the knowledge base on the implementation of SFM at policy as well as field levels; and evaluating progress on the development of a planted forests code of best practice and a fire management code of best practice, including a strategy to enhance international cooperation in implementing the fire management code.

The AFWC called for continued support from FAO to member countries in: implementing progress towards SFM through effective national forest programs, which serve as a basis for coordinating the sector's inputs into achieving the MDGs with an emphasis on the contribution of forests to poverty reduction and food security; implementing national forest inventories and assessments covering the social, economic, environmental and inter-sectoral dimensions of forestry; and promoting the control of illegal logging and associated trade.

Reported by Jean-Claude Nguingiri, ITTO Regional Officer for Africa

## Clean forestry development

### ASEAN-ITTO Regional Workshop on Perspectives of Clean Development Mechanism Forestry Projects in Asia and the Pacific

22–24 March 2006

Phnom Penh, Cambodia

This workshop was attended by representatives of ITTO and Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) member countries in the region as well as by the Secretariat of Pacific Community, international non-governmental organizations, research institutes and the private sector. It was sponsored

by ITTO and the ASEAN–German Regional Forest Programme (REFOP) and supported by the Cambodia Forestry Administration. Resource persons from the German technical assistance agency GTZ, Perspectives Climate Change Consulting, the Centre for International Forestry Research and Pacific Consultants Co Ltd provided expertise to facilitate discussions.

The workshop was designed to promote understanding of the rules and procedures of Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) afforestation and reforestation (A&R) projects and to encourage country-level initiatives in promoting such projects in line with the ITTO *Guidelines for the Restoration, Management and Rehabilitation of Degraded and Secondary Tropical Forests*. It also aimed to facilitate an exchange of views on the possible inclusion of emissions reductions from deforestation in developing countries in a post-2012 agreement of the Kyoto Protocol.

The workshop made recommendations on several issues relevant to the CDM and the forest sector. On 'enabling conditions for A&R CDM focusing on public frameworks', for example, it recommended, among other things, that any future CDM capacity-building efforts incorporate forestry stakeholders as a matter of course and that regional-level workshops be held to bring together designated national authority (DNA) members to discuss issues of applying sustainable development criteria and lessons learned. Regional organizations could support existing DNAs and assist countries without DNAs in setting them up, possibly with inter-country cooperation or the development of a generic model.

On promoting investment opportunities focused on business incentives, the workshop recommended, among other things, that donor agencies be lobbied to support local aggregators of small-scale projects that can interact with the international carbon market. It also recommended that a forestry trust fund including A&R CDM projects be established in every country, possibly in partnership with local banks. The possibility of using certification schemes to raise the value of emissions reductions from projects with outstanding social and environmental benefits should also be explored.

On checks and balances focusing on civil-society needs, the workshop recommended, among other things, that, in establishing requirements for A&R projects, governments pay due attention to aspects that are non-negotiable and ensure that these are met while also providing conditions that enhance a community's ability to negotiate those aspects that are negotiable. These include building the capacity of communities to negotiate and facilitating the participation of NGOs that truly represent the interests of the community. Moreover, rules for the sharing of benefits between beneficiaries and investors should be established with the aim of increasing the income of local stakeholders, and emphasis should be given to the promotion of small-scale A&R CDM projects to ensure that they contribute to the sustainable development of low-income groups. The level of regulatory interventions from government should be different for large-scale and small-scale A&R CDM projects. Government would promote and assist small-scale projects by imposing minimal regulations, whereas the level of regulation would be higher for large-scale projects to ensure that sustainable development criteria are complied with fully.

On the issue of reducing emissions from deforestation in tropical countries, the workshop recommended that awareness of deforestation be increased and the participation of the forest sector in negotiations within the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)

be improved. The long-term effectiveness of forest conservation could be increased if appropriate incentives were provided for reducing emissions from deforestation. This would be achieved by ambitious Annex 1-country reduction targets linked with effective reduction of deforestation in tropical countries based on an agreed baseline (preferably at the national level). Carbon credits from avoided deforestation should not be capped. The mechanism addressing deforestation should be kept simple and integrated into the existing climate-change regime within the UNFCCC, a stable market should be secured with a balanced supply and demand considering a discount for carbon credits from avoided deforestation, and the deforestation monitoring capacity of tropical countries should be improved by targeted capacity-building, including regional cooperation.

*Reported by Hwan Ok Ma, ITTO Secretariat*

## **Good news, bad news for Council**

### **40th Session of the International Tropical Timber Council**

**29 May–2 June 2006**

Merida, Mexico

Progress is being made towards ITTO's objective of SFM, according to a report released at the 40th session of the International Tropical Timber Council, which met in Merida, Mexico, in May/June this year. However, the report warned that the quality of management on 95% of the permanent forest estate is still problematic—and progress will be fleeting unless the international community ensures that nations benefit economically from maintaining their tropical forests.

The Council is ITTO's governing body. It meets regularly to discuss a wide-ranging agenda aimed at promoting sustainable tropical forest management and the trade of sustainably produced tropical timber.

According to the new ITTO report *Status of tropical forest management 2005*, at least 25.2 million hectares of permanent production forest, and 11.2 million hectares of permanent protection forest, are now under management consistent with sustainability. This compares with almost zero in the first survey conducted by the Organization in 1988. The Council heard that while progress is being made, less than 5% of the total permanent forest estate in the tropics is known to be under sustainable management.

Delegates were able to quiz a panel of tropical forestry experts on the findings of the report and their implications for tropical countries and the international community. The full report, which includes in-depth profiles of ITTO's 33 producer member countries, is available at [www.itto.or.jp](http://www.itto.or.jp).

The Council financed a number of new projects during the session to further promote and contribute to the sustainable management of tropical forests. The problem of shoot-borers in timber plantations in Mexico's Yucatan Peninsula and state of Veracruz will be addressed by one project, while the management of mangrove and flood forests on the central coastal plains of Veracruz will be tackled by another. Guyana's Iwokrama forest benefited from the financing of a project to promote SFM there, and the Philippines will receive assistance to implement a forestry information system. A project in Indonesia will assist in the monitoring of concession forest management performance; an African regional parliamentary conference on the sustainable management of Central African forest ecosystems also received funding.

The total amount of funds allocated at the session was US\$3.9 million. Major donors were the governments of Japan and the USA, while the Common Fund for Commodities, the Friends of Iwokrama and the governments of Norway, Finland, France, Australia and the Republic of Korea also pledged funds. A summary of all the projects financed is given on page 18.

ITTO's Annual Market Discussion was convened during the session on the topic of tropical timber procurement policies in consumer countries. Rupert Oliver, a UK-based tropical timber trade analyst, reported that Europe's public procurement policies are moving rapidly towards requiring evidence of legality and sustainability. He expressed concern about the lack of harmonization between the policies of different authorities and countries, which could lead to major market inefficiencies. The Discussion also received presentations on public and commercial procurement policies in Denmark, France and the USA.

Several side-events were convened during the session. The Council's Civil Society Advisory Group organized a panel of local-community leaders in Mexico, Guatemala, Nicaragua and Panama to speak about the challenges facing community forest enterprises in the region. Marcedonio Cortave, from the Association of Forest Communities of the Peten (Guatemala), reported that access to international timber markets through certification had created additional benefits for his community. Several other participants spoke of the problems facing communities in obtaining finance for their operations and called on the international community to address this issue.

At the same event the non-governmental organization Forest Trends presented the results of a study financed by ITTO, which found that relatively few countries have established tenure and forest policy environments conducive to the widespread development of community forestry enterprises.

Another side-event reported on the World Trade Organization's Doha Round of negotiations on trade and its possible implications for the forest products trade. Sandra Ribey of the Government of Canada presented information on a proposal by a number of governments on a possible sectoral initiative in the Non-Agricultural Market Access negotiations on wood products, and Al Goetzl, a US-based consultant, presented the results of a study estimating the impacts of tariff reductions on wood products.

A third side-event canvassed the response of the private sector in Europe to changing consumer demand for wood products. An interesting aspect of the presentation was a description of how the private sector has increasingly taken the lead in organizing responses to changing consumer demand through mechanisms such as certification.

*For more information on the Council session go to [www.itto.or.jp](http://www.itto.or.jp)*