

Final Report**A. Project Identification**

- (a) Title: **INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP ON
IMPROVED UTILIZATION OF TIMBER
RESOURCES IN SOUTHEAST ASIA**
- (b) Serial Number: **PD 160/91 Rev. 2 (1)**
- (c) Executing Agency: **ITTO/IUFRO Div. V/FRIM**
- (d) Host Government: **Malaysia**
- (e) Starting Date: **December 1992**
- (f) Actual Duration: **5 days**
- (g) Actual Project Cost (US\$):

PART I: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**1. Background Information About the Project**

It is well known that tropical forests are being rapidly depleted or deteriorated in many regions of the planet. It is also generally accepted that the continued existence and wise use of these forests is essential to safeguard the world's ecological equilibrium and to provide for indispensable material needs of people in the developing countries where most of these forests are located. Following a resolution at its XVIIth World Congress in Kyoto, Japan, in 1981, IUFRO decided to address the problems of forestry in developing countries by setting up a special programme with the improvement of living conditions for the rural and urban poor populations as its basic objective. It is postulated that increasing the productivity of forests is a necessary condition for progress towards this objective.

The realization of the basic objective requires:

- appropriate knowledge, either obtained from existing sources, or to be created by research,
- application of this knowledge.

As a first step, IUFRO decided to identify gaps in existing knowledge and research necessary to fill these gaps.

With the financial support from the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) of Canada, in 1985, Dr. Florentino Tesoro of Philippines was engaged as the rapporteur to visit research institutions in Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka and Thailand and discuss with local researchers of these research institutions to identify priority research areas in Southeast Asia. Based on his findings, Walter Kauman, Florentino Tesoro and Wing-Chong Wong who were the office holders of P5.01 at that time, produced a IUFRO Report entitled "Improved Utilization of Timber Resources in Southeast Asia". This was later developed into a programme of the same title.

After various revisions, the following four priority research areas are identified in the programme:

- * commercially less-accepted species
- * plantation-grown species
- * wood residues
- * rattan and bamboo

The revised document was sent for review and comment by the relevant IUFRO's officials. Initial contacts with potential donor agencies were also made. The general consensus was that before the donor agencies would fund such a large project, it would be essential to hold first an international workshop to bring together knowledgeable people in the region and have them all agreed to support and take concerted actions to contribute to the implementation of this regional programme.

The proposal for holding the workshop jointly by ITTO, IUFRO Div V and FRIM, submitted by the Malaysian Government, was approved by ITTO in late 1991. FRIM was given the sole responsibility to organize the workshop in Kuala Lumpur, but with constant consultation with both ITTO and IUFRO Div V. It took about a year to prepare for this international workshop. ITTO provided US\$116,360 for holding the

workshop. IUFRO-SPDC and other donor agencies funded the participation of their own office holders.

The objectives of this ITTO/IUFRO Div V/FRIM International Workshop were as follows:

- * to bring together researchers in the region as well as executives of donor agencies to determine the appropriate actions to be taken to implement the four regional priority research areas.
- * to draw up project proposals and work plans for the implementation of research and development (R&D) activities in the above-mentioned regional priority areas and to determine the roles to be played by each participating R&D institutions in the region.
- * to establish a system of coordination and networking to facilitate the effective implementation of the work plan.
- * to explore means for improving the transfer of knowledge from the national R&D institutions to the forest industries.

2. Project Achievement

The ITTO/IUFRO Div V/FRIM International Workshop on Improved Utilization of Timber Resources in Southeast Asia was successfully held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia from 7-11 December 1992.

The invited guests and the participants were welcomed by the Chairman of the Organizing Committee Dr. Salleh Mohd. Nor, who is also the Director-General of FRIM and the President of IUFRO. The Workshop was officially opened by the Minister of Primary Industries, Malaysia. It was attended by Officials from ITTO, including Dr. B.C.Y. Freezailah, the Executive Director, IUFRO and FRIM as well as various Malaysian agencies involved in forestry, timber trade and wood research. Two representatives from each of the national research institutions in the ten participating countries viz. Bangladesh, China, India, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Sri Lanka and Vietnam, presented country reports on the priority research areas. IUFRO was represented by Dr. Amantino de Freitas, the Coordinator

of Division V: Forest Products and Dr. Hsiu-Hwa Wang, the Deputy Project Group Leader of P5.01: Properties and Utilization of Tropical Woods. Dr. R.A. Plumptre, the Project Group Leader of P5.01 and Dr. Walter Kauman, the former Project Group Leader of P5.01, also attended the Workshop as representatives from consumer countries (United Kingdom and France respectively). The International Hardwood Products Association (IHPA), U.S.A. and the Netherlands Timber Trade Association (NTTA) of Netherlands also sent their representatives to provide the perspective of the timber industries on research activities to be carried out.

The donor agencies participated in the Workshop included the ASEAN Timber Technology Centre (ATTC), the German Agency for International Development (GTZ), the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) of Canada and the Winrock International Institute for Agricultural Development. The representatives of these agencies presented statements in the Workshop to outline their functions and their requirements for projects to be submitted for support.

There were 46 participants in the Workshop, excluding members of the Secretariat and the rapporteur. The country reports presented contained up-to-date information on the resources, the industries and the status of research on the four priority research areas. The participants also gave their views on the organization, implementation and coordination of the proposed regional collaborative projects.

After the presentation of the country reports, the IUFRO proposal for a collaborative project on the priority areas identified and based on the original initiative of IUFRO was presented to serve as the background for subsequent group discussions to develop more comprehensive proposals incorporating the views and aspirations of the researchers in the region.

Two group discussions were organized and held concurrently. Group discussion on plantation-grown species, rattan and bamboo was chaired by Dr. Walter Kauman and group discussion on commercially less-accepted species and wood residues by Dr. R.A. Plumptre. The group discussions centred on the identification of lead and

participating institutions, definition of research areas, mechanism for implementation and transfer of information/technology. At the end of the group discussions, reports were presented for discussion in a plenary session and decisions on the lead and participating institutions were then made. It was also agreed that research on rattan and bamboo be handled by two separate lead institutions.

The Proceedings of the ITTO/Div V/FRIM Workshop on Improved Utilization of Timber Resources in Southeast Asia has been published and 100 copies of the Proceedings were sent to ITTO. All participants of the Workshop also received a copy.

3. Target Beneficiaries Involvement

The participants have shared information with one another and have the opportunity to learn about the resources and status of research in the four identified priority research areas. With the personal contacts established, the participants could establish working relationship with their peers. The meeting has resulted in the identification of the following lead institutions for each of the research areas:

- (a) *Commercially less-accepted species*: Forest Products Research and Development Centre, Indonesia
- (b) *Plantation-grown species*: Forest Research Institute, India
- (c) *Rattan*: Forest Products Research and Development Institute, Phillipines
- (d) *Bamboo*: Taiwan Forest Research Institute, Taipei
- (e) *Wood residues*: Forest Research Institute Malaysia, Malaysia

4. Lessons Learned

(a) Development Lessons

The project only involves the organization of an international workshop to enable the scientists in the region to share information on resources as well as status of research on utilization of plantation-grown species, less commercially-accepted species, rattan and bamboo and wood residues. Representatives from consumers' associations and donor agencies have also participated and give their inputs into research to ensure the applicability of the research results. The logical follow-up of this workshop is the

development of regional project proposals on each of the priority areas by the lead institutions for funding.

Project leaders from the lead institutions have later been identified. These project leaders already have existing heavy research responsibility and they might not have enough time to carry out this added workload effectively. As expected, the lead institutions have been slow to come out with project proposals.

To ensure effective follow-up, arrangement should have been made to provide certain financial incentive to the project leaders to develop the project proposals outside their normal office hours.

(b) *Operational Lessons*

The implementing agency, FRIM, has not encountered difficulties in organizing the international workshop. Meeting facilities in Kuala Lumpur are good and there is an efficient communication system. The only problem arises when FRIM has been instructed to withdraw the invitation extended to two participants from Taiwan at the last moment. This has given rise to embarrassment and affected the relationship with scientists in Taiwan. If FRIM has been informed of the political sensitivity earlier, this embarrassment could have been avoided.

The papers presented by participants from non-English speaking countries in the region require quite extensive editing. As a result, the Proceedings could not be published earlier, taking into consideration that the editors also have to carry out their own research activities and other duties and could only do the editing work at their spare time.

5. Recommendations

To organize an international workshop in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, generally, poses no difficulty. FRIM staff have experience in organizing international workshops. As mentioned earlier, the only shortcomings of the organization of the workshop are as follows:

- (a) the organizing committee has not been well informed beforehand the political sensitivity.
- (b) the Proceedings have not been published earlier due to heavy involvement of editors in their day-to-day duties.
- (c) the project proposals have not been developed by the lead institutions on schedule.

All these shortcomings could be overcome with improved planning, it would facilitate the organization of Workshop and the implementation of recommendations in future if some funds have been allotted to serve as incentive for the project leaders to prepare proposals and to allow the editors to be away for a reasonable period from their daily work to concentrate on the preparation of the Proceedings.

To improve future planning and organization of similar workshop, it is recommended that a certain sum should be included in the budget for the implementation of workshop recommendations such as to cover administration and communication cost of the lead institutions and to provide financial incentive to project leaders.

The late delivery of project proposals on identified priority research areas by the lead institutions delays the process of seeking funding and establishing networking among scientists in the region. Since considerable saving has been realized in the organization of the workshop, it is proposed that the balance of the fund be used for follow-up activities.

It is suggested that to facilitate the completion of the regional project proposals, a sum of US\$1000 be given to each lead institutions and an additional sum of US\$1000 to be paid to project leaders in these institutions responsible for preparing the project proposal. Incentives to lead institutions and project leader will only be paid on delivery of project proposals of acceptable quality.

To assist the preparation of the regional project proposals and to standardize and streamline such proposals for funding, it is suggested that a coordinator be appointed to visit each institutions for not more than a week and work directly with the development of these regional project proposals. A budget of US\$12,000 (airfare and DSA) would be required.

PART II: MAIN TEXT

Project Results

The purpose of bringing together scientists in the region to discuss issues on the four priority research areas has been achieved with the successful holding of an international workshop. The participation of representatives from consumers' associations and donor agencies helps to foster understanding between scientists and users of research results.

A work plan has been drawn up at the close of the workshop. However, preparation of project proposals by the lead institutions has fallen behind schedule. To assist the lead institutions in the preparation of the project proposals, the United States Forest Service has made available limited fund to allow Dr. Robert Youngs, the former Coordinator of IUFRO Div V and the Workshop Coordinator to make a short visit to these lead institutions. An outline for the preparation of project proposal has been prepared circulated and discussed with the leaders within each of the lead institutions. Although the lead institutions have been responsive and agreed to get in touch with scientists from other participating institutions to draw up regional project proposals for funding during the visit, the results have so far, not been encouraging.

Taiwan Forest Research Institute (TFRI), Taipei has been assigned the leading role for the implementation of the bamboo project. It has successfully organized a meeting in June 1994 on "Problem Analysis on Bamboo Research in South East Asia". This meeting brought together scientists from TFRI and the Universities in Taiwan as well as scientists in the region to discuss problems on bamboo research and means to overcome them. There has been useful exchange of information and idea. The participants were informed of research activities coordinated by other international agencies, such as the International Network for Bamboo and Rattan (INBAR) funded by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) of Canada. The scientists in the region unanimously agreed to cooperate with INBAR and to complement the work being carried out by the existing networks. Scientists from Taiwan have considerable experience in bamboo silviculture and it has been requested to organize a training course for bamboo researchers in the region. A training course on bamboo silviculture is expected to be organized in 1995.

A regional project proposal on utilization of wood residues has been prepared by the lead institution, the Forest Research Institute Malaysia (FRIM). The project proposal has been submitted to various agencies, including ITTO, for funding. The result is still pending.

The lead institutions responsible for preparing regional project proposals on other priority research areas have yet to complete their individual project proposals.

Each of the project proposal will incorporate the holding of seminars and exchange of scientists to facilitate networking and transfer of knowledge. Taiwan has succeeded in holding the bamboo workshop with its own source of funding. Taiwan is also planning to fund a training course on bamboo silviculture for scientists in the region, thereby fulfilling the objectives of establishing a mechanism of networking and technology transfer. Other lead institutions will not use their own resources to do likewise. Unless their project proposals receive international funding, the objectives of establishing a system of coordination and networking cannot be achieved.

6. Synthesis of the Analysis

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| (a) Specific Objective(s) Achievement | <i>Partly realized</i> |
| (b) Outputs | <i>Realized</i> |
| (c) Schedule | <i>Delayed but not seriously</i> |
| (d) Actual Expenditures | <i>Below planned</i> |

PART III. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

(a) *Development Lessons*

The project only involves the organization of an international workshop and does not expect to achieve any significant development objective.

(b) *Operational lessons*

- (i) The organizer should be informed of any political sensitivity with regards to the participation of scientists from certain countries in ITTO-sponsored activities.
- (ii) The participants do not have enough time and support to carry out the tasks identified in the recommendation.

(c) *Recommendations*

- (i) To fund the organization of an international workshop, a certain amount of fund should also be included for follow-up activities.
- (ii) To include some funds in the budget to assist the lead institutions to pay for the cost of administration and communication a needed to contact other participating institutions in the region.
- (iii) To incorporate into the budget a small incentive for the project leader in the lead institution on the completion of an acceptable project proposal.

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