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Regional and Sub-Regional Inputs to UNFF10

Regional/ Sub-regional Organization Asia-Pacific Network for Sustainable Forest Management and Rehabilitation:

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General Information

The multi-year programme of work (2007–2015) of the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) sets a new focus on regional collaboration and partnerships. Since its eighth session in 2009 the Forum has solicited inputs from relevant regional and subregional forest related mechanisms, institutions, organizations and processes as an integral part of session deliberations.¹

At its ninth session, the Forum invited regional and subregional organizations to strengthen their contributions to the work of the Forum and to provide input, in the context of the overall theme for UNFF10, on their efforts towards the implementation of the non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests, (herein after referred to as the forest instrument) and its four Global Objectives on Forests, through sharing regional perspectives, approaches and experiences. Regional activities on North-South and South-South cooperation, including triangular cooperation on SFM were also encouraged.

This questionnaire has been prepared by the Forum Secretariat to facilitate regional inputs for the tenth session of the Forum (UNFF10), to be held from 8 to 19 April 2013 in Istanbul, Turkey. In completing this questionnaire, you may choose to extract the relevant information and include it in your submission, if information is already available in an existing report or document. Otherwise, you may provide the reference or document itself to the UNFF Secretariat, indicating the relevant section.

¹Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), the parent body of the Forum, through its resolution 2006/49, agreed to “Strengthen interaction between the Forum and relevant regional and subregional forest-related mechanisms, institutions and instruments, organizations and processes, with participation of major groups, as identified in Agenda 21, and relevant stakeholders to facilitate enhanced cooperation and effective implementation of sustainable forest management, as well as to contribute to the work of the Forum.” (paragraph 2)

The size of the report of the Secretary General will be a maximum of 8,500 words (approximately 16 pages). In view of this, the Forum Secretariat suggests no more than five pages of written input. We would be most grateful if you could send your inputs to unff@un.org, fax: 917-367-3186) by **30 September 2012**. In light of time constraints and financial limitations, you are kindly asked to provide your input in English.

Section I: Progress towards the implementation of the forest instrument in the context of the overall theme of UNFF10 on “Forests and Economic Development”

A. Progress towards implementation of the forest instrument

1. Briefly describe actions (e.g. regulatory, financial/economic and informational/educational) taken by your organization to foster political commitment for sustainable forest management (SFM).

Please describe the main challenges encountered and/ or lessons learned.

As a regional organization committed to promoting sustainable forest management in Asia and the Pacific, APFNet is well aware of the role of strong political commitment as a top down approach in effectively uplifting the forestry profile and thus facilitating forestry development. In view of that, APFNet has always valued regional high-level cooperation mechanism and endeavoured to involve in related activities. During 2011, APFNet had the honour to be the key organizer and sponsor of two important events, i.e. First APEC Meeting of Ministers Responsible for Forestry in September and the ASEM Symposium on Sustainable Forest Management to Address Climate Change in June.

With the theme of *enhanced regional cooperation for green growth and sustainable forestry development*, the First APEC Meeting of Ministers Responsible for Forestry is the first ever ministerial event in forestry under APEC, and had gathered ministers responsible for forestry from 21 APEC economies, as well as heads of international organizations, and CEOs from the private sector. President Hu Jintao addressed the opening ceremony and reiterated China’s continuous support for the developing members of APEC through APFNet. Ministers adopted the Beijing Statement on Forests and Forestry, which indicates various ways of further cooperation and APFNet’s potential in forming synergy among multiple stakeholders.

In organizing the ASEM Symposium on Sustainable Forest Management to Address Climate Change, APFNet was able to provide a platform for officials from 17 ASEM members and relevant organizations to review and exchange the latest developments sustainable forest management, measures and actions, as well as their functions in mitigating and adapting climate change. Moreover, as a cross continental cooperation mechanism, the Asia Europe Meeting (ASEM) was considered an effective platform for information sharing and joint actions.

Despite increasing recognition of the unique role of forests in socio-economic development, relatively unified standards and approaches of sustainable forest management have not yet been agreed, which to an extent hampered the fulfilment of the political commitment on the

ground. And to follow up those strong political commitments, an equally strong enforcement is in much need.

2. Briefly describe efforts taken at the regional level to foster economically, socially and environmentally sound measures that act as incentives for the sustainable management of forests.

Demonstration projects are one of the four pillars of APFNet in fulfilling its mission. A dozen of projects have been ongoing and are involving local communities, forestry authorities and other stakeholders to jointly promote sustainable management of forests. Take the Pilot Project of Multifunctional Forests for example. The project is mainly funded by APFNet was launched in August, 2011 to build a demonstration site for multifunction forestry under close-natural management, motivate the local community through community co-management and protection of non-timber forest products. The assisted natural regeneration has been applied in rehabilitating the local forests and has proved as a cost-effective approach; and the benefit of non-timber forest products have also been reaped to increase the income of communities nearby the forest farm. The local environment and local communities' income have been improved at the same time, which further promote the sustainable management of forests.

Please describe the main challenges encountered and/ or lessons learned.

The project site was chosen in Inner Mongolia, and monoculture had been prevalent for a long time. It has only been recent that close natural management is applied. Technical knowledge and support is still lacking and the scale up of the project effects and outcomes wait to be explored.

3. Briefly describe actions taken to enhance regional cooperation to promote international trade in forest products from sustainably managed forests harvested.

Promoting trade of sustainably harvested forest products is an important aspect of sustainable forest management. There are different stakeholders in the international trade of forest products, e.g. government, the private sector and civil society, who share a common interest in managing forests in an economically viable, environmentally sustainable, and socially responsible manner. The impetus to SFM is being driven increasingly by the timber consumers, whose demand is wood that is harvested legally and in accordance with environmental standards. Aware of this, APFNet, together with TNC/RAFT, held a Training Workshop on Methods, Tools and Skills for Promoting Legal and Sustainable Forest Management and Trade in the Asia-Pacific Region in 2009. The workshop brought together key government, industry and civil society stakeholders in the Asia-Pacific region to identify the key challenges they face and solutions in fulfilling requirements of SFM in each economy.

This workshop has to an extent increased the understanding of the role of corporate social responsibility as a private sector response to the changing regulatory and market environment and it is an effort in series to promote sustainable forest trade.

As a follow-up, the Asia-Pacific Forestry Business Forum was held during the Second Asia-Pacific Forestry Week by APFNet, in coordination with China National Forestry Institute Federation, WWF, EFI FLEGT Asia and China National Forestry Product Industry Association. The Forum provided a platform for participants from the private sector to exchange views with international organizations on issues emerging in the implementation of related trade rules and regulations. APFNet is also building a database of regional forestry

enterprises so as to disseminate relevant information concerning international forest trade to them.

Please describe the main challenges encountered and/ or lessons learned.

A strong technical support system is in much need, both expertise in international forest trade and in internet technology, so the private sector can be better involved in APFNet's activities.

4. Briefly describe actions taken to enhance regional cooperation to address illicit international trafficking in forest products through the promotion of forest law enforcement and good governance.

Sustainable Forest Resource Management, together with Forestry and Rural Development, is a thematic training series of APFNet and focuses mainly on forest law enforcement and governance. Forestry officials and practitioners from regional economies are invited to interact with experts in the region each year since 2009. The most recent one is the fifth Training Workshop on Sustainable Forest Resource Management was held in Kunming, China, participants from 13 regional developing economies came to the workshop to discuss the issues facing forest law enforcement and good governance. Through the interaction, the workshop may facilitate forestry officials in each economy to improve their forest governance. To disseminate the workshop outputs, APFNet has published the compilation titled *Toward Sound Forest Governance – Proceedings of the fifth Workshop on Sustainable Forest Resource Management*, and meanwhile uploaded several lectures on APFNet's website for sharing the outputs at a wider scale.

Please describe the main challenges encountered and/ or lessons learned.

The participation of the workshop should be kept within 20 people at a time, therefore the dissemination of the workshop outputs at a larger scale to influence more forestry officials is of vital importance. Now the participants' report submitted to the workshop still need to be improved and more video of the lectures delivered could be edited and uploaded on APFNet's website and probably on other video website.

5. List and briefly describe activities aimed at mobilizing new and additional resources from all sources for SFM.

In its early stage, APFNet knows the importance of diversifying its funding resources and mobilizing resources available. Apart from the bulk of donation from Chinese government, APFNet has also got financial support from Australia and US, the co-sponsor. In addition, APFNet is building partnership with international / regional organizations to jointly sponsor and carry out activities. Among the dozen of APFNet projects, the forestry authorities in the economy and the executive agency also contribute some counterpart funds to guarantee the implementation. The private sector is also an ideal choice for soliciting new financial resources for SFM. APFNet is planning to leverage the corporate social responsibility and tap into the potential of the private sector to establish a fund specialized for SFM.

Please describe the main challenges encountered and/or lessons learned.

As a relatively new organization, APFNet needs to on one hand raise its profile and on the other hand raise public awareness on the role of forests and SFM when dealing with enterprises. A better publicity and promoting scheme is much needed for APFNet.

6. Please provide additional information specific to your region/subregion on the implementation of the forest instrument and the impact made by the forest instrument on enhancing forest-based economic development.

Not applicable.

B. Progress towards GOFs

1. Please describe actions taken by your organization and/or by other public and private organizations (e.g., government, NGOs, private sector, etc.) in your region/subregion to help achieve the following :

GOF1, "Reverse the loss of forest cover worldwide through sustainable forest management, including protection, restoration, afforestation and reforestation, and increase efforts to prevent forest degradation"

In 2011, APFNet launched the project entitled *Multi-Functional Forest Restoration and Management of Degraded Forest Areas*, which was developed and implemented by the Institute of Forest and Wildlife Research and Development (IRD). This project is aimed to enhance the capacity of Forestry Administration of the Royal government of Cambodia in managing and restoring biodiversity. The proposed project has two specific objectives as follows:

1. To restore a degraded forest of protected forest in Koh Kong province for environmental protection and biodiversity conservation of a protected forest.
2. To enhance the restoration of a community forest in Siem Reap province for production of timber and NTFPs as a means to improve livelihoods of local community.

The project will be able to fund a community nursery in each pilot site, develop models of forest restoration plans in each pilot site, publish and disseminate knowledge and experience on multi-functional forest restoration.

Now the nursery has been set up and operating to provide local communities with seedlings of precious tree species; the local people also get to know the high economic value of those tree species and are assisted by the Forestry Administration staff to rehabilitate the local forests.

With a sum of US\$ 386,570 support under APFNet's grant, the project will improve the local biodiversity and community forests in terms of increased tree density and diversity of forest products and thus improving livelihoods of local communities.

GOF2, "Enhance forest-based economic, social and environmental benefits, including by improving the livelihoods of forest dependent people"

Launched in 2010, the APFNet-Nepal project "Demonstration of Sustainable Forest Management with community participation in Nepal" is targeted at creating green job opportunities, increasing income of local communities and shape National Forest Policy and

Strategic Planning through instrumental approaches including establishing community-based cooperatives and enterprises, reinforcing sustainable forest management and biodiversity conservation. The project was implemented by Federation of Community Forestry Users, Nepal (FECOFUN) with total fund of the project is US\$ 577,159, among which APFNet grant is US\$ 500,479.

Through the project, a list of sustainable forestry enterprises have been identified and established to support the poor and the marginalized; the public awareness on the importance of SFM and biodiversity conservation has been improved in operating the community based enterprises.

GOF3, "Increase significantly the area of protected forests worldwide and other areas of sustainably managed forests, as well as the proportion of forest products from sustainably managed forests"

In APFNet's Strategic Plan for 2011-2015, two out of the four thematic priorities are related to increasing forest area, i.e. improving forest management to reduce forest loss and degradation; monitoring progress towards the APEC 2020 forest cover objective. Activities designed will contribute to increasing the area of sustainably managed forests, mainly through the suitable silvicultural techniques and also synthesizing forest area change information available with other international organizations.

In 2011, the project titled Multi-Functional Forest Restoration and Management of Degraded Forest Areas was launched in Cambodia to restore the degraded protected forests west Cambodia and also the community forests in the north for sustainably harvesting timber and NTFPs. So far, a community nursery has been set up in the Siem Reap province to cultivate seedlings of precious tree species, mainly rose wood species, which will be interplanted in the local degraded forests with acacia. When the project is terminated, it is expected that the degraded protected forests in the project site could be well restored meanwhile increasing income for the local communities; and it is also expected that the restoring techniques and standard practices could be compiled and disseminated for larger scale of restoration.

GOF4, "Reverse the decline in ODA for SFM and mobilize significantly increased, new and additional financial resources from all sources for the implementation of SFM"

The launch of APFNet is a prime example of channeling financial resources for the implementation of SFM. APFNet has secured a commitment of \$15 million financial contribution from Chinese government over five years for the operation of APFNet to promote sustainable forest management in the Asia-Pacific region. Meanwhile, additional financial contributions have also been received from US and Australia, the co-sponsors of APFNet, as well as other international organizations through those four years since 2008. In 2011, APFNet involved actively in the First APEC Meeting of Ministers Responsible for Forestry, where China's President Hu Jintao made the commitment that China will continue to provide the developing members of APEC with assistance within its capacity through APFNet. This is another commitment that APFNet could use to mobilize new and additional resources for fulfilling its mission, i.e. promoting SFM. The increase of financial resources specially for implementing SFM through APFNet has demonstrated APFNet's effort in the

developing world to reverse the decline in ODA for SFM and also mobilize more financing resources for SFM.

2. Please provide additional information specific to your region/subregion on progress towards the achievement of the GOFs.

C. Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)

1. Please describe studies or initiatives in your region that capture the contribution of forests to the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the MDGs?

Making Forestry Work for the Poor: assessment of the contribution of forestry to poverty alleviation in Asia and the Pacific is the key output of the APFNet project implemented by the FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific. The project funded by APFNet assessed the extent to which poverty has been reduced through forestry activities in the region and strengthened policies and capacities to tackle poverty within the sector.

Under MDG 1, Asia-Pacific governments are committed to halving extreme poverty by 2015 and many have adopted poverty-related measures in national forestry policies and programs. The high incidence of poverty in forested areas and the high dependence of the poor on forest resources suggest a leading role for forestry in poverty eradication. This publication has examined the potential of pro-poor forest management in improving livelihoods and also helping to achieve the MDG 1; besides the examination, the publication also puts forward several suggestions for formulating enabling forest policies for the benefit of the poor living in and near forests. The publication presents key policies and plans relevant to poverty alleviation in eleven target economies and draws attention to the need for concrete measures to support livelihood development at the local level. It also includes case studies on how people and communities have approached and engaged in forestry and forest management in different situations around the region, which would be relevant to economies with similar conditions.

2. What indicators have been, or could be, used to assess the contribution of forests to the MDGs?

Through promoting community forestry, forests have made significant contribution to reduce poverty, thus facilitating the achievement of MDG 1. In particular, secure forest tenure rights, the utilization of non-timber forest products, the number of forest-based community enterprises, the local rural jobs created through those enterprises, the increase of the local average income, the improvement of the rural infrastructure, etc. can be regarded as indicators to assess the contribution of forests to the MDGs.

3. Please provide additional information specific to your regional/subregional on MDG forest- related work.

Section II: Characteristics of regional and sub-regional cooperation and partnerships

1. Please provide examples of how your region or sub-region is engaged in facilitating cooperation in sustainable forest management? These may include North-South, South-South and Triangular Cooperation.

Forestry development in the Asia-Pacific region is quite uneven and requires joint effort from different parties. Among APFNet projects and activities, several has seen participation of universities in the US, Canada, Japan, South Korea as well as universities in China and those in the Philippines, Indonesia, etc.

In 2010, APFNet co-sponsored and organized the First Forestry College Deans' Meeting in the Asia-Pacific Region in Beijing, bringing almost 80 participants from universities not only in US, Canada, Australia, Japan, Korea, but also from economies like Bangladesh, Cambodia, Chile, Lao PDR, Mongolia, Sri Lanka, etc. A key output from the meeting is the establishment of the Meeting Mechanism of Asia-Pacific Forestry College Deans, to exchange the latest development of forestry education and also the possible programs under this mechanism.

The APFNet project titled *Adaptation of Asia-Pacific Forests to Climate Change* was launched in 2011 to develop adaptive strategies that will facilitate an increase in the resilience of forests and forest-dependent communities in the Asia-Pacific region to climate change. The project is executed by the University of British Columbia, partnering with forestry authorities in the BC state and the US, universities and academic institutes in US, Australia and China.

Another APFNet research project titled *Comparative Analyses of Transitions to Sustainable Forest Management and Rehabilitation* was also launched in 2011 to strengthen a better understanding of the interrelations of various factors leading to forest transitions, and the capability in adapting to those transitions. The project is implemented by APAFRI, partnering with universities in China, South Korea, Japan, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines and Viet Nam.

2. What advances has your organization made in such areas of cooperation?

Through cooperation involving different parties, APFNet is able to draw technical support from different parties for designing better-tailored projects.

3. In which areas would your organization like to see stronger international cooperation?

Standard codes of conducts on SFM may be a norm for developed economies, while for many emerging economies and least developed economies, managing techniques may still be lacking. APFNet would like to see more vibrant international cooperation among different stakeholders, so as to promote SFM in the region.

4. Please describe any joint activity relevant to the Forum's work undertaken with member organizations of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF)² and/or involving major stakeholders?

Partnerships are indispensable tools and bridges for APFNet to add value to and leverage resources available for joint program activities. APFNet has conducted joint activities with several member organizations of the CPF, namely, FAO, ITTO and IUCN. For example, in November, 2011, APFNet has co-organized the Second Asia-Pacific Forestry Week with FAO/RAP; and as listed above, FAO/RAP implemented the APFNet project. In 2011, APFNet signed the memorandum of understanding with ITTO and a joint activity is now being planned. With ITTO, IUCN and other organizations, APFNet held the Regional Workshop on Incentives to Catalyze Sustainable Management and Restoration of Mangroves in Asia and the Pacific in October 2012.

5. Please provide additional information specific to your region/subregion on successful cooperation and partnerships, including those with the private sector and other civil society organizations (also known as major groups).

During the Second Asia-Pacific Forestry Week in November 2011, APFNet organized a Students' Green Forum, where APFNet announced the winners of its young students green plan contest. Through the award winning incentives, APFNet helped cultivate the innovative talent of young students and promote creative thinking on solutions to challenges facing forest protection and management. The contest actually gave a great platform for the youth and also drew young students' attention and efforts to green issues.

6. Please list (or, if available, provide link to the relevant webpage) the member countries and organizations with whom you work on sustainable forest management issues.

Please see the list on the last page. It can also be found on the APFNet's website:

www.Apfnet.cn.

²List the names of CPF member organizations

Australia www.daff.gov.au	Fiji Islands
Brunei Darussalam	India
Canada http://www.sfmcanada.org	Lao PDR
China http://www.forestry.gov.cn	Myanmar
Hong Kong, China	Mongolia
Indonesia	Nepal
Malaysia	Sri Lanka
Mexico www.conafor.gob.mx	FAO
New Zealand	RECOFTC
Papua New Guinea	TNC
Peru	ITTO
The Philippines	SPC (Secretariat of Pacific Community)
Singapore	IMFN
Chinese Taipei	IUCN
Thailand	APAFRI
United States	
Viet Nam	
Bangladesh	
Cambodia	