APFORGEN

ASIA PACIFIC FOREST GENETIC RESOURCES PROGRAMME

Among the World's continents, Asia has the highest number of tree species that are actively managed, for diverse purposes such as timber, non-timber products, energy and other ecosystem services – a reflection of the enormous cultural diversity of human populations in the continent. At the same time, more than 1700 of Asia's tree species are threatened with extinction.

APFORGEN, established in 2003, works to enhance the conservation and sustainable use of tree species and their genetic diversity in Asia and the Pacific.

APFORGEN is the only network in Asia and the Pacific that specifically focuses on the conservation and sustainable use of the genetic diversity of trees.

APFORGEN

APFORGEN has 14 member countries:
Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Vietnam

APFORGEN's Secretariat is hosted by the Asia Pacific Association of Forestry Research Institutions (APAFRI)

Bioversity International provides technical support to APFORGEN

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Why do Forest Genetic Resources matter?

Forest genetic resources (FGR) are the heritable materials maintained within and among tree and other woody plant species that have current or potential economic, environmental, scientific or societal value.

Genetic diversity enables tree species to resist abiotic and biotic threats and adapt to changing environments, and is the basis for present and future selection and breeding programmes.

The value of regional collaboration

Regional collaboration and coordination is essential for the conservation and sustainable use of tree species whose distribution crosses national boundaries. Many such species hold great potential for improvement and enhanced use but are threatened by, for example, illegal cross-border trade and unsustainable resource acquisition.

Regional networking facilitates synergy in research and conservation activities and helps achieve more through concerted efforts.

APFORGEN's objectives

1) Strengthen national programmes on forest genetic diversity in the participating countries

2) Enhance regional networking and collaboration on conservation and management of FGR

3) Locate and characterize, conserve and facilitate exchange of genetic diversity of selected priority forest species

4) Promote sustainable use of genetic diversity in natural and man-made forests

5) Enhance linkages with other regional and international networks

Key achievements

- National Status reports on FGR published
- National priorities for conservation and sustainable use of FGR identified
- Training courses organized
- Sharing of information, experiences and good practices
- Enhanced communication between scientists, policy makers and practitioners

Supporting the implementation of the Global Plan of Action on Forest Genetic Resources

APFORGEN collaborates with the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the UN (FAO) to coordinate the implementation of the Global Plan of Action on Forest Genetic Resources in the Asia-Pacific region.

The Global Plan of Action is a strategic framework for the conservation and sustainable use of genetic resources of trees and other woody plants. It is based on the findings of the first-ever State of the World's Forest Genetic Resources report (FAO 2014). The Global Plan of Action was adopted by FAO Conference in its 38th session in June 2013.

APFORGEN has established three Working Groups to support the implementation of the Global Plan of Action:

- Mobilizing political and financial support
- Developing conservation and sustainable use strategies for regionally important and threatened tree species
- Strengthening tree seed programmes