

## Summary of the APFORGEN Inception Workshop<sup>1</sup>

### **DAY 1: 15 July 2003 (Tuesday)**

The APAFRI Executive Secretary Dr Daniel Baskaran Krishnapillay welcomed the participants to the Workshop. This was followed by the welcoming remarks of Dr Percy Sajise (IPGRI Regional Director for Asia, the Pacific and Oceania), Dr Simmathiri Appanah (Senior Programme Officer, FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific,) and Dato' Dr Abdul Razak Mohd. Ali (Chairman of APAFRI). Dr Razak officially declared the workshop opened.

#### **Session I Forest genetic resources conservation and APFORGEN**

Session I started with adoption of the workshop programme. Mr Hong, L.T. (IPGRI) presented a background document, which traced the evolution of APFORGEN and its proposed organisational framework. Thirteen countries have expressed interest in participating in APFORGEN. More countries are expected to join APFORGEN in the future.

Dr Jarkko Koskela (IPGRI) presented IPGRI's activities on conservation and use of forest genetic resources and IPGRI's strategic choices, one of which is conserving and using forest genetic resources. He gave some examples of IPGRI's past and present activities related to forest genetic resources (FGR) conservation in Sub-Saharan Africa, South America, Europe as well as Central and West Asia and Asia-Pacific. He also provided a brief introduction to the launching process of the Sub-Saharan Africa Forest Genetic Resources Programme (SAFORGEN) and highlighted some challenges and opportunities to the future work in the Asia-Pacific region.

Dr Ida Theilade (DFSC) gave a presentation on *ex situ* conservation of trees in living stands, giving examples of dipterocarps in Indonesia and tropical pines in Central America. The examples showed that the primary problem for long-term management would be the unsuccessful regeneration of the *ex situ* stands. Dr Koskela also gave a presentation on the European Forest Genetic Resources Programme (EUFORGEN). He presented the history and structure of the Programme and how it operates through the five species-specific networks.

### **Day 2: 16 July 2003 (Wednesday)**

#### **Session II Forest genetic resources in South Asia: update and capacity-building needs**

#### **Session III Forest genetic resources in Southeast Asia: update and capacity-building needs**

#### **Session IV Forest genetic resources in Southeast and East Asia: update and capacity building needs**

During sessions II, III and IV country reports updating the status and conservation efforts of FGR in South and Southeast Asia were presented and the respective country representative identified capacity building needs. These included Bangladesh (Dr Sk. Sirajul Islam), India (Mr R.P.S. Katwal), Nepal (Mr P.R. Tamrakar), Pakistan (Dr Shams ur Rehman), Sri Lanka (Mr J.E. Munashinghe), Cambodia (Mr Sok Srun), Indonesia (Dr Nur Masripatin), Lao PDR (Mr Chansamone Phongoudome), Malaysia (Dr S.L. Lee & Dr D.B. Krishnapillay), Philippines (Dr R.A. Razal), Thailand (Mr V. Sumantakul) and Vietnam (Dr N.H. Nghia). The country report of China (Prof Wang Huoran), which was received was not presented owing to the absence of the representative. The information presented was used as reference at subsequent working group meetings.

Dr Anders Pedersen (DFSC) gave a presentation on "*Revisiting the Moving Workshop 2001: Conservation, Management & Use of Forest Genetic Resources in SE-Asian Region*". He explained the purpose of and reasons for arranging the 2001 workshop as well as reviewed

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some of the key achievements, conclusions and recommendations. One of the conclusions of the 2001 workshop was that there was a strong need and interest for a FGR conservation network in the region.

Dr Suchitra Changtragoon (National Wildlife and Plant Conservation Department, Thailand) presented a paper on the “*Potential for using molecular markers to facilitate gene management and the in situ and ex situ conservation of tropical forest trees*”.

#### **Session V Working groups formation and APFORGEN web page**

Dr Jarkko Koskela gave a presentation on the EUFORGEN website. He presented the structure and contents of the EUFORGEN website so that the participants could have some ideas on what kind of information they would like to access through an APFORGEN website, which will be developed later. The participants felt that the EUFORGEN website could serve as a useful model when developing the APFORGEN website.

To start the Working Group session, Mr Hong and Dr Koskela gave an introduction to the Working Group tasks. Dr Ramon Razal and Mr R.P.S. Katwal were elected to chair the Southeast Asia and South Asia working groups, respectively.

#### **Day 3: 17 July 2003 (Thursday)**

#### **Session VI Working Groups – discussion and drafting of framework for FGR needs/ collaboration and APFORGEN strategies**

Dr Percy Sajise (IPGRI) facilitated the Session to review the organisational framework of APFORGEN as presented in the background document. He emphasised that a successful network involves both a ‘net’ of people and some activities (*network = net + work*). The facilitation was followed by a plenary discussion with both sub-regional Working Groups. The items reviewed included:

##### **APFORGEN objectives**

Dr Sajise presented four draft objectives for APFORGEN. This was followed by a discussion. The revised objectives that have the consent of the workshop participants have been included in the Workshop Recommendation 1.

##### **APFORGEN organizational structure**

The question of what kind of governance the APFORGEN programme should have was discussed in detail. The participants stated that the Programme should be *sustainable* and *effective* in terms of governance. The following suggestions were derived from the group after a brainstorm session:

- a) Organisational structure to comprise:
  - A Secretariat
  - Regular meetings of committee or staff
- b) The APFORGEN organisation should encompass the elements of good management, transparency, fund generation, being supportive and facilitative, encouraging wide participation, focussing on specific subjects, collaboration, open-mindedness, benefit sharing, equality, effective system of communication, HRD and capacity building (education, training), frequent interactions and exchange of information and experiences.

No changes were suggested to the proposed structure that consists of the Steering Committee, Secretariat and National Coordinators.

##### **National coordinators**

The role and preliminary Terms of Reference (TOR) for the National Coordinators (NC) and the process for appointing NC were discussed. It was emphasized in the discussion that NCs may be holding high positions in their respective institutions but that they should

be involved in genetic conservation. Thus, identifying suitable persons as national coordinators is critical. Dr Sajise emphasised that, for the time being, it is necessary to continue the work with participants of this workshop as focal points. The respective government organisations would be requested to nominate the NCs to ensure legitimacy and official representation of national governments in APFORGEN. IPGRI/APAFRI has been delegated the task to write to the appropriate national government authorities for nomination of NC. The focal points participating in this workshop will facilitate in this task.

One change was made to the draft TOR suggested. However, the Workshop Participants decided that this Workshop would only make recommendations to elements to be included in the TOR that will be finalised during the first National Coordinators' meeting or the first Steering Committee meeting (refer to Workshop Recommendation 4).

#### **APFORGEN steering committee**

The role and Terms of Reference of the APFORGEN Steering Committee were discussed. No revisions were made to the proposed draft TOR at this point. However, it was decided that this Workshop would only make recommendations on elements to be included in the TOR that will be finalised during the first National Coordinators' meeting or first Steering Committee meeting. The proposed TOR is found in Workshop Recommendation 6.

However, there was discussion on the number of international bodies representation in the Steering Committee. It was agreed that the final structure of the Steering Committee would be decided during the first National Coordinators' meeting or first Steering Committee meeting.

The need for a separate Technical/Scientific Advisory Committee to assist the Steering Committee was also discussed. Dr Koskela expressed a view that, in the case of APFORGEN, the proposed Steering Committee includes also relevant regional and international organisations and therefore the Technical Advisory Committee is not necessary.

As for launching of the APFORGEN programme, it was suggested that the National Coordinators should meet soon after their countries have nominated them. The National Coordinators' meeting would then finalise the TOR for the Steering Committee as well as for the National Coordinators. After that, the Steering Committee will hold its first meeting to officially launch the APFORGEN programme.

#### **Systems of communication**

In addition to the APFORGEN web page, the participants suggested additional means to enhance communication to include: annual steering committee meetings or technical seminars, an APFORGEN Newsletter and regular (internal) email-newsletter

It was suggested that APFORGEN news could be published in the existing newsletters of APAFRI or IPGRI-APO until APFORGEN is able to source funds for publishing its own newsletter. However, it was also argued that the advantage of having a separate newsletter will give a "higher profile" to the Programme.

#### **Legitimacy of the programme**

Legitimacy of the Programme was briefly discussed. It was concluded that legitimacy could be created through approval and commitment by national governments as well as regional organisations such as ASEAN, FAO Asia-Pacific Forestry Commission and others.

#### **APFORGEN action plan**

The two working groups then continued discussion on drafting the action plan for APFORGEN in their respective sub-regions, South Asia and Southeast Asia.

### **Day 4: 18 July 2003 (Friday)**

#### **Session VII Working Groups continued**

The Working Groups continued to finalise their discussions for presentation.

**Session VIII Working Groups presentations**

The two working groups presented their proposed action plans and a discussion followed. Sub-regional and eco-regional approaches for collaboration were recommended by some of the participants. There was also a thorough discussion on the role and use of the priority species lists created by the countries as well as the sub-regional groups. The South Asia group considered priority species for tree improvement/multiplication and species for conservation separately, while the Southeast Asia group did not. The regional priority species identified by the Working Groups are presented in the Working Group reports. For the pre-workshop lists of national priority species, refer to the background document.

The common areas of interest tentatively proposed for the whole region include:

1. *Ex situ* & *in situ* conservation (including management of germplasm)
2. Exchange of genetic materials
3. Tree improvement and silviculture
4. Strengthening national programmes on plant genetic resources by networking, extension, public awareness, human resources development, training etc.
5. Evaluation, documentation and characterisation of FGR information
6. Social aspects of the protection of forest genetic resources (local communities, gender issues, etc.)
7. Inclusion of FGR into national policies and strategies
8. Capacity building

It was stated, that all the countries in the region are in need of both human resources development and physical capacity building to be able to improve FGR conservation. The emphasis on training should be on:

- a) Short and long term training
- b) Scientist exchange
- c) Collaboration in e.g. training material production
- d) Workshops and meetings
- e) Study tours
- f) Fellowships for young scientists/conservationists

Some specific areas where training is needed could include:

- a) FGR conservation methods
- b) Molecular aspects of FGR conservation
- c) Taxonomy
- d) Planning and management of FGR conservation
- e) Tree breeding and improvement
- f) Training in participatory approach towards FGR
- g) Pests and diseases management
- h) Livelihood generation from the use of FGR

However, the detailed training needs should be assessed. The workshop participants highlighted the need to include the practising forestry professionals into capacity building programmes.

There was also a discussion on the modus operandi for the APFORGEN programme. In addition to the modus operandi presented by the groups, the following suggestions were given during the discussion:

1. Eco-regional approach to FGR and their conservation
2. End-use-based approach to FGR and their conservation (timber, fuelwood, fodder, medicinal NTFP, etc.)
3. Effective networking to ensure that all participating countries are linked
4. Helping and facilitating sourcing for funding
5. Facilitation through translation of key documents from English to local languages

The participants suggested that the Programme should be flexible in choosing the right approach for each activity and the group that developed the concept note should also select the approach. In addition, some countries' need for information and technology transfer was highlighted. As to the role of APFORGEN, one workshop participant reminded that member countries would be responsible for implementation of the conservation efforts and that the APFORGEN Secretariat would only play a facilitative role. It was later decided that, for the time being, APFORGEN *modus operandi* should be kept open and flexible.

### **Session IX Workshop recommendations and concept notes**

The Workshop made 12 recommendations for the further development of APFORGEN. In addition, the workshop participants discussed and committed themselves to develop the concept notes on the following topics:

#### **Southeast Asia Working Group**

1. Use of native species (*Aquilaria crassna*, *Dipterocarpus alatus*, *Pterocarpus macrocarpus*) in Vietnam (Lead), Laos, Cambodia and Thailand (Lead: Dr N.H. Nghia, deadline for concept note 30 September 2003)
2. Conservation of endangered species in Vietnam (Lead), Laos, Thailand, Cambodia and China (Lead: Dr N.H. Nghia, deadline 30 September 2003)
3. Developing and establishing *ex situ* conservation stands (*Pinus* spp.) in all SE-Asia member countries (except Malaysia). Lead by Philippines (Lead: Dr Ramon Razal, deadline 30 September 2003)
4. Demography, genetics & reproduction biology on priority and endangered species in SE-Asia: Malaysia (Lead), Indonesia, Thailand, Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia and Philippines (Lead: Dr S.L. Lee, deadline 15 October 2003)  
(*Rattan*, *Aquilaria crassna*, *Azzeria xylocarpa*, *Dalbergia cochinchinensis*, *D. oliveri*, *Gonystylus bancanus*, *Eusideroxylon zwageri*, *Pinus merkusii*)
5. Evaluate the genetic resource status of forest tree species (*Hopea odorata* and *Dalbergia cochinchinensis*) by using molecular markers. Thailand (Lead) and other Southeast Asian country members. (Lead: Dr Suchitra Changtragoon, deadline 31 October 2003)
6. Operational management in conservation of forest genetic resources (DFSC partnership with Indonesia, Malaysia, Vietnam and Philippines; Lead: Dr A. Pedersen, DFSC, deadline 15 October 2003)
7. Monitor and verify Criteria & Indicators in conservation of forest genetic resources. (DFSC partnership with Philippines, Vietnam and Thailand. Lead: Dr A. Pedersen, DFSC, deadline 15 October 2003)

#### **South Asia Working Group**

8. Institutional capacity building of APFORGEN South Asia countries for Forest Genetic Resources Conservation (Lead: P.R. Tamrakar, Nepal, deadline 30 September 2003)
9. Extension services – awareness programme: The needs for extension services and awareness programme for APFORGEN South Asia countries (Lead: J.E. Munashinghe, Sri Lanka, deadline 30 September 2003)
10. Germplasm collection, storing, and propagation: Development of mechanism for exchange & trading of forest reproductive materials for conservation and use for APFORGEN South Asia and Southeast Asia countries (Lead: Dr A. Paliwal and A. Pedersen, deadline 30 September 2003)

It was recommended that the concept notes should be 3–4 pages long and a common format should be used. The concept notes should identify: a) the problem, b) what should be done and c) ways to obtain funding for the project.

### **Session X Closing of Workshop**

Dr P. Sajise provided the wrap-up and closing of the workshop. He concluded that the two issues that provoked most discussion were the priority species lists as well as exchange

of genetic material. In this workshop, a tentative structure for APFORGEN has been agreed upon and the need for political support as well as for resource generation was recognised. He elaborated that it is important to transmit the key conclusions of the workshop to the authorities of participating countries.

He also pointed out a need for a vision for APFORGEN. Dr Vichien Sumantakul has volunteered to provide a draft vision statement and submit to the APFORGEN secretariat for circulation and comments by all the participants. Other participants have also been requested to give their suggestions. It was decided that APFORGEN should also develop a logo. All participants are encouraged to provide suggestions and deadline for this would be end of July 2003.

Finally, all the participants were given an opportunity to provide feedback regarding the workshop and the arrangements.

### ***Workshop recommendations***

#### **Recommendation 1**

The Workshop participants recommend the adoption of the following objectives for APFORGEN:

- i) Strengthen national programmes on forest genetic diversity in the participating countries
- ii) Enhance regional networking and collaboration on conservation and management of forest genetic resources
- iii) Locate, characterize, conserve and facilitate exchange of genetic diversity of selected priority forest species
- iv) Promote sustainable utilization of genetic diversity in natural and man-made forests
- v) Enhance linkages with other regional and international networks

#### **Recommendation 2**

The Workshop participants recommend the adoption of the organizational structure, which was outlined in the workshop background document. The main elements of the organizational structure consist of:

- i) National Coordinators
- ii) Steering Committee and
- iii) APFORGEN Secretariat

#### **Recommendation 3**

The Workshop participants recommend that APAFRI and IPGRI should approach relevant governmental institutions and policy-makers in each country, with help of the workshop participants, and initiate a process to officially nominate the National Coordinators for APFORGEN.

#### **Recommendation 4**

The Workshop participants recommend that National Coordinators:

- i) act as a link between the APFORGEN Secretariat and various national institutions carrying out work on forest genetic resources
- ii) be responsible for involving relevant institutions and stakeholders within their respective countries to carry out agreed tasks and
- iii) for coordinating APFORGEN related activities

#### **Recommendation 5**

The Workshop participants recommend that the APFORGEN Steering Committee be composed of National Coordinators from all participating countries and that the Steering Committee should also include representatives from APAFRI, IPGRI and DFSC.

**Recommendation 6**

The Workshop participants recommend that the Steering Committee:

- (i) to oversee APFORGEN and meet regularly to review the progress made and
- (ii) to discuss issues relevant to conservation and use of forest genetic resources and make recommendations for the future work of the Programme.

**Recommendation 7**

The Workshop participants recommend that official endorsement, both at national and regional level, should be obtained for APFORGEN. Relevant fora for seeking endorsement could be the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the FAO Asia-Pacific Forestry Commission and the South Asia Association for Regional Collaboration (SAARC).

**Recommendation 8**

The Workshop participants identified the following common areas of interest in forest genetic resources among participating countries:

- i) evaluation, characterization and documentation
- ii) *in situ* and *ex situ* conservation
- iii) exchange of genetic materials
- iv) domestication and utilization
- v) strengthening national programmes on forest genetic resources
- vi) involvement of local communities and the role of livelihood and gender in conservation and use of forest genetic resources, and
- vii) development of relevant policies and enhancement of the linkage between conservation of forest genetic resources and national forest programmes. The Workshop participants recommend that these areas should be given priority in developing regional collaboration.

**Recommendation 9**

The Workshop participants identified several regional capacity building needs, such as short and long-term training courses, exchange of scientists, collaboration in developing training materials, workshops and fellowships for scientists and professionals. More specifically, training would be needed on conservation methods, molecular tools, taxonomy, management of forest genetic resources, domestication, participatory approaches in conservation, and livelihood generation through the use of forest genetic resources. The Workshop participants recommend that these areas should be given priority in developing regional capacity-building efforts.

**Recommendation 10**

The South and Southeast Asia Working Groups developed a tentative list of priority species for the two sub-regions. The Workshop participants recommend that APFORGEN should give priority to these species initially. These lists would be subject to updating.

**Recommendation 11**

The Workshop participants discussed a wide range of approaches, which could be used in developing the modus operandi of APFORGEN. For further development of APFORGEN, the Workshop participants recommend that the modus operandi should be kept flexible and that specific groups or networking could not be established at this point of the Programme.

**Recommendation 12**

The Workshop participants recommend that one of the first concrete activities for APFORGEN should be developing more effective means for information dissemination and effective communication among participating countries.