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Purpose: Information

Fifth Meeting of the APFNet Council

20-21 March 2019 | Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia

APFNet Project Implementation 2018

Most projects are on track and effectively implemented according to their individual goals, objectives and expected outputs. Nevertheless, some concerns were noted.

1. 5 new projects launched

With the full support from project stakeholders, 5 project agreements were signed and these projects have entered implementation phase, covering fields of forest restoration, mangrove restoration, forest resource monitoring and online course development. Communications with the executing partners have indicated that these projects have well commenced with sufficient managerial, financial and technical preparations.

The 5 projects are:

- *Regional forest observation for sustainable forest management [ID: 2018P2-CAF]*
- *Integrated planning and practices for mangrove management associated with agriculture and aquaculture in Myanmar [ID: 2018P1-MYR]*
- *Innovative sustainable forest management education in the Asia-Pacific region [ID: 2018P3-UBC]*
- *Wangyedian multi-functional forest experimental base project [ID: 2018P4-INM]*
- *Reconstruction and sustainable management of a degraded forest based on the combination of inter-planting nitrogen fixation rare tree species and thinning [ID: 2018P4-CAF]*

Click web links to know more about projects.

2. 3 projects completed with expected outcomes achieved

- *Community-based sustainable forest management of the Sungai Medihit Watershed Sarawak, Malaysia [ID: 2013P- MAS]* was completed in October. The project targeted two indigenous communities in the Sungai Medihit Watershed to promote sustainable forest management and to establish an effective community-based forest co-management mechanism. The communities have been able to co-manage forest resources and their livelihoods have been greatly improved through alternative agricultural, husbandry, aquaculture practices and handicraft-making.

- Rehabilitation and Management of degraded forests in Beijing's Miyun Reservoir watershed [ID: 2013P5-MYN] was completed in October. The project explored integrated approaches to conserve forests around the Miyun Reservoir and to improve water quality. Project activities include close-to-nature management of 280 ha forests of Chinese Pine (*Pinus tabuliformis*) and Oriental Thuja (*Platycladus orientalis*), sustainable orchard management, enrichment planting, forest eco-tourism, forest therapy and education. A policy brief was submitted to the Beijing Association for Science and Technology to recommend policy reformulation in support of longer-term forest management plans, forest-ecotourism development and other sustainable land uses in the reservoir area.
- Supporting Community-based Sustainable Forest Management and Economic Empowerment of Women in Central Region of Nepal [ID: 2013P4-NPL] was completed in December. Community-based forest management and livelihood improvement, being two major project components, have been well combined and demonstrated. Women have been socially and economically empowered by operating women-led small forestry enterprises on aromatic herbs, wooden handicrafts and eco-tourism, being considered as a model in the area.

3. 15 on-going projects¹ running well with annual project targets accomplished.

Major progress achieved is categorized by following thematic fields

- Forest Restoration: APFNet continues to align its work to contribute to existing international, regional and national processes to advance forest restoration, so that forests can regain their health and are able to provide ecosystem services while also benefitting local livelihoods. A multitude of approaches of forest landscape restoration, agroforestry, assisted natural regeneration and enrichment planting have been applied in 12 demonstration projects in Cambodia, China, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal and Papua New Guinea. Livelihood alternatives like agroforestry, small and medium sized enterprises, the utilization of NTFPs, forest eco-tourism as model cases, have been locally demonstrated.
- Watershed Planning and Management: Integrated watershed management was supported with 4 projects. A participatory watershed management plan was developed for the Solo Upper Watershed, Indonesia and the Prek Thnot Watershed, Cambodia. Participatory micro-planning and mangrove restoration were practiced in the Irrawaddy river delta, Myanmar. The other two watersheds mentioned are Miyun Reservoir and the Sungai Medihit watershed in 3(a).
- Sustainable Forest Planning & Management: Sustainable forest management plans have been developed at different management levels and time spans, ranging from community-level forest management plans to national forest management plans to plans considering time horizons between 15 and 200 years. A variety of forest management approaches, such as close-to-nature forest management, multi-functional forestry and integrated fire management have been demonstrated in different projects.

¹ 15 on-going projects, excluding the newly started and completed projects in 2018, see attached list

- **Forests and Climate Change:** APFNet continues to partner with UBC and 12 other universities/institutions to improve climate models, ecological models and niche models produced in the Phase I project. Climate niches of ten tree species in Malaysia, Chinese Taipei, Myanmar and China were predicted under different climate change scenarios. Furthermore, a policy brief is in preparation on how these major species will adapt to climate change. Research on improved accuracy of measuring the carbon bound in forests have started to generate results, such as the carbon mapping in the GMS, improvement of carbon equations in Thailand, and carbon accounting of forests in Anhui and Zhejiang Provinces, China.
- **Forests and Community:** The philosophy that community development and livelihood improvement should be considered together in forest management has been embodied in all related projects. Communities have been enabled to participate in decision-making process, forest management and the development of sustainable livelihood options.
- **Policy research and capacity building:** APFNet values the development and reformation of policies, institutional arrangements and governance approaches that favor SFM and forest rehabilitation. In 2018, a series of publications was produced to provide a general overview of the forestry in Greater Central Asia. New sandalwood regulations in Fiji and Tonga, developed with APFNet funding, have come effective in protection of smallholder sandalwood growers. Additionally, to facilitate wider knowledge transfer, the outlines of eight online courses have been finalized. A network of world-renowned universities have been established and these courses will be ready by the end of 2019.

4. 3 projects delayed for agreement signing

- *Enrichment of Pine Plantations in Sri Lanka with Native Species* [ID: 2018P6-SRI]
- *Enhancing Ecosystem Services from Rehabilitated forests, Using the Policy Learning Protocol and the Path Way of Influence Framework.*
- *Integrated Forest Ecosystem Management Planning and Demonstration Project in the Greater Mekong Sub-region (Myanmar site)* [ID: 2018P5-MYR]

5. Project communication, publicity and dissemination strengthened

In the light of the *APFNet Communication Guidelines*, the *Project Communication Strategy* (hereinafter referred to as Strategy) was developed to guide executing agencies, implementing agencies and other partners. Communication has been taken into account when planning and implementing annual work under each project.

Three project brochures (see links) were produced, *i.e. APFNet-funded projects which introduces APFNet projects funded in the past decade, Inside Wangyedian Forest Farm- Exploring Sustainable Forestry with APFNet and Supporting Sustainable Forest Management and Forest Rehabilitation in Cambodia*. Networking and face-to-face communications among project partners have been enabled by such events as the Workshop on Forest Fire Management and Monitoring (Siem Reap, Cambodia), to enhance mutual learning and training. APFNet

project officers and project representatives attended a series of regional and international workshops and conferences to share project stories.

6. Secretariat's observations

- Internal approval procedures, inefficient communications among project stakeholders, and project changes in subsistence have caused delay in some project start-up and extensions of implementation or closure;

- To ensure a project's sustainability, post-project support should be secured to observe long-term changes/impacts, and to facilitate communication of important project deliverables that are produced when or even after a project is closed.

- More efforts would be needed to raise awareness and enhance capacity of project partners as communicators to ensure effective information exchange and wide dissemination of good practices and lessons learned.

List of on-going APFNet projects

1. Demonstration on Integrated Planning and Management of Forest Ecosystem in Greater Mekong Sub-region – Lao PDR project site [ID: 2017P7-GMS-LAO]
2. Development Participatory Management of Micro Catchment at the Bengawan Solo Upper Watershed [ID: 2017P6-INA]
3. Community tree planting project in Papua New Guinea [ID: 2017P3-PNG]
4. Integrated Forest Ecosystem Management Planning and Demonstration Project in Greater Mekong Sub-region (Cambodia) [ID: 2017P2-CAM]
5. Construction of a mini botanic park of 8.4 ha within the National Garden Park of Mongolia Mini botanic garden project [ID: 2016P4-MN]
6. Demonstration of vegetation restoration and management and utilization of forest resources in the Greater Central Asia (Chifeng site) [ID: 2016P3-INM]
7. Demonstration on Sustainable Forest Management and Restoration in Hilly and Low Mountain Area of Southern China [ID: 2016P2-CAF]
8. Integrated Forest Ecosystem Management Planning and Demonstration Project in Greater Mekong Sub-region (Pu'er Project Site) [ID: 2016P1-GMS-PE]
9. Construction of Multifunction Forest Management Demonstration Sites - Phase II [ID: 2015P8-INM(II)]
10. Adaptation of Asia-Pacific Forestry to Climate Change – Phase II [ID: 2015P7-UBC(II)]
11. To Demonstrate the Development and Application of Standing-Tree Carbon Equations to Improve the Accuracy of Forest-Cover Carbon Stock Estimates in Thailand [ID: 2015P6-THA]
12. Capacity building towards effective implementation of SFM practices in Fiji, Tonga and Niue [ID: 2015P3-SPC]
13. Landscape approach to Sustainable management of forests in Prek Thnot Watersheds [ID: 2015P1-KHM]
14. Sustainable Forest Management in Northern Provinces of Lao PDR [ID: 2014P1-ASEM]
15. Strengthening Urban Forestry Demonstration Site of Bang Kachao (Thailand) for Biodiversity Conservation and Natural Learning Center [ID: 2012P1/2-THA]



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Implementation of APFNet's Work Plan 2018

The APFNet Secretariat prepared this document to summarize the implementation of the Annual Work Plan (AWP) 2018 which was reviewed by the Council (Decision C. 04/03) and approved, by the Board of Directors (Decision B. 04/05).

Activities were fine-tuned to take into account comments and decisions from the Council and Board, such as initiation of the 10 year review (activity 29, Decision B. 04/08).

Worthy of mention are great efforts and progress made as following, to “achieve quality, efficiency, and positive effects/impacts in all aspects of its operations”:

APFNet Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E)

As part of operational work and a target set in the current Strategic Plan, monitoring and evaluation has been further enhanced throughout APFNet operations. Continued efforts have been made to assess effectiveness and efficiency of activities, review current policies and procedures, regularize M&E practices and enable effective result/feedback sharing for improvements and future actions.

Governance and institutional work

To facilitate Board and Council to better fulfill their respective responsibilities, secretariat's reporting and communications has been enhanced both at annual meeting and during intersessional period. Board and Council have been encouraged to share ideas on APFNet's development. Decision was made strategically by the Board on a comprehensive review of the organization to inform the future strategic planning. Board has set up a committee to regularly review the performance of Executive Director, being a good start to explore ways to increase contributions of expertise and skills for efficient macro-level oversight and decision-making.

Policy review to enhance inter controls

Administrative and financial policies, rules and procedures have been systematically reviewed and updated, to ensure clearer guidance and regulations to practices for efficient and transparent operations. Improvements in 2018 have been made on

procurement, business travels, and budgeting and expenses, following the updated policies and standardized templates and forms. The effect of updates have been regularly reviewed for timely adjustments. Interpretation and communication of these policies and regulations are widely promoted.

Enhancing Secretariat's capacity building

Several approaches have been used to ensure professional and efficient secretariat support and services to APFNet members and stakeholders, including (1) continuous efforts on capacity building for the secretariat staff through trainings, secondments, and opportunities to attend international conferences, under a long term capacity building plan, (2) refining institutional structure and responsibility delegation within the secretariat; (3) increasing international employment and internships; and (4) stronger support from experienced professionals and consultants.

Partnerships enhanced

Current partnerships not only support APFNet for programs and services, but also contributes in terms of resource and secretariat capacity building. Cooperation with partners was reviewed, aiming to improve communication to enhance mutual-understanding and to ensure effective cooperation on common goals. Highlights in this aspects include:

- Secretariat worked with 4 host universities in China to raise quality and impacts of APFNet scholarship programs
- APFNet's presence has been enhanced in Americas through partnership with University of British Colombia
- APFNet has continued cooperation with FAO on research (outlook study) and collaborative events like APFW to jointly promote forest restoration in the region
- Staff exchange and project cooperation were explored with RECOFTC, CIFOR and ACIAR

Highlights of activities by pillar/ implementation tool

Capacity building

To facilitate to strength technical and managerial competencies of regional forestry professionals and practitioners:

- 4 training workshops organized on forest and livelihood, restoration, biodiversity, and dryland ecosystem management, with 43 participants in total
- 22 candidates awarded with APFNet scholarship and enrolled by 3 host universities
- Trainers in Forestry (TIF):4th meeting held with its strategy determined; a study tour on community forestry organized in Hanoi, Vietnam to enhance regional dialogues
- Asia Pacific Forestry Education Coordination Mechanism (AP-FECM):5th meeting held, with the theme of *Focusing on Globalization of Higher Forestry Education in a Digital Era*, and second phase of the Sustainable Forest Management online education project inaugurated

Projects

To demonstrate and promote models and practices of forest management and rehabilitation:

- Call for project 2018: 5 project concept notes appraised by Project Appraisal Panel (PAP), and 1 technically recommended to be further developed into a full proposal
- 1 project proposal finalized
- 8 new projects launched, 4 completed, 3 million US dollars granted
- Communication on project outcomes and impacts enhanced through publications
- 3 projects evaluated on mid-term, 2 projects evaluated on completion, and 1 post project review conducted

Regional policy dialogues

To further strengthen sub-regional linkages, explore policy options, and promote regional cooperation:

- APFNet Transboundary Wildlife Conservation Initiative (@Wild) and Sino-ASEAN Network of Forestry Research Institutes (SANFRI) launched, with strategies and operation frameworks developed, and follow up activities carried out
- Second Meeting of Ministers Responsible for Forestry in Greater Central Asia (MMRF GCA) convened

Communication and information sharing

Website, publications, workshops, as well as outreach events in international events remain the main communication channels.

Major publications and researches include:

- *Growing Higher Forestry Education in a Changing World – Analysis of Higher Forestry Education in the Asia-Pacific Region*
- *Forestry Development and Best Practices of Forest Management in Greater Central Asia in series*
- *An Overview of In-Service Training Arrangements of Public Forestry Agencies in the Asia-Pacific Region;*
- *Regional Strategy and Action Plan for Forest and Landscape Restoration in Asia-Pacific*
- *Research on Fragmentation of Forest Governance in Asia and Pacific Region*

Implementation of APFNet's Work Plan 2018

No.	Activity/Task	Status	Results/outcomes
I. Capacity building			
1	Enhance capacity of regional forestry officials <i>(regular activity)</i>	Completed	2 trainings were organized in July and November respectively on “Forest rehabilitation and management” and “Forestry and livelihood development”.
		Completed	2 workshops were held respectively in July and September for GCA forestry officials, to share progress and assess the efforts to combat desertification and manage dry land ecosystem.
2	Assess to improve APFNet trainings	In progress	To be incorporated in the plan for 10 year review and conducted in 2019
3	Facilitate exchange and cooperation among forestry trainers and policy makers through support to the Trainers in Forestry Network (TIF)	Completed	Findings of a recent study entitled <i>An Overview of In-service Training Arrangements of Public Forestry Agencies in the Asia-Pacific region</i> have been widely shared in the region. The study, conducted by TIF network in 2017, also facilitated to map out a clearer strategy for TIF's future development, as well as identifying significant actions for policy makers to strengthen their in-service training in different contexts.
4			A study tour on community forestry (CF) was organized for forestry trainers in Hanoi, Vietnam. Demonstration of good CF models and effective practices, as well as exchanges on in-service training policies and training programs gained appreciation from participants.
5	Enhance quality and impacts of APFNet Scholarship Program (ASP)	Completed	A review was completed for all four ASP host universities to look at program performance and to suggest improvements. Host universities have taken follow-up actions: (1) communication with awarded students has

			<p>been enhanced to guide academic engagement and campus life;</p> <p>(2) Selection criteria and procedures have been improved and will be executed from 2019 to select supervisors;</p> <p>(3) More efforts have been made to promote program in the region.</p>
6	Provide young forestry officials with scholarships for professional development so they can better contribute to the sector (Regular work)	Completed	22 forestry officials and practitioners from APFNet member economies were awarded as 2018 in-take by APFNet Scholarship Program and enrolled in BJFU, NJFU and NWAUFU.
7	Support effective operations of Asia-Pacific Forestry Education Coordination Mechanism (AP-FECM)	Completed	<i>Globalization of Higher Forest Education Report</i> was published and disseminated in international forestry meetings.
			The 5th AP-FECM meeting was held. The meeting coordinated wide discussion on the theme of Globalization of Higher Forestry Education in a Digital Era and shared activities and achievements among over 30 member universities.
			Forestry Online Course Development Workshop was organized. The workshop enhanced the quality and impact of SFM online courses. It helped participants from 7 member universities to develop the curriculum map for all the courses and draw on best practices of teaching and learning approaches.
II. Projects			
Project implementation is reported in a separate document.			
III. Supporting regional policy dialogues			
No.	Activity	Status	Results/outcomes
8	Support Forestry Planning Network (FPN) to strengthen strategic capabilities, improve planning processes and increase effectiveness of strategic forestry plans	Completed	(1) Asia-Pacific Forestry Planning Workshop was held in Beijing, China, in March and attended by 12 APFNet member economies. The workshop reviewed the progress of activities in 2017 and work plan for 2018, and presented SMART indicators with the aim to

			<p>improve monitoring and measurement aspects of forestry strategic planning.</p> <p>(2) A report entitled <i>Baseline Review and Gap Assessment on Forestry Strategic Planning in Asia-Pacific Economies</i> was published.</p>
9	<p>Support high-level forestry dialogues and exchanges in GCA to share experiences and develop common strategic priorities (Regular activity)</p>	Completed	<p>The Second Meeting of Ministers Responsible for Forestry in Greater Central Asia (MMRF-GCA) was held in August, Issyk-Kul, Kyrgyzstan. The following consensus were reached</p> <p>(1) to mobilize resources and enhance cooperation on biodiversity and forest ecosystem conservation, combating desertification and land degradation;</p> <p>(2) to carry out capacity building, policy dialogue and joint inventory programs.</p> <p>(3) National Forestry and Grassland Administration of China will host the 3rd meeting.</p>
10	<p>Support APFNet Transboundary Wildlife Conservation Initiative(@Wild) to increase cooperation for wildlife conservation among GMS economies</p>	Completed	<p>(1) @Wild was launched in March.</p> <p>(2) A wildlife conservation training workshop was held in cooperation with National Grassland and Forestry Administration of China in June to promote information exchange among @Wild members.</p>
11	<p>Advance forestry research by strengthening cooperation and facilitating collaborative actions among forestry research institutions through Sino-ASEAN Network of Forestry Research Institutes (SANFRI)</p>	Completed	<p>(1) SANFRI was officially launched in March with its framework document adopted and Steering Committee (decision-making body) established.</p> <p>(2) Visiting Scholar Program under SANFRI was initiated in November. Hosted by Yunnan Academy of Forestry (YAF), this Program will support 10 young researchers recommended by the member institutes to conduct research and academic visit in YAF.</p>

IV. Communication and information sharing			
No.	Activity/task	Status	Results/outcomes
12	Database of regional forest laws and policies (Continued activity)	In progress	Data collection and translation have been completed for 18 APFNet member economies.
13	Research on Fragmentation of Forest Governance in Asia and Pacific region (Continued activity)	Completed	The study looks into forest governance fragmentation in China, Indonesia, Malaysia, Nepal and Viet Nam. The results reveal that forest governance fragmentation has positive impacts on synergy between national forestry programmes and complementary norms and associated institutions, but negative impacts on cross-sectoral and cross-scale communication and integration. The impacts vary significantly across economies. Thus, the study provides economy-specific recommendations on improving forest governance.
V. Partnerships, networking and outreach events			
No.	Activity/task	Status	Results/outcomes
14	Collaboration with FAO	In progress	(1)APFNet supported FAO's <i>Asia Pacific Forestry Sector Outlook Study 2030</i> by providing technical inputs and engaging in report preparation. (2)APFNet continued staff secondment to FAO RAP. (3)APFNet has been engaged in APFW 2019 planning and preparation as co-stream leader.
15	Enhance cooperation with MoU partners	Completed	(1) APFNet attended 54 th Session of ITTO Council. (2) APFNet Supported the Second World Forum on Ecosystem Governance, co-organized by NFGA and IUCN.
16	Enhance networking and outreach through partner/international events to promote APFNet	Completed	APFNet attended and participated in (1)International Conference on Planted Forests of IUFRO in Beijing, China, October (2) Global Landscape Forum in Bonn, Germany

			in December. (3)APFNet co-organized the First China-ASEAN Symposium on Forest Eco-tourism with NFGA in December, Guangzhou, China
	Organize outreach events in China	Completed	(1) Conference of Forest Restoration was held to celebrate APFNet's 10 th anniversary (2) APFNet held the 2019 New Year Reception.
VI. Projects and Activities supported from the APFNet Fund			
No.	Activity/Task	Status	Results/outcomes
17	Support Community-based Enterprises in GMS (on-going project)	In progress	The original plan of providing a drying house to the Thai furniture cooperate was changed to band saws, which will be in place for operation in 2019.
18	Forest plantation program supported by Foundation of People's Insurance Company(group) of China (PICC)	Completed	The project was successfully completed. PICC accepted the project deliverables through a field visit in October to assess project performance, outcomes and impacts, acknowledging the benefits stemmed from the project for forests and ecosystem.
19	"Greening the Desert" Ecological forest plantation in Ningxia, China	Completed	The project is completed, with great efforts and achievements on forest plantation to shelter the sand and to enhance its ecological functions. Under-forest practices were piloted to improve local livelihood, which might be promoted in the region.
20	Public awareness of the importance of forests (project phase 2 of Activity 7.3 in 2017)	Completed	The project continued to improve public awareness of forest protection, focusing on high school students. Green Forestry and Ecological Environment Protection Association (GFEEP) invited around 90 students from Liaoning, China to lectures and performances to learn more about importance of forests.
VII. Governance, institutional work			
No.	Activity/Task	Status	Results/outcomes

21	Enhance involvement of Board and Council in APFNet's work and monitor efforts to improve governance, decision-making and the advisory process	Completed	<p>(1) Fourth meetings of Council and Board of Directors convened in March, to review the achievements of last year and to discuss the work and priorities of the year. Decisions were made on annual work plan and budget of the organization, and on work to enhance APFNet's monitoring and evaluation.</p> <p>(2) 3 quarterly updates were circulated to Board and Council; specific communication and reporting were enhanced on APFNet's 10 year review and assessment of Executive Director's performance.</p> <p>(3) Ways to enhance responsibilities fulfillment and involvement of Board and Council were further explored and piloted, including establishing sub groups to ensure inputs and substantial contribution from the Board and Council.</p>
22	Facilitate APFNet's operations in China	In progress	Secretariat has been in communication with relevant Chinese ministries and government agencies, with an aim to sign a MoU with host economy to facilitate operation of the organization.
23	APFNet strategies	In progress	Please see activity 28 and 29
24	APFNet's presence in the Americas(through UBC)	In progress	<p>(1) Visits were paid to Peru, Chile and Ecuador, to meet with government officials, academic leaders, and SFM practitioners, to enhance connection of APFNet with regional economies and to share forest-related information.</p> <p>(2) APFNet received application from Ecuador to join the organization.</p>
VIII. Secretariat Operations: Administration, HR, Finance			
No.	Activity/Task	Status	Results/outcomes
25	Policy review and amendment	Completed	<p>(1) Policies, rules, by-laws and procedures reviewed, updated and implemented</p> <p>(2) Trainings organized in the Secretariat to facilitate implementation, with amendments well communicated with APFNet stakeholders.</p>

			(3)APFNet financial operations regularly monitored and efficiency enhanced
26	Development and management of human resources	In progress	Capacity of Secretariat staff enhanced through (1)staff secondment to FAO RAP (2) 2 staff members sent to Master's degree programs (3) regular weekly training, lectures, field visits organized (4)Staff sent to forest-related events and meetings to learn and practice (5)staff secondment/ exchange to other organizations explored
IX. Monitoring and evaluation			
No.	Activity/Task	Status	Results/outcomes
27	Project evaluation	Completed	(1)Midterm evaluation on 3 projects conducted to assess the project performance and progress. Results were shared with project partners in a timely manner to guide remaining project implementation (2)Terminal evaluation on 2 projects conducted to assess achievements and impacts
28	Ten-year review of APFNet	In progress	(1) ToR and review matrix completed and approved by Board; (2) review team selected with draft evaluation plan completed
29	Mid-term review of APFNet Strategic Plan (2016-2020)	Completed	To be reported separately
30	Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system	In progress	Issues and challenges identified on project evaluation indicators and procedures, and Guideline for Project M&E under review for amendments