



Workshop on the Follow-Up to UNCED and Implementation of the Forest Principles



16 - 19 January, 1995

Report of the Workshop on the Follow-Up to UNCED and Implementation of the Forest Principles



FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific
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WORKSHOP ON FOLLOW-UP TO UNCED AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE FOREST PRINCIPLES IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

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I. INTRODUCTION

The Regional Workshop on the Follow-Up to UNCED and Implementation of the Forest Principles was held at the FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific in Bangkok, Thailand, from 16 to 19 January 1995. The meeting, supported by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the FAO Tropical Forests Action Programme (TFAP), was organized by the FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (FAO/RAPA).

Participants in the Workshop included senior forestry professionals and coordinators of National Forestry Action Programmes (NFAPs), from the following countries: Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Japan, Republic of Korea, Lao PDR, Nepal, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Vanuatu. Also participating were representatives from the Japan Environment Agency, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).

The Workshop agenda and a complete list of participants are provided in Annexes A and B.

The Workshop was opened with addresses from Mr. Dong Qingsong, FAO Deputy Regional Representative, and Mr. Suvit Yodamni, UNEP Regional Director and Representative. These opening addresses are given in Annexes C and D.

The Workshop was chaired by Mr. Jose Malvas, Jr., Director of the Forest Management Bureau, Philippines Department of Environment and Natural Resources. Mr. Ram Swarup, Conservator of Forests of Fiji, was elected Vice-Chairman. Mr. Thosapala Hewage, NFAP Coordinator for Sri Lanka, served as Rapporteur.

Context and Objectives of the Workshop

Since the convening of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), several governments and international agencies have recognized the need to restructure their environmental sectors and policies as recommended in Agenda 21. Many positive actions have already been taken by governments, NGOs, and international organizations in Asia and the Pacific. However, it has become apparent, that since the signing of the Rio Declaration and the Forest Principles, the implications of these agreements for sustainable management of forest ecosystems are yet to be fully understood or appreciated at the local, national, and regional levels.

Given that the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) was to review progress on the implementation of Agenda 21 forestry recommendations in April 1995, it was considered important for countries of the Asia-Pacific region to be given the opportunity to highlight issues of particular concern to the region to the CSD. This Workshop was thus organized by the FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (FAO/RAPA), with financial support from UNEP and FAO/TFAP.

The overall objective of the Workshop was to review and assess the progress of Asia and Pacific countries in implementing the forestry-related agreements reached at UNCED, particularly Chapter 11 of Agenda 21 ("Combating Deforestation"), and the *Non-legally binding authoritative statement of principles for a global consensus on the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests* (generally referred to as the "Forest Principles"). The Workshop was designed to provide Asia-Pacific countries an opportunity to highlight achievements, issues, constraints, and recommendations of particular relevance for countries of the region.

The specific objectives of the Workshop were to:

- review progress and constraints in implementing Agenda 21 and the Forest Principles in countries of Asia and the Pacific;
- identify forestry issues and recommendations of particular importance to the Asia-Pacific region to be brought to the attention of the CSD, when it reviews progress in the forestry sector;
- provide the CSD (through the Committee on Forestry and the Ministerial Meeting to be organized by FAO in March, 1995) with recommendations on the use of National Forest Action Plans for the implementation of UNCED Agenda 21 in forestry.

Documentation

The basic documentation for the Workshop consisted of:

- a) resource papers prepared by FAO and UNEP, including the following:
 - i) *Review of the Forest Principles 20 Months after Rio* (prepared by UNEP/Nairobi);
 - ii) *Summary Note on Areas of Progress, Experiences, and Selected Issues in UNCED Follow-Up with Emphasis on Developing Countries* (prepared by FAO/Rome);
 - iii) *Implementation of Agenda 21 and the Forest Principles in Asia and the Pacific: Draft Discussion Paper* (prepared by FAO/RAPA);
 - iv) *National Forestry Action Programmes for the Implementation of Agenda 21 and the Forest Principles* (prepared by the NFAP Support Unit, FAO/Rome).
- b) country statements and reports on progress and constraints in implementing Agenda 21 and the Forest Principles.

A complete list of the documents distributed during the Workshop is given in Annex E.

Working Groups

To facilitate greater interaction and discussion, the participants were organized into two working groups to discuss the most significant achievements of Asia-Pacific countries in implementing Agenda 21, problems and constraints encountered, and issues of particular importance to the Asia-Pacific region to be brought to the attention of the CSD.

Working Group I discussed the following themes related to Agenda 21 and the Forest Principles:

- Conservation, management and overall aspects of sustainable development of forests
- Sustainable use of forests and related aspects of economic development
- Role of major groups and social aspects of forests

Working Group II discussed the following themes:

- Institutional strengthening and capacity building
- International and regional cooperation and support
- Forestry issues relating to other Chapters of Agenda 21 and international agreements
- TFAP as an instrument for implementing Agenda 21 and the Forest Principles

A synthesis of the conclusions of the Working Groups is provided in Part IV of this report.

II. GLOBAL AND REGIONAL EXPERIENCE IN IMPLEMENTING AGENDA 21 (CHAPTER 11, "COMBATING DEFORESTATION") AND THE FOREST PRINCIPLES

Progress, experiences, and selected issues in UNCED follow-up with emphasis on developing countries

The Workshop was briefed on global perspectives of the UNCED process and arrangements for review of forestry by the CSD by Mr. Mafa Chipeta, UNCED Follow-up Focal Point for Forestry in FAO, who also outlined the roles of FAO in pre-CSD preparations and presented elements from the draft Task Manager's report on forests.

Observing that Asia and the Pacific is extremely vast and diverse, Mr. Chipeta indicated that it would be unrealistic and inappropriate to expect a "joint," or common, position on issues for consideration by the CSD. Instead, a range of issues which reflect the diversity of situations was viewed as appropriate.

The Workshop was reminded that central to UNCED agreements was recognition that both development and environment must be given a central role in the way ahead and that there should be no question of choosing between environment and development. Either one on its own is inadequate and unsustainable, while the two are mutually supportive.

Highlights of post-UNCED progress made toward this main UNCED goal were given, with special focus on developing countries. Examples were also drawn from the developed countries of the region, including Australia, Japan, and New Zealand.

It was noted that practical pre-UNCED actions in sustainable forest management has continued, but, more importantly, there has been a focus on creating the conditions for facilitating even faster progress in the future. In this respect, actions have been initiated to balance environment

with development in policies, legislation, strategies (such as National Forestry Action Plans), programs, and institutional arrangements. Since UNCED, there has also been increased recognition of the external driving forces behind forest loss and degradation such as poverty, rapid population growth, policy incentives that support inappropriate land uses, high levels of consumption, waste, and pollution.

Environmental aspects of forests, including greater attention to conservation (such as biodiversity and protected areas) have been a higher profile. The pace in achieving balance between environment and development, however, and approaches for doing so, have not always been perceived the same way by all interest groups--governments, NGOs, and the private sector. This has caused controversy, creating the need for consensus building on a priority basis.

To create a basis for assessing progress, some countries have cooperated to develop criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management, although so far with limited participation by developing countries. These indicators could partly be used in certificating forest products in international trade. Progress and experiences were also presented with regard to the elimination of earlier unilateral restrictions of timber trade; changes in production and consumption patterns; lack of innovation in international cooperation and its continuing poor coordination; modest flows of official development funding; limited technological development and technology transfer; institutional weaknesses and need for capacity building; modest progress in involving major groups and people in forestry; and outstanding deficiencies in information on the state of forests and on their valuation.

It was reported that there have been no specific actions to initiate review of the non-legally-binding Forest principles which the countries had agreed to keep under review. To provide a basis for deciding whether, and, if so, in what direction to go forward, it was reported that FAO was arranging for review of merits of various options at the March 1995 meeting of the Committee on Forestry and the Meeting of Ministers responsible for forestry which will follow it.

A detailed outline of arrangements for achieving convergence of ideas, initiatives and proposals, so as to reach CSD with a harmonized and coherent message for the sector was outlined. Of particular importance will be the March 1995 session of the FAO Committee on Forestry (COFO) and its associated special Meeting of Ministers responsible for forestry. These will be preceded by consultations of NGOs, the private sector, of those leading various initiatives on criteria and indicators of sustainable forest management, of TFAP coordinators, and of the CSD's own preparatory Inter-Sessional Working Group. Before COFO and the Ministerial Meeting, regional perspectives are to be enriched by the convening of FAO/UNEP regional meetings, sessions of some FAO Regional Forestry Commissions (and of a special meeting of the bureaux of all of them) and from country reports still being provided to FAO.

The Workshop was informed that a draft, which would serve as the basis for the UN Secretary-General's report to the CSD had been prepared by FAO and sent to the UN in early December 1994, using inputs received from governments, NGOs, private sector associations and inter-governmental organizations. Detailed information was given on FAO arrangements to ensure that information from the regional consultations could be channelled to CSD through the COFO process.

Progress in incorporating environmental concerns into forestry under Agenda 21 and the Forest Principles

Mr. Bai-Mass M. Taal, Senior Programme Officer with the UNEP's Terrestrial Ecosystems Branch, presented an overview perspective on progress in incorporating environmental concerns into forestry since UNCED. He noted the significance of Principle 4 of the Rio Declaration, which states that "to achieve sustainable development, environmental protection shall constitute an integral part of the development process and cannot be considered in isolation from it." Complementing this principle are several paragraphs and elements of the Forest Principles calling for holistic and balanced approaches in forest development, incorporating all aspects of environmental, social, and economic development.

The Forest Principles are significant as they reflect, for the first time, a general consensus on all types of forests. They constitute a political document, affirming general values, while Chapter 11 of Agenda 21 provides an action plan to achieve the objectives outlined in the Principles and other forest-related UNCED outputs.

Countries are still grappling with how to incorporate environmental concerns into forestry. For example, in Asia, 49 percent of all forest areas are designated for wood production, compared with 14 percent for environmental protection.

Since Rio, there have been a number of initiatives or processes to put into action the Forest Principles. A number of countries, however, have focused only on particular elements of the Forest Principles for implementation.

The most developed element is 8(d): formulation of criteria, guidelines, and methodologies for sustainable forest management. In line with this element are the Montreal and Helsinki Processes for the development of criteria and indicators.

All four programme areas of Chapter 11, and the Preamble of Agenda 21, call for an increase in partnership to achieve the Rio Declaration. Considerable progress has been made in this area. The Global Forest Conference, in early 1993, was the first global initiative after Rio. It resulted in the Bandung Declaration calling for enhanced international partnership to address global forest problems.

Other international processes that have attempted to incorporate environmental concerns into forestry include:

- Indo-British Forestry Initiative;
- Malaysia-Canada Initiative;
- CIFOR-Indonesia Policy Dialogue on Science, Forests and Sustainability.

Similar efforts at the national level attempt to enhance environmental considerations in forest management. They include the following:

- Canada's Model Forest Program;
- Indonesia's eco-labelling and certification preparatory activities;
- India's National Conservation Strategy;

- China' National Agenda 21;
- Bangladesh's Forestry Master Plan;
- Japan's system of forest management and forest ecosystem reserves;
- Philippine's "Banner Programme 1994;"
- Korea's National Forest Plan (incorporating development and conservation of forests)

These developments indicate that improvements have been made in incorporating environmental concerns into forestry since UNCED.

National Forestry Action Plans for the Implementation of Agenda 21 and Forest Principles

Mr. Darmo Suparmo, TFAP Adviser for Asia and the Pacific, presented an assessment of the experience in using National Forestry Action Plans for implementing Agenda 21 and the Forest Principles. TFAP has evolved considerably, with continuous feedback and adjustment, since it was formulated in the mid-1980s. The goal of TFAP is to promote the sustainable use of tropical forest resources to meet local and national needs, by fostering international and national partnerships to manage, protect and restore forest resources for the benefit of present and future generation throughout the world.

The key features and essential characteristics of TFAP are:

- implementation by the country;
- involvement by all concerned partners;
- harmonization and coordination;
- action oriented by identification of issues;
- flexibility

The use of National Forestry Action Plans as a tool for implementing sustainable forest management is explicitly encouraged in Chapter 11 of Agenda 21.

The TFAP, or parallel Forestry Master Plan process, has been adopted by 21 developing countries in Asia and the Pacific. Ten countries in the region are implementing NFAP programs. China has successfully completed the SFAP project, and Hunan Province of China is likely to hold a roundtable meeting to facilitate further actions. It is anticipated that two other countries (i.e., Bangladesh and Thailand) will reach the implementation phase of their NFAPs in 1995.

NFAPs are most successful when they are well integrated within the overall national development program of the country. This has happened in most countries which have initiated NFAPs in Asia and the Pacific.

A number of problems have been encountered in the preparation and implementation of NFAPs. They include the following:

- weak country capacity and coordination of partners in NFAP preparation and implementation;
- insufficient funds to support NFAP programs, especially in the areas of forests products utilization, non-wood forest products development, and plantation development;
- failure to involve all concerned partners, including NGOs, from the beginning of NFAP exercises;
- insufficient information and data needed to base forest resources management.

Workshop participants strongly endorsed the NFAP process and agreed that NFAPs can be effective tools for the implementation of Agenda 21 and the Forest Principles. Participants noted that FAO's capacity to support the NFAP process should be enhanced to ensure effective development and implementation of NFAPs.

III. ASIA AND PACIFIC COUNTRIES' PROGRESS AND EXPERIENCES IN IMPLEMENTING AGENDA 21 AND THE FOREST PRINCIPLES

UNCED served to effectively elevate the issues and concern for the world's environment, including forests. The long-term nature of forestry and the extensive requirements needed to solve major forestry problems, however, preclude dramatic positive change in the sector. Much of the progress that has been achieved since UNCED has been related to continuation or acceleration of earlier programs. Also common, have been preparatory actions to create an environment conducive to effective future practical action, including awareness raising, attitude adjustment, preparation of standards, policy changes, planning and strategy development, and institutional improvement.

UNCED reflected conviction that the forestry sector should allow environmental considerations to permeate all development and become a central rather than peripheral issue. It also highlighted the role of non-governmental interests (including those of forest-dependent communities) in sustainable forest development and the inter-sectoral nature of many key forestry concerns. For the forestry sector, awareness of this among policy-makers and planners and the associated attitude change has been one of the major areas of world-wide progress since UNCED.

The change in attitude has prompted efforts to search for early achievement of sustainable forest management and to develop the necessary criteria and indicators for measuring progress towards this goal. The development of criteria and indicators, which will permit certification, will also lay the foundation for non-discriminatory trade in sustainably-produced timber from all types of forests and should make it unnecessary to continue resorting to bans and boycotts.

International debate is increasingly concerned with how to integrate national development considerations with global environmental benefits such as ameliorating climate change or conserving genetic pools. A standing issue is how to provide incentives or compensation to those countries or communities which forego rights to utilize their forests in order to contribute to global environmental security.

New or Adapted Policies, Plans and Strategies

Most countries of the region are reorienting forest policies and strategies in line with UNCED and Agenda 21. For example, in **Malaysia**, a revised *National Forestry Policy* was approved in 1992 and a new *National Forestry Act* in 1993. Further, land was designated as permanent forest estate and a continuous forest monitoring system was made operational in 1993. From 1993 Malaysia granted private forest plantations owners full tax exemption of between 5 and 10 years under various fiscal initiatives. **Bangladesh, Cambodia, Myanmar, and Samoa** have also recently adopted new forest policies. **Sri Lanka** is revising its Forestry Master Plan of 1986 to incorporate more environmental considerations into its forest management plans, and **India** has recently begun developing a National Forestry Action Plan. **Japan** has introduced a new "Forest Management System Based on River Basin" approach to enhance forest management across different ownerships.

Several countries, including **China** and the **Philippines**, have developed comprehensive national Agenda 21 programs. **India** has developed an Environmental Action Plan, which provides a framework for Agenda 21 actions. Preparation and implementation of NFAPs has continued after UNCED. IUCN-assisted National Conservation Strategies have continued to be prepared, while in some countries, National Sustainable Development Strategies (NSDS) are ready.

Management, conservation, and sustainable development of forests

At UNCED, and on numerous occasions since, countries of the region have committed themselves to achieving and practicing sustainable forest management. ITTO's *Objective 2000* provided initial impetus in this area, which has gained added momentum since UNCED.

Most countries of the region have accelerated reforestation efforts since UNCED. The planting programs of **China, India, Indonesia, and Vietnam** are especially noteworthy for their scale. In 1994, FAO initiated a new regional project to support reforestation programs in **Bhutan, Laos, Myanmar, and Vietnam**.

Several countries have harmonized their policies on forest concession management. **Indonesia**, for example, has been implementing legislation which makes it possible for the government to assume the management of concessions which do not fully comply with regulations by establishing joint ventures between the concession holder and government forest enterprises.

Since UNCED, there has been increased attention to conservation, exemplified by creation or expansion of protected areas in several countries. Under its pilot phase, the Global Environment Facility funded several developing country projects in the Asia-Pacific region, largely on protected areas, including on wildlife management. Similar support is being provided by the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank in **Indonesia**.

Promotion of sustainable patterns of production and consumption

As the leading suppliers of tropical wood products, Asia-Pacific countries are very concerned about initiatives in developed countries which threaten their traditional markets. Partly to respond to concerns in market countries, Asia-Pacific producers are actively promoting the development and application of criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management. **Indonesia and Malaysia** have taken the lead in this area and may soon start sustainability certification.

Several countries in the region have initiated efforts to reduce logging damage and negative impacts of forest operations. For example, **Malaysia, Indonesia, India,** and the **Philippines** have active programs to test and encourage reduced impact logging.

Fiji has recently adopted a model logging code designed to enforce environmentally sound forest harvesting. **Australia, Fiji, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands,** and **Vanuatu** are drawing up a regional code of conduct that will set minimum standards for logging and export of timber.

Forest industries in the region remain relatively inefficient in terms of wood conversion to marketable products. Some countries (e.g., **Philippines**) are undergoing major restructuring of the their industrial processing sector to modernize equipment and adapt to the realities of reduced raw material supplies, smaller logs, and increased dependency on plantation-grown wood.

Since UNCED, increased attention has been focused on non-wood forest products and services (such as ecotourism) as potential alternatives to more damaging timber harvesting. Several countries in the region are increasing emphasis in these areas. However, knowledge of complex management, utilization, and marketing aspects of these products and services is limiting more rapid development. Concerns also exist that non-wood forest products might be over-exploited the same way that timber resources have been in some places.

Paper fiber recycling is emphasized in the region. In **Japan**, the waste paper utilization rate is over 50 percent; in the **Philippines**, about three-fourths of all waste paper is now recycled. In **Singapore** and **Hong Kong**, the rate is nearly 100 percent.

Pre-UNCED programs to improve efficiency of wood stoves (to reduce fuelwood demand) have continued in many countries.

A development with significant conservation implications in the Asia-Pacific region is the rapid increase in rubberwood processing to substitute for certain tropical hardwoods that risk depletion. In **Malaysia**, rubber clones that are more suited for timber production are being developed.

Role of major groups and social aspects of forests

Non-governmental organizations

Environmental organizations are rapidly gaining in power and influence in many countries of the Asia-Pacific region. Building on their already formidable base, environmental NGOs in **India, Thailand,** and the **Philippines** have significantly expanded their power since UNCED. In **Thailand**, advocacy groups have strongly influenced the pace of development and the orientation of the Master Plan for Forestry and the design of a major GEF-supported protected area program. In other countries of the region, fledgling advocacy groups are beginning to exert increasing influence in forestry debates. In **Indonesia**, for example, a consortium of environmental groups recently elevated public awareness of forestry issues considerably by encouraging debate over reallocation of government reforestation funds.

In addition to local NGOs, international NGOs actively support conservation and sustainable forest management throughout Asia and the Pacific. Since UNCED, such organizations have been especially active in developing local capacities in many countries with previously limited links to the

international NGO community, such as **Bhutan, Cambodia, China, Laos, and Vietnam**. International NGOs have also aggressively promoted the development and application of criteria and indicators of sustainable forest management and the certification of wood products.

Various "operational" NGOs and community-based organizations have played a critical role in practical implementation of grassroots conservation and forest-based livelihood programs and in local empowerment and capacity building. To benefit from perceived NGO strengths, many international and government agencies are closely working with NGOs. In the **Philippines**, for example, some protected areas are now co-managed by the government and environmental NGOs.

The commercial private sector

The commercial private sector is critically important for forestry in Asia and the Pacific. The high level of commercial exploitation in some countries of the region means that private companies wield tremendous influence over forestry, particularly in the management, utilization, and marketing areas.

The transition from centrally planned economies toward market economies in **China, Laos, Mongolia, Myanmar, and Vietnam** is presenting new opportunities and challenges for the private commercial sector and the governments involved. These countries are being faced with great opportunities and risks as forest management and exploitation is opened up to private-sector investment, privatization of state corporations, and joint ventures with international firms.

An important government incentive which can be provided for sustainable forest management is the adoption of policies supportive of private investment and entrepreneurship into value-adding industries instead of simple trade in raw materials. An example of what investment in technology, human resources development, and local entrepreneurship can achieve is the evolution of forest utilization in **Indonesia** from export of raw logs to local processing of timber products.

Other major groups and civil society

Tribal and clan ownership and management of forest resources has a long tradition in **Papua New Guinea, Fiji, Vanuatu**, and other South Pacific countries. In **Fiji**, the Native Land Trust Board assists in the management of forest land in many areas. In other areas, forest management decisions are made exclusively by local groups or in collaboration with government organizations.

Local governments and communities are being given increasing levels of responsibility for forest management and protection in several countries of the region. A recent trend toward decentralization and devolution of forest management responsibilities to local governments, user groups, local communities and individuals has taken place in **Bangladesh, India, the Philippines, Nepal, New Zealand, Vietnam, China, Laos, and Indonesia**.

Such decentralization and devolution has not released central governments from all forestry related responsibilities, however. Important technical assistance, monitoring, and regulatory duties remain. In many cases, however, the staff needs of central government forestry agencies have changed dramatically, and government forest departments are acknowledging their roles in the rapidly changing resource management environment.

Forest-dependent peoples are highlighted under the new forestry policy of the Asian Development Bank which intends to give them an economic stake in forests. **Vietnam and India** have variously encouraged participation by locals and forest dwellers.

Institutional strengthening and capacity-building

Post-UNCED capacity building efforts have been at three levels: creating an "enabling environment;" building up the capacities of government institutions; and strengthening NGO, local community and individual citizen capabilities. The most deliberate post-UNCED initiative in capacity building remains UNDP's Capacity 21, launched in 1993. UNDP's Country Capacity for National Forest Programmes (CCNFP), which complements Capacity 21 is designed especially to enhance the capacity of countries to manage national forest programs. Considerably more funding is needed for these programs to succeed in meeting their objectives.

International and regional cooperation and support

Finance

The two main multilateral funding organizations supporting forestry in Asia and the Pacific are the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank. Forestry lending by the World Bank in the early 1990s has more than doubled compared with the early 1980s. Since 1977, the Asian Development Bank (AsDB) has made cumulative forestry loans amounting to US\$ 794.32 million (annual average US\$ 39.7 million).

In terms of financing technical assistance in forestry, the leading source in the UN system is UNDP, particularly through allocations under the Indicative Planning Figure (IPF) of countries. In 1993 UNDP provided US\$ 20.3 million for forestry worldwide through FAO alone. Asia received more than US\$ 10 million in UNDP support for forestry in 1992.

Asia and the Pacific receives a relatively large portion of the international funding for forestry, but the funding patterns are highly uneven. The **Philippines**, for example, has obtained over 100 percent of the external funding needs identified under its TFAP process, while **Fiji**, **Laos**, and **Vietnam** have received less than 25 percent of their identified needs.

Technology transfer and technical cooperation

Since UNCED, two major new international organizations have been established in Asia. These are the Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR), and the Southeast Asian Regional Research Programme of the International Center for Research in Agroforestry (ICRAF). In addition, the International Tropical Timber Agreement, under which ITTO operates, was renegotiated with a mandate for strongly pursued the goals of sustainable forest management throughout the region and the world.

Several other regional organizations funded by bilateral organizations are making significant contributions toward sustainable forest management objectives. Among these are the Regional Community Forestry Training Center, the Asian Institute of Forest Management, and the ASEAN-Canada Tree Seed Centre.

The FAO-executed Forestry Research Support Programme for Asia and the Pacific (FORSPA), funded by the Asian Development Bank and UNDP, provides a model for promoting low-cost South-South technology sharing.

Recent developments and experiences in international cooperation

Given that many environmental issues are trans-boundary, regional cooperation will be increasingly important. A prime example of such cooperation is provided by the recent agreement by the Prime Ministers of **Australia, Fiji, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu** to work toward a common code of conduct relating to logging and log exports from indigenous forests.

Many countries in the region are similarly active in various initiatives designed to pursue the goals of UNCED. Among these are the Indo-British Initiative; the Canada-Malaysia Initiative, CIFOR-Indonesia Policy Dialogue, and the Montreal Process. It is important to note that many of these processes initiated in the Asia-Pacific region.

With assistance from ITTO, **Indonesia and Malaysia** have recently established a trans-frontier reserve in a key area of more than 1 million hectares straddling the two countries' border in Borneo. Forestry elements relating to other chapters of Agenda 21 and the Conventions.

A few countries (e.g., **Indonesia and Vietnam**) have—through official fiscal and market support—raised agricultural yields, which may lead to an eventual reduction in the rate of forest clearing for new farm land. Poverty, and policies resulting in reduced access to yield enhancing inputs (including some elements of structural adjustment) are holding many other countries back in this area.

Several countries in Asia and the Pacific (particularly the middle-income countries) have demonstrated considerable success in reducing the rate of population growth. Others have made little progress in this area.

Some countries in the region (e.g., **Malaysia**) have pilot projects on carbon sequestration through reduced impact logging or reforestation.

With support from the World Bank, AsDB, and other donor organizations, many countries in the region are devoting considerable attention to the conservation of biodiversity. **Indonesia**, for example, has recently drafted a comprehensive Biodiversity Action Plan and begun its implementation.

IV. WORKING GROUP REPORTS

During the course of the Workshop, Working Groups separately discussed achievements, constraints, and issues in seven thematic areas related to implementation of Agenda 21. Working Group I addressed the first three themes, while Working Group II focused on the second four themes. The groups met in plenary to thoroughly discuss all conclusions and recommendations of both groups. This summary, therefore, represents the consensus conclusions and recommendations of the entire Workshop.

WORKING GROUP I

Theme 1: Conservation, management and sustainable development of forests

Major achievements in the region:

- Most countries formulated and adopted National Forestry Action Plans or Master Plans for Forestry;
- One country (Indonesia) formulated and adopted a national land use policy
- Community and participatory forestry practices were promoted and enhanced;
- Awareness, on the part of all people, to environmental issues and the role of forests and trees was greatly enhanced;
- The number and extent of protected areas in most countries have been substantially increased, and some countries have enacted new laws for improved management of protected areas;
- Most countries have formulated and approved new national forest policies;
- All countries committed increased investment and resources for forest development and environmental amelioration.

Major constraints to effective implementation:

- Lack of firm political will;
- Conflicting forest use function and absence of conflict resolution mechanisms;
- Unresolved land tenure issues;
- Funding inadequacies;
- Lack of appropriate forestry technology and research support;
- Lack of adequate trained human resources and institutional capacity.

Issues of particular importance to be brought to the attention of the CSD:

- All nations should be called upon to formulate national land use policies;
- All nations should be reminded to formulate and adopt NFAPs, or similar appropriate forest management plans, and endeavor to implement them in an effective manner;
- All nations should be requested to create appropriate Forest Development Funds and augment their existing funding commensurate with forestry development requirements;

- All countries should be encouraged to support the establishment of protected areas that adequately conserve the biodiversity of importance to the country and the world, and to strengthen the effectiveness of protected areas management.

Theme 2: Sustainable use of forests and related aspects of economic development:

Major achievements in the region:

- Most nations have either rationalized, or taken steps to rationalize, annual allowable harvest of forest products;
- Several countries have taken steps to improve harvesting systems, reduce skidding practices, and minimize soil disturbances through the application of low impact logging and the adoption of revised logging codes;
- Some countries imposed restrictions on the export of logs and primary products; instead they are promoting in-country processing and the export of value-added products;
- Steps have been taken to increase the recycling of forest products and to reduce waste;
- Environmental impact assessment procedures have been established for forestry and other land use, and for forest industries in a number of countries;
- One country (Philippines) introduced a system of environmental management charges;
- Steps have been taken to promote tourism (including ecotourism), resulting in new opportunities for rural development and increased revenue earnings from forest areas.
- Lack of clear political decisions on ways to satisfy community needs from forests;
- Conflicts between short-term economic interests in forests and sustainable forest management requirements;
- Unilateral trade restrictions;
- Improper identification of research priorities and reluctance to invest in relevant research programs;
- Lack of appropriate technologies and mechanisms for transferring such technologies;
- Lack of investment funds;
- Absence of appropriate evaluation techniques for environmental costs and benefits.

Issues of particular importance to be brought to the attention of the CSD:

- Nations should be urged to improve mechanisms for the transfer of forestry-related technology;

- Influence liberalized Official Development Assistance (ODA) from developed to the developing countries as envisaged in UNCED 1992;
- Nations should be requested to honor international laws and agreements governing the free trade of all forest products; non-discriminatory and multilaterally agreed rules and procedures, and open and free international trade in forest products, should be facilitated;
- Nations should be urged to explore and develop mechanisms that encourage the free trade of all forest products derived from sustainably managed forests.

Theme 3: Role of major groups and social aspects of forests

Major achievements in the region:

- Land titles and usufructuary rights of indigenous people on forest land; change of land have received greater recognition; the needs and wishes of indigenous people have been given increased attention;
- People's awareness and understanding of sustainable forest management and environmental degradation issues has improved;
- Mechanisms for sharing the benefits from sustainable forest management have been expanded;
- Decision making and consultation on forest management issues have been decentralized and broadened in most countries;
- The contributions of environmental groups across many sectors to the planning and implementation of forest management has received greater appreciation;
- Volunteers (e.g., NGOs, boy scouts, school children-green brigades, environmental groups, etc.) have been mobilized for tree planting and forest protection to a greater extent than in the past.

Major constraints to effective implementation:

- Poor communication and understanding between forestry personnel and forest neighbors/indigenous people;
- Communication and publicity inadequacies;
- Lack of knowledge and institutional capacity to deal with the needs of special groups in and near forests.

Issues of particular importance to be brought to the attention of the CSD:

- Governments should be encouraged to recognize the role of major groups in dealing with the social aspects of forestry, and improve coordination and cooperation with them to help solve forest management problems.

WORKING GROUP 2

Theme 4: Institutional Strengthening and Capacity Building

Major achievements in the region:

- Frequent and significant dialogues in international fora on issues related to forestry;
- Since UNCED, three global initiatives on the implementation of the Forestry Principles were started in the countries of the region;
- Considerable progress has been made in developing criteria and indicators for sustainable use of forest resources;

Major constraints to effective implementation:

- Forestry is generally given a low priority in developing economies;
- Lack of institutional capacity to adequately address the issues of sustainable management of forests;
- Lack of coordination among the different agencies and organizations concerned with land use and management of natural resources;
- Lack of national land use and forest policies.

Issues of particular importance to be brought to the attention of the CSD:

- Financial and technical support to countries that do not have land use and forest policies should be accelerated to enable them to develop and implement such policies;
- Country capacity for planning, policy research, and analysis should be strengthened;
- Networks to exchange research results and other information should be enhanced;
- The process of involving NGOs and communities in the management of forests should be accelerated; this requires considerable training and sensitizing of community leaders, forestry personnel, and NGOs—for which training-of-trainers should be given a high priority;
- Governments should take steps to ensure adequate budgetary support for forestry institutions;
- An improved coordinating mechanism for country capacity building should be developed and institutionalized.

Theme 5: International and Regional Cooperation and Support

Major achievements in the region:

- Bilateral assistance in forestry has increased considerably since UNCED;
- A number of cooperative initiatives (e.g., Bandung Declaration, Malaysia-Canada, and Indo-British) have been started with the objective of furthering international dialogue on the implementation of the Forest Principles;
- A recent ministerial-level meeting was convened at ESCAP in Bangkok where Agenda 21 issues were discussed and an action plan was approved.

Major constraints to effective implementation:

- Inadequate funding through multilateral agencies;
- Skewed distribution of international funding;
- Lack of coordination among donor agencies;
- Inadequate technology transfer;
- Reduced capacity in FAO to focus on forestry issues due to resource constraints.

Issues of particular importance to be brought to the attention of the CSD:

- There is need for greater devolvement of funds from international donors and a more equitable system of disbursements should be ensured;
- The pace of technology transfer should be accelerated;
- FAO should become a focal point for technological support and, to fulfill its mandate, it may examine options for strengthening its organization.

Theme 6: Forest Issues Relating to other Chapters of Agenda 21 and International Agreements

Major achievements in the region:

- Many countries have signed the Conventions on Biodiversity and Combating Desertification;
- The extent of protected areas in the region has been increased;
- Programs linking improved agricultural production with forestry (e.g., ICRAF's program on slash-and-burn agriculture) have been initiated in the region since UNCED.

Major constraints to effective implementation:

- Lack of coordination among government agencies with responsibilities for inter-related issues affecting forestry;
- Lack of mechanisms for management of shared ecosystems across legal boundaries;
- Rapidly changing lifestyles and demands of rural people in developing countries;
- Poverty and land hunger;
- Poor understanding of the diversity of biological resources.

Issues of particular importance to be brought to the attention of the CSD:

- All countries should be encouraged to sign the Convention on Combating Desertification and share their experiences and technologies relevant for combating desertification. Special funding mechanisms to support these efforts should be ensured;
- Considering the fact that mountain areas are watersheds of the river systems that ensure food security, and are fragile ecosystems, countries should be urged to give special attention to the preparation of effective management plans of such areas;
- Considering that sound agricultural and rural development is vital to the health of forests, nations should be encouraged to fully integrate rural development and agriculture; efforts to enhance the development of rural industries and other income and employment alternatives should be given high priority;
- In view of the importance of conserving biodiversity for future generations, the CSD may wish to consider the following recommendations:
 - protected area networks should be expanded
 - surveys of biological resources should be accelerated
 - intellectual property rights issues related to biodiversity should be resolved
 - the rate and level of the transfer of biotechnology should be enhanced.
- Countries should be encouraged to increase cooperation in controlling the trade and use of endangered wildlife;
- Countries should be encouraged to review all land use, agriculture, rural development, and other policies related to forestry for their potential negative impacts on forests, and revise them to reduce or eliminate damaging effects on forests.

Theme 7: TFAP as an Instrument for Implementing Agenda 21, Chapter 11, Combating Deforestation, and Forest Principles

Major achievements in the region:

- National Forest Action Plans and Forestry Master Plans play an important role in supporting implementation of the Forestry Principles in more than 20 countries in Asia and the Pacific;
- Evaluation and revision the TFAP and Master Plan processes have led to greater complementarity in supporting the Forest Principles.

Major constraints to effective implementation:

- FAO's capacity to service the TFAP process is limited;
- Many partners (including national governments in some countries) have given a low priority to the implementation of NFAPs;
- Weak institutional capacity for implementing NFAPs;
- Lack of adequate financial resources.

Issues of particular importance to be brought to the attention of the CSD:

- TFAP should receive adequate administrative and financial support from all partners;
- All countries that have not already done so should consider initiating NFAPs, or similar comprehensive forestry planning exercises, on a priority basis;
- Financial and institutional support for TFAP should be enhanced;
- Country capacity for implementing NFAPs should be strengthened on a priority basis.

AGENDA

15 January 1995(Sunday)

Arrival of Participants

16 January 1995(Monday)

- | | |
|-----------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 0815-0900 | Registration |
| 0900-0945 | Opening Ceremony |
| - | Opening Address of Mr. Dong Qingsong, Deputy Regional Representative, FAO/RAPA |
| - | Opening Address of Mr. Suvit Yodmani, Director and Regional Representative, UNEP, Bangkok |
| 0945-1030 | Group Photograph and Coffee/Tea Break |
| 1030-1100 | <u>SESSION 1</u> INTRODUCTION AND WORKSHOP OVERVIEW |
| - | Adoption of Agenda and Timetable |
| - | Election of Chairperson and Rapporteur |
| - | Context and Objectives of the Workshop (Patrick B. Durst, Regional Forestry Officer, FAO/RAPA, Thailand) |
| - | Global Perspective on UNCED Process and Commission on Sustainable Development Review of Forestry (Mafa E. Chipeta, UNCED Follow-UP Focal Point for Forestry, FAO Forestry Department, Rome, Italy) |
| 1100-1200 | <u>SESSION 2</u> NATIONAL PROGRESS AND ISSUES |
| - | Country Statements on Progress and Issues in Implementing Agenda 21 and the Forest Principles |
| 1200-1330 | Lunch |
| 1330-1500 | <u>SESSION 2</u> (cont) |
| - | Country Statements (cont) |
| 1500-1530 | Coffee/Tea Break |
| 1530-1700 | <u>SESSION 2</u> (cont) |
| - | Country Statements (cont) |

17 January 1995 (Tuesday)

0830-1000 **SESSION 3** INTERNATIONAL PROGRESS AND ISSUES

- Use of National Forestry Action Plans for the Implementation of Agenda 21 and the Forest Principles (Darmo Suparmo, NFAP Regional Adviser for Asia/Pacific, FAO, Rome, Italy)
- Country reports on experience in planning, programming, and implementing National Forestry Action Plans

1000-1030 Coffee/tea Break

1030-1200 **SESSION 3** (cont)

- Review and Discussion of the Global Task Manager's report on Forestry, Chapter 11 of Agenda 21: Combating Deforestation (Mafa E. Chipeta, UNCED Follow-Up Focal Point for Forestry, FAO, Forestry Department, Rome, Italy)
- Progress in incorporating Environmental Concerns into Forestry under Agenda 21 and the Forest Principles (Mr. B.M. Taal, Senior Programme Officer, Terrestrial Ecosystems Branch, UNEP Headquarters, Nairobi, Kenya)

1200-1315 Lunch

1315-1500 **SESSION 4** DEVELOPMENT OF RECOMMENDATIONS

- Working Groups are assigned to:
 - identify progress, limitations, issues, and priorities related to the implementation of Agenda 21 and the Forest Principles in Asia and the Pacific
 - Provide critical analysis of the Task Manager's Report on Forestry
 - make recommendations on how best to use National Forest Action Plans in the implementation of Agenda 21 and the Forest Principles
 - identify issues and concerns to be brought to the attention of the Commission on Sustainable Development, through the Committee on Forestry and the Ministerial Meeting

1500-1530 Coffee/Tea Break

1600-1700 **SESSION 4** (cont)

- Working groups (cont)

18 January 1995 (Wednesday)

- 0830-1000 **SESSION 4** (cont)
- Working groups (cont)
- 1000-1030 Coffee/Tea Break
- 1030-1200 **SESSION 4** (cont)
- Working groups (cont)
- 1200-1330 Lunch
- 1330-1500 **SESSION 4** (cont)
- Presentation of working groups recommendations
- 1530-1600 Coffee/Tea Break
- 1600-1700 **SESSION 4** (cont)
 Working groups (cont)

19 January 1995 (Thursday)

- 0900-1200 **CONCLUDING SESSION**
- Presentation and Adoption of report and Recommendation
- Closing

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Mr. Chairman,
Mr. Dong Qingsong, Deputy Regional Representative for Asia & Pacific of FAO,
Mr. Mafa E. Chipeta of FAO, Rome,
Distinguished participants,
Ladies and gentlemen.

First, allow me to extend my warmest welcome to you to this significant Regional Workshop in Bangkok. It is a great pleasure and honour for me to be addressing this important meeting on the Implementation of the Forest Principles on Forest Management in Asia and the Pacific. Ms. Elizabeth Dowdeswell, the Executive Director of UNEP has asked me to convey to you her best wishes. She regards your deliberations in this meeting to be of crucial importance, especially since you will be dealing, for the first time, at the regional level, with the implementation of Forests Principles and Chapter 11 of Agenda 21: Combatting Deforestation.

You will recall that these two issues were considered, during the negotiations, to be among the key ingredients of sustainable development. Your deliberations on these issues gain further significance in the light of the Commission for Sustainable Development's (CSD's) decision to review for the first time, in April 1995, forest issues as part of its five-year thematic review of Agenda 21.

It is against this backdrop, Mr. Chairman, that UNEP proposed to FAO the idea of having this regional workshop. And we are delighted that the Tropical Forestry Action Programme (TFAP) Advisors Group (FAG) has associated itself with us in this country and regional driven process. Our endeavor will be to review progress in implementing the Forest Principles and Agenda 21, the forestry chapter, identify and highlight for CSD's attention issues of particular importance to your region and share experiences and raise issues related to national forestry action plans as a tool for implementing UNCED agreements in the region.

UNEP, in this process, is primarily interested in ensuring the introduction of the environmental perspective within the dialogue and consolidation of approaches to the issue of "sustainable management and development of all types of forests".

To this end, our endeavour is not only to facilitate the dialogue, but also to contribute with the preparation of a set of opportunities and options for action that might be considered for adoption at the 1995 session of the CSD.

A few weeks ago, at the UNCED follow-up discussions at the United Nations General Assembly, the Chairman of the Commission on Sustainable Development, Minister Klaus Topfer, highlighted the central points on which the work of the CSD should focus. I would like to mention three of these which are of direct relevance to the objectives of this Workshop:

(i) that "the next session of the CSD must be in a position to decide as clearly and concretely as possible what needs to be done in a global perspective, in order to enhance the implementation of the Forests Principles and Chapter 11 of Agenda 21";

(ii) that "the CSD will be successful if it makes progress in the cross-sectoral issues of particular importance, namely finance, technology, trade and environment and consumption and production patterns"; and

(iii) that "national experiences must be incorporated into the work of the CSD".

Mr. Chairman,

In the last year, there have been several initiatives and consultations on forest issues in preparation for CSD III in April 1995. Country initiatives started at Bandung in Indonesia in February last year, and were carried forward by the Helsinki and Montreal processes, the Forestry Forum for Developing Countries, the Canada-Malaysia sponsored Inter-Government Working Group on Forests, CIFOR keystone process, and will be further strengthened at the FAO-COFO Ad-hoc Ministerial meeting to be held next year.

However, there was a realization that these meetings missed an important point—a strong regional perspective issue. Our workshop is, therefore, to fill in this gap and also to complement and support other initiatives when and where appropriate. You will be pleased to learn that we are also cooperating with FAO in organizing similar workshops for the regions of Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean.

This meeting comes at a time when we, at UNEP, are re-orienting our policy and strategy for implementation of key activities in the field of forests. Our endeavour is to play a uniquely distinctive role in the field of forests, and simultaneously to favour such activities which are supportive to the actions of FAO, our sister organization in the UN System that has been assigned Task Manager for Chapter 11 of Agenda 21.

Thus, our major interest is in linking forest issues with other priority global and regional environmental issues such as biodiversity, climate change, desertification and watersheds. Our new strategy focuses on an implementable and integrated management of terrestrial ecosystems, and their resources for sustainable utilization, considering ecological, social, economic and cultural factors.

Mr. Chairman,

Forests have, in the past, been regarded merely as an economic resource, as land covered with trees which could be exploited for timber and firewood, and which also could be converted to more economically productive use, such as for agriculture and cattle ranching.

The last two decades have seen the emergence of a more holistic view. This takes into account the full range of other goods and services produced by the forests, such as the protective role of forests for the conservation of soil, water, genetic resources and biological diversity. The recent emphasis of the role of forests as carbon sinks to reduce global warming has served to broaden the range of services rendered by forests, to a global level.

The progressive decrease of the world's forest through activities such as logging, burning, development of new agricultural land, acid rain, and climate change calls for alterations in policies and approaches which would preserve the integrity and functions of forest lands.

The status and condition of the world's forests has become a source of increasing concern to the international environmental community. Forests account for roughly 40 per cent of the world's land area. Out of a total of approximately 3.6 billion ha. of forest cover 1.9 billion ha. are under tropical forests, according to the last FAO assessment. By far the greatest concentration of tropical rain forest is in the Amazon basin. This forest ecosystem accounts for two-thirds of the world's tropical moist forest.

The state of tropical forests gives us reason for concern. The estimated rate of deforestation in the tropics in the decade 1981-1990 was 15.4 million hectares per annum or an annual rate of loss of 0.8 per cent. This is greater than the annual deforestation of 11.4 million hectares assessed by FAO/UNEP in the decade 1971 to 1980.

I need not dwell on the consequences of deforestation, but allow me, Mr. Chairman, to illustrate the loss of biodiversity due to deforestation in the tropics. Tropical moist forests represent the main repository of the earth's biotic resources, containing about one-half of the 1.4 million named species in the entire world biota (estimates of total number of species range from 5 to 30 million). At present, an estimated 10,000 species are lost each year because of tropical deforestation.

Concern about the loss of biodiversity arises from economic, social and ethical values that society associates with biological resources. Consensus exists that maintaining biodiversity requires protecting its habitat, in this case forests.

Mr. Chairman,

I believe that the extent of UNEP's commitment to the Rio Principles, and in particular to Agenda 21, gives us a definite responsibility to take steps both nationally, regionally and internationally to protect the multi-functional roles of forests. I refer here to the environmental, economic, social and cultural factors leading to sustainability. I also refer to the environmental issues of forestry: forests at the interface of trade and the environment; inter-linkages of forest and biodiversity; forest and desertification; forest and watershed; and forest and climate change.

These cross-cutting issues show that forest issues are central to global environmental concerns. Forests have endlessly been discussed during the past decade and have moved from the professional and technical level to the international political agenda. A concrete example of this shift is "the non-legally binding authoritative statement of principles for a

global consensus on the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests", that is, "the Forest Principles" agreed at Rio. These Principles mark a genuine commitment to control deforestation through a variety of approaches at the global and, most crucially, local levels.

Agenda 21 calls for an enhanced and strengthened role for UNEP. As the principal body within the United Nations System in the field of the environment, we are also required to concentrate on the "Further development of international environmental law, in particular conventions and guidelines, reinforcement of its implementation and coordination functions arising from an increasing number of international legal agreements".

It is also in this context, that we are cooperating with FAO in assisting to bring about a regional perspective in the Forest Principles and other forest issues, and bring these to the attention of CSD.

This is the kind of commitment which could lead to the acceptance of the need to take a balanced and integrated approach to the sustainable management of all types of forests, and thus secure the much needed global and regional cooperation and partnership to achieve sustainable development. UNEP is committed to translating Agenda 21 into action in practical terms in cooperation with our partners at the regional and national levels. This meeting provides a mechanism for such cooperation, and UNEP is privileged to be associated with it.

The Forests Principles signal the need for real change. A major weakness at previous policy deliberations in forest management is the failure to distinguish parts from the whole, and to enact comprehensive land-use policies and integrated ecosystem management in most countries. A land use policy enables the consideration of management that could attain ecological, social, economic and political goals coincidentally. It represents a general theory that management problems should be understood in their larger ecological context.

The contextual thinking inherent in land use formulation helps to suggest new directions: the context of locally distinct cultures can be saved only if local communities go beyond negatively conceived restrictions and develop positively understood goals for protecting and developing their indigenous cultures. Their defined values, locally generated, are then assimilated into the agreed areas for sustainable development plans. These include a positive conception of the integrity of the land, of its ecological complexity, and of its creative and productive process, all of which are interwoven. Hopefully, any subsequent development will force us towards the universal application of integrated ecosystem management and of land-use planning.

Mr. Chairman,

Permit me to touch on the causes of deforestation. It's becoming clear that the causes actually lie outside the forests. Deforestation is increasingly the function of inadequate agriculture, of population growth, unsustainable development in rural areas, unsustainable patterns of production and consumption. All these external causes must be addressed together with trade, food security, poverty, human settlement, and the like, if we are to make any perceptible progress towards sustainable forest management.

It is vital that a comprehensive view of the role of forests guides us in the implementation of the follow-up to Rio, and that you will be considering the linkages between forest and biodiversity, desertification and climate change and the other sectoral and cross-sectoral issues which CSD will be dealing with.

This is the major challenge: to identify the linkages; on that basis, identify priorities for action, and ensure its implementation at national, regional and global levels. I am certain you will find your way in identifying how Asia and the Pacific region can play a leading role in these complex but essential tasks.

Mr. Chairman, distinguished delegates,

In the next few days you will deliberate on all these critical issues of importance and concern to your region. You know your region better than anyone else. The combined role of UNEP and FAO is to facilitate this dialogue with the hope that this meeting will build consensus on forest and environment interlinkages and on issues you feel are critical enough to be brought to the attention of CSD. It is, therefore, important that your deliberations concentrate on issues and policy options that require political guidance and impetus. We feel that whilst governments are deeply involved in the process of initiating actions relating to Agenda 21, it is imperative that they involve decision making and encourage active participation of the public and private sectors, local communities and NGO's in forest management and conservation.

Only in this way will we be able to put into practice the new concept of "partnerships" validated at the Rio Summit. Also in this way we would achieve that new dimension, in addition to the governmental one, to be incorporated to ensure the full implementation of Agenda 21, involving the widest participation possible. The preamble of Agenda 21 captures this notion of partnership succinctly when it states "no nation can achieve sustainable development on its own; but together we can".

I wish the workshop very success, and thank you very much for your attention.

**BEYOND THE RIO RHETORIC:
A TIME FOR ACTION IN FORESTRY**

**Dong Qingsong
FAO Deputy Regional Representative**

**Opening Address
Workshop on the Follow-Up to UNCED and
Implementation of the Forest Principles**

**FAO/RAPA, Bangkok
16 - 19 January, 1995**

My Esteemed Colleague, Mr. Suvit Yodmani, UNEP Director and Regional Representative,
Distinguished Heads of Forestry and other Participants,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure for me to welcome all of you to the FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, and to this Workshop on the Follow-Up to UNCED and Implementation of the Forest Principles.

Nearly three years ago, the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) was convened in Rio de Janeiro. It was the largest global summit ever held, with 178 member countries and more than a hundred Heads of State represented. UNCED concluded that only by linking sustainable development with environmental protection could we ensure our common future.

The Conference was unique with respect to the lofty levels of political concern and commitment generated. These were translated into the adoption of conventions and other agreements on environment and development, and the formulation of Agenda 21 as an operational blueprint for saving the "blue planet."

In Rio, FAO was entrusted by the United Nations with the role of "Task Manager" to promote coordinated follow-up to UNCED in the field of agriculture, including forestry. Thus, the FAO Forestry Department is responsible for coordinating and monitoring follow-up related to the Forest Principles and to Chapters 11 and 13 of Agenda 21, "Combating Deforestation," and "Sustainable Mountain Development."

Since UNCED, FAO has participated in, and contributed to, many intergovernmental consultations in forestry. We should recall that the first such effort was the Global Forest Conference, convened here in our region, in Indonesia. That conference produced the "Bandung Initiative for Global Partnership in Sustainable Forest Development."

The Bandung Conference was followed by the Canada-Malaysia Initiative, the Indo-British Initiative, the Helsinki and Montreal Processes, and several others. Such initiatives demonstrate the interest and energy which countries possess for following-up the agreements from the Earth Summit.

But such meetings and conferences by themselves will have little impact in the battle to ensure the existence of healthy forests for current and future generations. What is needed is not more words, but strong, forceful and vigorous actions. Words will not save the world's forests from destruction and misuse; actions may.

Deforestation in tropical Asia and the Pacific increased from 2.0 million hectares per year between 1976 and 1980 to 3.9 million hectares per year between 1981 and 1990. This gives the Asia-Pacific region the dubious distinction of having the fastest rate of deforestation in the world. Fully 1.2 percent of the region's forests are lost annually, mostly to land clearing for agriculture and excessive cutting of industrial timber and fuelwood.

It is unrealistic to expect an early end to the pressures driving the clearing and degradation of forests in the region. Poverty, greed, and inequitable distribution of wealth are the basic underlying causes of deforestation. Only when these fundamental problems are adequately addressed will the pattern of forest destruction be curtailed. The challenge of implementing UNCED follow-up in forestry is thus more of a fight for honesty, fairness, and sustainable economic development than it is a search for improved genetic clones and "silver bullet" technological fixes.

In most countries of Asia and the Pacific, the large populations and rapid economic development place exceptional demands on forest resources. In the post-war period, approximately 70 percent of all tropical forest products have come from Southeast Asia. Since the mid-1980s, the figure has risen to over 80 percent. These industrial demands, coupled with the insatiable appetite for new land for agriculture and other development have taken an extreme toll on the region's forests.

Twenty-five years ago, more than 50 percent of Thailand was forested. Today, perhaps only one-quarter of the country is covered with trees. One of the consequences of inappropriate land clearing was the devastating floods and landslides in southern Thailand in 1988. Similar disasters have also occurred in other countries where deforestation was unchecked for years. Ultimately, the widely publicised human sufferings and economic losses these disasters wrought, helped raised awareness among decision makers and led to major shifts in forestry policies such as total or partial bans on commercial logging in natural forests.

Principle 4 of the Rio Declaration states that "to achieve sustainable development, environmental protection shall constitute an integral part of the development process and cannot be considered in isolation from it." Ensuring the sustainability and enhancing the benefits from conservation and utilization of forests should be the focus of all UNCED follow-up in forestry. The aim should be to avoid any loss or deterioration of biological resources and ecological services, while simultaneously managing the forests on a productive basis.

Indeed, timber extraction and the conversion of some forests to other land uses will be necessary. In this respect, however, it is the responsibility of governments to ensure that all citizens benefit from development. One should not be blinded by the "veneer of success" when a minuscule segment of society achieves great economic advances, at the expense of the majority. Sustainable utilization of forests can only be achieved through the recognition of the different groups of users who depend on the forest. We must pursue original and flexible approaches to promote sustainability across a variety of tenure, use, and management regimes in different ecological and economic contexts.

We must also keep in mind that forests are more than just timber. They provide a multitude of non-wood products and services with which you are all familiar, including watershed protection, carbon sequestration, and climate regulation. They serve as storehouses of irreplaceable genetic resources and playgrounds for tourists and recreationists.

Timber interests all too often overshadow these important non-timber products and services, in part because the latter are often outside the market economy or are difficult to quantify and value. Additionally, many such benefits accrue to people far from the forests. The time has come for us to "internalize" these externalities. This may require people, who have not done so in the past, to directly or indirectly share in the cost of maintaining forests which provide services of broad value.

This workshop, generously supported by the United Nations Environment Programme, comes at an opportune time to consider how the political commitments made at the Earth Summit have been put into action in the Asia-Pacific region. You are here this week to take stock of these actions and to deliberate how the provisions of Rio's agreements can be better implemented and reflected in policies, programmes and institutional arrangements for forestry.

By your professional standing, mid-way between the politicians who made the lofty commitments at Rio and the actual users of the forests, you are ideally suited to conduct this task. Given sometimes very limited resources, you are the individuals who develop the operational procedures for forestry and oversee their compliance. You either help eradicate corruption or condone it. You ensure equitable sharing of the benefits from forests and protect the rights of forest dwellers, or you turn a blind eye to such social needs. You put the long-term ecological interests of the forest as top priority, or you compromise these interests to short-sighted, unsustainable practices.

It is thus your actions, and those of the departments you head, that we are taking stock of this week. In that sense, this workshop serves as a "self-critique" and an opportunity to see how we can improve in translating the rhetoric of Rio into meaningful actions.

I thank you for your attention, and I wish you much success in your deliberations here this week.

List of Documents

1. Opening Statement by Dong Qingsong, Deputy Regional Representative of FAO
2. Opening Remarks by Suvit Yodmani, Regional Director and Representative of UNEP
3. Introductory Remarks by M. E. Chipeta
4. Implementation of Agenda 21 and the Forest Principles in Asia and the Pacific - Draft Discussion paper
5. Summary Note on Areas of Progress, Experiences, Selected Issues in UNCED Follow-Up with emphasis on Developing Countries
6. National Forestry Action Programmes for the Implementation of Agenda 21 and Forest Principles
7. Progress in Incorporating Environmental Concerns into forestry under Agenda 21 and the Forest Principles
8. Country Statement of Bangladesh
9. Country Statement of Bhutan
10. Country Statement of China
11. Country Statement of Fiji
12. Country Statement of India
13. Country Statement of Indonesia
14. Country Statement of Japan
15. Country Statement by the Republic of Korea
16. Country Statement of Laos
17. Country Statement of Nepal
18. Country Statement of Papua New Guinea
19. Country Statement of Sri Lanka
20. Country Statement of Thailand

21. An Overview of Sri Lanka's Forestry Planning Strategy
22. Information on Upcoming FAO forestry Related Meetings.
23. Stock-Taking - Tropical Forests Action Programme
24. Operational Principles - National Forestry Action Programmes
25. UNCED - the Forest Principles
26. UNCED - Chapter 11 of Agenda 21, Combatting Deforestation
27. Review of the Forestry Principles - 20 Months after Rio —A Study by the United Nations Environment Programme
28. The Basic Environment Law in Japan
29. Statement of Principles on Forests
30. Outline of Japan's Contribution to International Forest and Forestry Cooperation