

**Forestry Outlook Study for West and Central Asia (FOWECA)**  
**1<sup>st</sup> Sub-regional Workshop for Central Asia and the Caucasus**  
**20-26 May 2004, Beirut, Lebanon**

**Record of the FOWECA Beirut Workshop**

The Forestry Outlook Study for West and Central Asia is part of the series of outlook studies implemented by FAO. Following a recommendation by the Near East Forest Commission at its 15<sup>th</sup> session in Khartoum, FAO in collaboration with the member countries has undertaken a forestry outlook study for the West and Central Asia countries (FOWECA). At the invitation of the FAO Director General, most of the countries in the West Asia sub-region have nominated focal points for the outlook study.

The FOWECA planning workshop was held on 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2004 in Beirut, in conjunction with the 16<sup>th</sup> Session of NEFC. Twenty five people including 13 FOWECA focal points participated in the workshop. The main objectives of the workshop were to introduce to the focal points the process and activities of FOWECA study, to discuss the structure and the preparation of the country outlook paper, and to identify the thematic outlook study topics and issues. Three presentations were made focusing on the introduction to the study process, the driving forces having an impact on the forestry sector in the region, and the trends and scenarios of forestry sector to the horizon 2020. The structure of the country outlook paper was discussed and agreed, and topics and issues were identified for thematic outlook studies.

The participants requested FAO to increase technical support for the preparation of the country outlook papers. Focal points would establish an in-country working group and a work plan that will be communicated to FAO as soon as possible.

### **Objectives**

The workshop's main objectives were to introduce the process and activities of the FOWECA study, to discuss the structure and the preparation of the country outlook paper, and to identify the thematic outlook study topics and issues.

Mr. Hassan Abdel Nour, Senior Forestry Officer in the FAO Near East Regional Office, opened the workshop by introducing the objectives and the agenda. Mr. J-L Blanchez, Forestry Officer, FAO Headquarters, Rome, presented the process, outputs and activities of the study. The driving forces having an impact on the forestry sector were presented by Ms. Qiang Ma, Forestry Officer, FAO Headquarters. Trends and prospects in forestry with some guidance on scenarios formulation were presented by Mr. Blanchez.

The presentations elicited valuable comments and suggestions from the participants, who stressed the importance of considering stability and security, human development, inter regional and global impacts as well as the demographic, economic and social, science and technological, environmental and policy and institutional driving forces. A suggested methodology for national scenario planning should be proposed, with sub-regional institutions being invited to collaborate in the implementation of the study. Some countries emphasized their limited access to and availability of information. Countries suggested that a further regional or sub-regional meeting be convened to discuss draft country outlook papers.

In the afternoon session, the participants split into two working groups, guided by a presentation by Ms. Ma to discuss:

- the structure of the suggested outline of the country outlook paper; and
- the topics and the breakdown issues for the thematic studies.

Group I comprised Afghanistan, Cyprus, Lebanon, Iran, Turkey, and Uzbekistan;  
Group II comprised Jordan, Syria, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, United Arab Emirates, and Yemen.

## **Results**

The structure of the country paper outline was generally accepted. Some minor comments were suggested related to the introduction and the conclusion and should be considered in the final version.

The main topics for thematic outlook studies as identified by the groups are listed as follows:

Group I:

- 1. Socio-economic (all countries – first priority):**
  - Rural poverty
  - Urbanization and resulting increasing demand for forest services
  - Employment
  - Socio-economic aspects specific to forestry
  - Globalization and its effects on forestry
  - Population migration and demographic changes
- 2. Ecology and economics (all countries – first priority)**
  - Desertification
  - Deforestation
  - Erosion
  - Rehabilitation
  - Degradation of biological diversity
  - Wildlife
  - Natural disasters
- 3. Legal and institutional (all countries – second priority)**
  - Management and planning system
  - Forest education (first priority)
  - Financing Sustainable Forest Management (SFM)
  - Ownership conflicts and land tenure (Turkey, Afghanistan, Iran)
  - Protected areas management

#### **4. Other topics**

- Fuel wood (except Turkey, Cyprus)
- Harvesting and management
- Non-wood forest products
- Forest fires
- Pest and diseases
- Agroforestry (Iran, Afghanistan, Uzbekistan)

#### Group II

##### **1. Integrated sustainable management of forests and range lands**

- Resource assessments of forest and range and carrying capacity, ecosystem management
- Land tenure and use rights, capacity building, rural extension, (forest and range), degree of dependence of wildlife and livestock on forest and range
- Traditional laws

##### **2. Socio-economic development of forest and range lands inhabitants**

- Wood collection, animal rearing, income generation

##### **3. Human activities which impact on forests and range**

- Agriculture expansion,
- Urbanization, mines and quarries,
- Overgrazing, wood collection

##### **4. Natural and other disasters**

- Droughts, fires, diseases and pest, conflicts

##### **5. Biological diversity of forest and range lands**

- Loss of habitat
- Loss of species
- Opportunity of eco-tourism
- Forest and range protectorates

During the wrap-up session, the participants agreed upon the overall programme of the study as presented during the working sessions. A contract or an agreement would be prepared to provide the focal point with the necessary financial FAO support. In the meantime, the focal point will establish an in-country working group and a work plan that would be communicated to FAO as soon as possible.

Some specific recommendations were made on the following:

- The country outlook paper can be prepared in either Arabic or English.
- The request for more technical support from FAO to prepare the country outlook paper has been raised by some countries. Visits of countries by FAO staff can be organised at the specific demand of the country focal point.

Most of the countries agreed to deliver a draft country report by December 2004. However considering specific constraints and conditions in some countries, a longer period of preparation would be needed. In that case, the focal point should propose a work plan to FAO.

### **Acknowledgements**

The ROs sincerely thank the host country, the Minister of Agriculture of Lebanon, Dr. Ghattas Akl, Focal Point of Lebanon, the FAOR in Lebanon, Dr. Hassan Abdel-Nour, Senior Forestry Officer in the regional office for the Near East, and the workshop organizers and secretariat for their support and hospitality.

Annex 1: Workshop Programme

Annex 2: List of participants

## Annex I

### Planning Workshop Programme (tentative)

23 May 2004, Beirut, Lebanon

#### Background

At the specific request of the member countries during the 15<sup>th</sup> Session of Near East Forestry Commission in 2002, FAO is coordinating the Forestry Outlook Study for West and Central Asia (FOWECA). The Director-General of FAO has already written to the ministers of member countries outlining the background to the study and seeking their government's active support in undertaking the study. FOWECA will focus on providing a better understanding of emerging issues in the forest sector to the year 2020, specifically taking into account the inter-sectoral issues that impact forests and environment. By providing a regional and global perspective, FOWECA will help countries to better understand the implications of globalization in the forest sector, help to identify emerging opportunities and challenges and facilitate appropriate investment decisions. Several briefings regarding the objectives and activities have been made to member countries on the occasion of other FAO meetings or workshops. This workshop will be the first workshop of FOWECA focusing on the implementation of the study.

#### Objectives

The FOWECA workshop will be organized in conjunction with the 16<sup>th</sup> Session of NEFC. The National Focal Points of FOWECA from 15 countries are invited to participate in the workshop. The main objectives are to discuss the project workplan and the preparation of the country outlook paper; to identify topics and issues for the thematic studies; to take an overview of the trends and status of the forestry sector; and to identify the driving forces affecting forestry in the region.

#### Programme

09:00 – 09:30	Opening of the workshop – introduction of the workshop objectives <i>Mr. Hassan AbdelNour, RNE, FAO</i>
09:30 – 10:00	The FOWECA process: activities and outputs <i>Mr. JeanLouis Blanchez, FOPE, FAO</i>
10:00 – 10:30	Discussion: outlook approach – opportunities and constraints.
10:30 – 11:00	Tea/Coffee Break

11:00 – 11:30	Driving forces affecting forestry sector in West and Central Asia: <i>Ms. Qiang Ma, FOPE, FAO</i>
11:30 – 12:00	Questions and discussions
12:00 – 12:30	Contribution of the forestry sector to socio-economic development: present trends and the concept of future scenarios <i>Mr. JeanLouis Blanchez, FOPE, FAO</i>
12:30 – 13:00	Questions and discussions
13:00 – 14:30	Break
14:30 – 15:30	Group discussion: identifying and prioritizing topics or issues for the thematic studies
15:30 – 16:00	Wrap up group discussion
16:00 – 16:30	Discussion on preparation of country outlook paper <i>Ms. Qiang Ma, FOPE, FAO</i>
16:30 – 17:00	Closing of the workshop – conclusions <i>Mr. Hassan AbdelNour, RNE, FAO</i>

## Annex II

### FAO WORKSHOP ON FORESTRY OUTLOOK STUDY FOR WESTERN AND CENTRAL ASIA (FOWECA)

Beirut, Lebanon, 23 May 2004

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