



FAO FORESTRY

Finland supports FAO's tsunami rehabilitation assistance in the forest sector

In May 2005, the Government of Finland donated €3 million for a two-year programme implemented by FAO to assist the tsunami-affected countries of Asia with their forest-related rehabilitation and reconstruction efforts. The programme will focus on the needs of the most affected countries – Indonesia, Sri Lanka and the Maldives – but will also promote cooperation among all affected Asian countries and strengthen their technical capacity through regional activities.

With the immediate relief phase behind them, affected countries are beginning to face the enormous challenges of restoring people's livelihoods and the resources on which they depend – including forest resources. Opportunities to maximize the contribution of forests and trees to local livelihoods and environmental sustainability can best be captured if they are adequately addressed in reconstruction planning from the outset.

The funding provided by Finland will be used to bridge the gaps during the transition from relief to longer-term development. The programme will assist countries with the development of forestry policies and plans for long-term reconstruction, and will provide comprehensive technical support in forest rehabilitation and reforestation, integrated coastal area management and wood supply for reconstruction.

Several affected countries have announced plans to establish forest greenbelts for coastal protection. Finding a balance among land uses and reconciling eventual greenbelts with existing land uses will be critical. FAO is advocating integrated coastal area management and a livelihoods approach. The Organization will assist with detailed land use planning, focused especially at the district and village levels, to ensure integrated and coordinated planning and implementation among the forestry, agricultural and fisheries sectors. FAO is encouraging rehabilitation and sound management of natural and planted forests, reforestation, replacement of trees in home gardens and re-establishment of live fences, in some cases to improve coastal protection and in others to provide a variety of benefits, including forest products for household use and income generation.

Reconstruction of houses and other infrastructure will require huge quantities of timber and wood products, and there is great national and international concern that such wood come from legal sources. This concern is particularly heightened in Indonesia's Aceh Province, where great amounts of wood are needed, wood from local legal sources is limited and cutting of the local forest resources is difficult to control. The Government of Indonesia is aware of the problem and is taking measures to reduce the risk of illegal logging in Aceh, while encouraging the use of nationally produced wood from legal sources. In conjunction with the Government of Indonesia, industry groups and non-governmental organizations, FAO is developing wood procurement guidelines, technical specifications for wood products to be used for

reconstruction and lists of suppliers of wood from legal sources in Indonesia.

The programme funded by Finland will also promote capacity building, regional coordination and information sharing among affected countries. Information on the extent and impact of damage to coastal forests and trees is still limited in many countries. The programme will support forest damage assessments in the affected areas as well as analyses of the contributions of forests and trees to coastal protection and the role of forests in integrated coastal area management. It will also help disseminate technical information on subjects such as mangrove and coastal forest rehabilitation and the scientific basis of using forests for coastal protection.

New IPC working party facilitates technology transfer

A new Working Party on Environmental Applications of Poplar and Willow, established at the twenty-second session of the International Poplar Commission (IPC) in December 2004, held its inaugural meeting from 26 to 29 May 2005, hosted jointly by the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, Uppsala, and the Estonian Agricultural University, Tartu. The meeting, held in cooperation with the IPC working parties on diseases and on production systems, was conceived as an opportunity for practitioners and researchers working in comparable geographical conditions to learn from one another, with a particular focus on the use of poplars and willows in phytoremediation (see articles on pages 47 and 51 in this issue).

Field visits in Sweden and Estonia illustrated how such encounters can spark knowledge transfer between developed countries and countries with economies in transition. The visits to a large-scale Swedish sewage treatment works and to a project in Estonia where domestic wastewater from 2 000 people is used to irrigate about 10 ha of willows demonstrated the contrast in scale and technology between the countries, and served as an occasion for practitioners and researchers to pool their knowledge.

FAO fights Asian longhorn beetle in China

In China, massive outbreaks of the Asian longhorn beetle, *Anoplophora glabripennis*, an endemic borer infesting hardwoods, are a threat to the large reforestation programme in the Three North Region. The pest has been recorded and subject to control efforts in China for at least a century. In the past two decades, however, the large scale of afforestation, with increasing reliance on monoculture and clonal tree plantations, has led to a pest population explosion. The insect pest is reported to be present in more than 20 provinces, municipalities and autonomous regions in China. The tree genera most affected are poplars, willows and elms. In the most severely affected areas, up to 80 to 90 percent



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of trees have been infested. To control the damage, it has been necessary to remove and destroy millions of infested trees.

China's Three North Shelterbelt Programme is in the process of establishing over 9.5 million hectares of forests from 2001 to 2010, and the risks associated with the Asian longhorn beetle have had to be taken into consideration in the choice of species and management practices. An FAO project, in collaboration with the Shelterbelt Centre of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, has been working with the local authorities to examine alternative shelterbelt designs that emphasize species diversity and reduce the dependency on poplar. The project, to be completed in August 2005, has reviewed and promoted species with resistance to Asian longhorn beetle. The integrated management approach involves using mixed planting regimes adapted to individual areas coupled with pest monitoring and restriction of movement of planting material, particularly from infested areas. Biological control, including encouragement of woodpeckers, combined with physical control measures (destroying the insects and their eggs by hand), are helping to maintain low pest thresholds. It is believed that the situation is now under control, but extreme vigilance is still necessary.

The danger is not restricted to China. *Anoplophora glabripennis* is one of the world's major quarantine pests and is subject to strict phytosanitary regulations. Through international trade it was introduced in the United States, where in the 1990s many trees (especially maples and oaks) had to be destroyed to prevent its spread. The losses were particularly great in urban areas, and the pest remains under strict surveillance. It has also been found in Canada and several European countries, but quarantine procedures have thus far prevented its establishment.

The final project workshop in August, which will sum up the activities of the past two years, will thus be of international interest as other countries grapple with this pest. The workshop will present comprehensive reviews, currently being completed

in China, of all activities in the country related to the biology and management of the insect as well as those related to the genetics of pest resistance and the selection of resistant species that are acceptable to local farmers.

Mentoring of managers enhances participation in forest management

A novel capacity-building approach based on mentored *in situ* experiential learning for middle-level managers was found to be exceptionally effective in terms of institutional strengthening and attitudinal and behavioural change. An independent evaluation of the three-year project "Strengthening Participatory Approaches to Forest Management in Ghana, Guyana and Uganda", which ended in May 2005, concluded that the project had a clear positive impact in all three countries.

The project, funded by the United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DFID), was established to support fundamental reforms in the forest sector being undertaken by the three governments. Its objective was to integrate participation in the work of government (and other) agencies for effective natural resource management that would support the livelihood strategies of the rural poor. The primary target was middle-level managers of state forest institutions (e.g. District/Division forestry officers).

During the first year of the project the major emphasis was on supporting the implementation of participatory forest management in the three countries. However, from the middle of 2003 the focus shifted to strengthening the institutional environment for participatory forest management by improving the participatory skills of middle-level managers. *In situ* training for managers using a one-day-per-month mentoring approach became a central tenet of the capacity building, particularly in Ghana and Uganda where the institutional setting was conducive to this.

The evaluation found that the attitudes and behaviours of middle managers were significantly altered by their exposure to and adoption of participatory practices in their day-to-day work. A manager who had been mentored commented that the process "helped to break the barriers and created more openness between the supervisors and supervised and between the forest managers and communities". The evaluation also found that the "light touch" management style of the project was instrumental in contributing to a strong sense of national ownership of the process in all three countries, with positive consequences for institutionalizing the changed attitudes and behaviours.

Senior managers and external stakeholders also perceived significant changes in attitudes and behaviour of middle managers. Two loggers' associations in Guyana, for example, noted "a new Guyana Forestry Commission (GFC)", more supportive, community oriented and collaborative: "We now see the GFC as a collaborator and not as an antagonist, a policeman; staff are now more friendly and don't talk down to the community."



The evaluation's case studies clearly indicated that the project's approach broke down previously existing social and communication barriers and laid the foundations for local communities to benefit directly from prudent use of forest resources that had previously been denied to them.

The evaluation summed up the project's impacts as:

- improved morale and confidence among middle managers;
- greater trust between middle managers and communities (and other external stakeholders);
- acquisition by middle managers of participatory tools and methods to enable them to interact effectively with colleagues and stakeholders to resolve day-to-day management issues that were previously difficult or impossible to address.

Reasons identified for the project's effectiveness included:

- commitment of senior national leadership to fundamental institutional reform;
- the project's support of the national institutional reform agendas;
- the high proportion of middle managers (more than 60 percent in each country) and significant number of external stakeholders that participated in the mentoring and training (ensuring that most people involved with participatory forest management "speak the same language");
- a focus in the mentoring and training on the day-to-day problems faced by the middle managers, ensuring that tools and methods demonstrated could be immediately and effectively applied.

In addition to seeking to extend the lessons learned in the project, FAO is currently refining the interactive CD-ROM developed by the project to provide wider access to useful tools, methods, case studies and tutorials.

Support to national forest assessments

The Global Forest Resources Assessment 2000 (FRA 2000) concluded that most countries lack reliable information on forests and trees of all types. Because of the high cost involved, few countries have national forest inventories. Moreover, forest inventories have generally focused solely on timber, while most of the other social, environmental and economic functions of forests and trees outside forests have been neglected.

Over the past five years, FAO has worked with experts and decision-makers from countries in all regions to develop a cost-effective approach to national assessment and long-term monitoring of forests and trees outside forests, including aspects such as biological diversity, forest health, and resource use, users and management. The approach is based on carrying out field observations, measurements and interviews with stakeholders at a relatively small sample of nationwide sites that are representative for the country as a whole.

From 9 to 11 March 2005, FAO convened an international

meeting to evaluate the approach, the achievements and the utility of the results in policy impact analysis, and to recommend improvements. The participants included a mix of professionals: statisticians, biometricians, social scientists and specialists in forest inventory, remote sensing and biodiversity; forest-sector decision-makers from ten countries, including heads of forestry administrations; specialists in field implementation of national forest assessments from Africa, Central America and Europe; and developers of the approach and methodology. This diversity allowed for in-depth discussion on all aspects of national forest assessments.

The meeting concluded that national forest assessments contribute to the development of national policies and national forest programmes, helping to address cross-cutting issues such as poverty and environmental degradation. Participants agreed that the extension of the forest resource data collection to other land uses and trees outside forests is necessary and useful, and supported the use of technical cooperation among developing countries (TCDC) to promote the sharing of existing methodologies and systems and thus reduce start-up costs. They noted that additional efforts are required to simplify and disseminate the results and findings to make them readily understood by non-technicians and decision-makers.

Among its many recommendations, the technical meeting suggested that countries:

- focus on gathering the data most relevant to their national settings and priorities;
- work to make the data and findings accessible and widely known to policy-makers and the public;
- establish a permanent core staff and allocate a regular budget for assessment and for database maintenance;
- define a strategic plan for remeasuring sample sites and updating the data.

Further, it recommended that FAO:

- integrate national assessment into the work on streamlining and harmonizing international reporting carried out by the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF);
- seek feedback on users and uses of the assessments and new information needs;
- reinforce database management, data processing and analysis as a standard part of any national forest assessment project;
- further develop methodologies in such areas as interviewing and biodiversity data collection;
- encourage inclusion of information on how forests and trees outside forests contribute to food security and rural development.