

APAFRI BRIEF

NEWSLETTER OF THE ASIA PACIFIC ASSOCIATION OF FORESTRY RESEARCH INSTITUTIONS

No. 2: January 1997

FROM THE CHAIRMAN'S DESK

Greetings and best wishes to all our colleagues and friends for a wonderful 1997! Let us hope that the new year will be another important milestone in the Association's development, enabling it to provide better support to its members in strengthening the scientific basis of forestry.

Looking back at the accomplishments in 1996, one gets the feeling that we have a long way to go to fulfill the vision of collective self-reliance. Our efforts during the previous year were mainly directed at promoting and publicising APAFRI and enhancing its visibility, which are essential in the initial years of establishment of any organization. Till now 27 forestry research organizations have joined the Association. Considering the fact that there are more than 150 forestry research organizations in the Region, we have to strive hard to involve them in APAFRI. A number of leading national forestry research organizations are yet to join APAFRI. We would also encourage the participation of NGO and other private sector research organizations in the Association, for ultimately it is partnership and collaboration that will enhance the overall scientific capability.

Membership in the Association is only one initial important step to networking and it will materialise only if there is strong and sustained commitment from the members. We have to initiate a number of activities that will contribute to the objectives for which the Association was established. At present APAFRI's functioning is primarily dependent on the Forestry Research Support Programme for Asia and the Pacific (FORSPA), an FAO-implemented project funded by the Netherlands Government. Supporting APAFRI is an important objective of FORSPA, but we have to consider how APAFRI can be made self-reliant well before the conclusion of FORSPA in three years from now.

This will be an important issue for discussion during the meeting of the Heads of Forestry Research/APAFRI General Assembly scheduled at Ho Chi Minh City during 24 to 29 March 1997. Let us all meet in Vietnam and work out a pragmatic approach to strengthen APAFRI and through APAFRI regional collaboration in forestry research.

Members of APAFRI

As of 15 January 1997, APAFRI members include:

ASEAN Forest Tree Seed Centre, Thailand
Australian Centre for International Agricultural
Research, Australia
Bangladesh Forest Research Institute, Bangladesh
CAB International
Center for International Forestry Research, Indonesia
College of Forestry, University of the Philippines
at Los Baños
CSIRO, Division of Forestry and Forest products,
Australia
Department of Forestry, Fiji
Ecosystems Research and Development Bureau (ERDB),
Philippines
Faculty of Forestry, Universiti Pertanian Malaysia
Forest Department, Sri Lanka
Forestry Department, National Taiwan University
Forestry and Forest Products Research Institute, Japan
Forest Products Research & Development Institute,
Philippines
Forest Research Institute, Malaysia
Forest Research Institute, Papua New Guinea
Forestry Research Center, Solomon Islands
Forestry Research Institute, South Korea
Forest Science Institute of Vietnam
Indian Council of Forestry Research & Education
Indian Plywood Industries Research & Training Institute
Institute of Forestry and Environmental Sciences,
University of Chittagong, Bangladesh
ITC Bhadrachalam Paperboard Ltd., India
Kerala Forest Research Institute, India
Pakistan Forest Institute
Philippines Council for Agriculture, Forestry and
Natural Resource Research and Development
(PCCARD)
Taiwan Forestry Research Institute

APAFRI EC MEETING

The Second meeting of the Association's Executive Committee was held on 22 and 23 November 1996 at the Regional Community Forestry Training Centre, Kasetsart University, Thailand. Fourteen members and invitees attended the meeting. The meeting approved the programme of work for 1997 and took several important decisions concerning its functioning. Details of some of the planned activities are given in the following sections.

ACTIVITIES PLANNED FOR 1997

In pursuance of the objective of promoting research collaboration, APAFRI has planned a number of activities during 1997. Although the resources raised through membership are very limited, the Association aims to implement a number of activities to serve the needs of its members. Some of the important activities planned for 1997 are:

- Establishing a fund to support participation in meetings and conferences, specifically to facilitate the participation of young researchers in 21st IUFRO Congress scheduled in Kuala Lumpur in 2000;
- Organizing the Heads of Forestry Research/APAFRI General Assembly meeting in Ho Chi Minh City in March 1997;
- Co-sponsoring the Workshop on Tropical Acacias scheduled in Vietnam in October/November 1997;
- Instituting an award for excellence in research (see below);
- Undertaking case studies on success of research; and
- Publication of four issues of APAFRI brief/newsletter.

Through the above and several other related activities, APAFRI will provide an unprecedented opportunity for interaction and benefits to members will far out weigh the membership fee.

COMMEMORATING DR. Y.S. RAO

It is almost 4 years since Dr. Y.S. Rao, one of the outstanding foresters in the region, died in Bombay. Considering his invaluable efforts to promote forestry research (the very idea of establishing an Association was mooted by him and he was instrumental in preparing the first draft of the APAFRI constitution), APAFRI deems it fit to commemorate his contribution by instituting an award in his name. This annual award will be given to the most outstanding paper/report on problem solving research with significant practical applica-

tion value. The broad criteria/conditions are as follows:

- Eligibility for the award will be limited to researchers below the age of 35 from APAFRI member institutions;
- Nominations for the award will be made by member institutions;
- APAFRI will establish a selection committee to decide the most outstanding research paper/report from among the nominations received; and
- The award will consist of a specially designed plaque and citation and the cost of attending the award ceremony.

Detailed guidelines covering the procedures for nomination and selection are being prepared.

HEADS OF FORESTRY RESEARCH/ APAFRI GENERAL ASSEMBLY MEETING IN VIETNAM

Since the meeting of the Heads of Forestry Research Organizations in the Asia Pacific held at Bogor in February 1995, there have been a number of developments in forestry and forestry research. Readers may recall that APAFRI was launched in the Bogor meeting. The Association has steadily grown during the last two years and has reached the take off stage. In the context of the changes in the forestry sector, including research at the national, regional and global levels, it is imperative that the developments in the past are reviewed and a clear vision and strategy are identified. To facilitate this and to provide an opportunity for sharing of experience, APAFRI joins FORSPA and other organizations like CIFOR and ACIAR to hold a meeting of the Heads of Forestry Research/APAFRI General Assembly during 24 to 29 March 1997 at Ho Chi Minh City. The Forest Science Institute of Vietnam, a member of APAFRI, will be hosting the meeting.

Discussions during the Heads of Forestry Research meeting will focus on issues relating to research collaboration and capacity building of national research systems and will set the stage for the APAFRI General Assembly meeting. The APAFRI General Assembly will specifically discuss the APAFRI strategic plan, linkage with IUFRO and amendments to the APAFRI constitution relating to the tenure and composition of the Executive Committee. Being the first meeting of the General Assembly since the launching the Association, this meeting is critical in defining the direction of APAFRI's development.

SUCCESS STORIES IN FORESTRY RESEARCH

Success of applied research requires a combination of factors. Most importantly, the research should be directed at a well - defined problem, perceived as important by its potential clients. Apart from addressing the problem in its totality, the results should be disseminated in a manner that makes them easily understandable to the clients. Further, the clients should see clear benefits from research results and should be able to overcome economic, social and policy constraints in their application.

With the long history of forestry, there are several cases of successes in research. A systematic assessment of the experience will provide valuable information on how the rate of success could be enhanced by addressing all the relevant issues. With this objective, APAFRI in collaboration and with support of FORSPA is initiating case studies of success stories in forestry research. Suggestions and ideas for undertaking the case studies are most welcome.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY IN FORESTRY RESEARCH

Technological changes are critical for economic development and growth. Information technology is developing at an unprecedented speed and its impact will be similar to the industrial revolution which turned agrarian economies into industrial economies at the turn of the last century. Already now, more than half of the total GDP in industrialised economies is knowledge based, including sectors such as tele-communications, computers, software, education and research.

Information technology refers to the use of computer-based systems and telecommunications to access, process, store and disseminate information. At present, systems at the leading edge of information technology are discussed very widely. They include Internet and World Wide Web, digital data storage on CD-ROM (compact disk-read only memory) or DVD (digital video disk), digital and wireless telecommunication and systems that incorporate artificial intelligence, such as expert systems and neural networks. Benefits of the application of information technology include more timely access to information at the national, regional and global levels, improved conservation of knowledge and new combinations of media, such as text, graphics, audio and video.

Already during its formation in February 1995, the Asia Pacific Association of Forestry Research Institutions (APAFRI) emphasized the importance of information technology in forestry research. Some of APAFRI's strategic objectives directly address areas such as information sharing and improved access to, and use of, information systems. During the forthcoming meeting of the Heads of Forestry Research/APAFRI General Assembly in March 1997 in Vietnam, the recommendations of the Discussion Forum on Information Services in the Asia Pacific Region held in October 1996 in Indonesia will be discussed further. Need for integrated and focused information policies and strategies, information technology training at the national and regional levels and support for the regional network on forestry information services are some of the topics proposed for discussion. Further it is planned to demonstrate advances in the application of information technology. The demonstration will particularly focus on applications of CD-ROM and Internet technology relevant to forestry sector.

These are aimed to support the existing interest of APAFRI members in issues related to information technology, familiarise participants with current advances in this area and, ultimately, contribute to improved decision making.

*Michael Ibach,
Senior Information Scientist
CIFOR, Bogor, Indonesia*

APAFRI EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Chairperson:

Dr. Suree Bhumibhamon, Faculty of Forestry,
Kasetsart University, Bangkok

Vice-Chairperson:

Dr. Hsu-Ho Chung, Taiwan Forest Research Institute,
Taipei

Members:

Dr. Toshiya Ikeda, Forestry and Forests Products
Research Institute, Tokyo

Dr. Kamis Awang, Faculty of Forestry, Universiti
Pertanian Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur

Dr. K.M. Siddiqui, Pakistan Forest Institute,
Peshawar

Dr. Virgilio Fernandez, College of Forestry,
University of the Philippines at Los Banos

**SECOND INTERNATIONAL SHORT
COURSE ON SUSTAINABLE
TROPICAL FOREST
MANAGEMENT**

With technical and financial support from FORSPA, APAFRI was able to sponsor 4 participants from its member institutions to attend the Second International Short Course on Sustainable Tropical Forest Management organized by the Universiti Pertanian Malaysia during 4 to 16 November 1996. The four participants were Mr. Mohammad Shafiul Alam (Institute of Forestry and Environmental Sciences, University of Chittagong Bangladesh), Ms. Sujatha, (Kerala Forest Research Institute, India), Ms. Florita Siapno (Ecosystem Research & Development Bureau, Philippines) and Dr. Tran Van Con (Forest Science Institute of Vietnam). The course provided them an opportunity to learn about the recent developments in tropical forest conservation and management, including certification and labeling, reduced impact logging, application of EIA to forestry, management of biodiversity and information technology and its application in forestry.

**MEMBERSHIP FEE REMAINS
UNCHANGED FOR 1997**

The Executive Committee reviewed the APAFRI membership subscription and decided to maintain it at the 1996 level. The 1997 rates will be US\$ 1,000, US\$ 250 and US\$ 50 for categories I (institutions from developed countries and international/regional organizations), II (developing country institutions) and III (institutions from least developed countries and those undergoing economic transition), respectively.

**MANUAL OF FOREST FRUITS,
SEEDS AND SEEDLINGS:
CIFOR CD - ROM
PUBLICATION NO. 1**

This CD-ROM version of an earlier FRIM publication of the same title has been produced by CIFOR to facilitate easy reference and retrieval of information. It provides descriptions of 310 genera of trees, supported by 390 drawings, 470 black and white and 310 colour photographs. Although the manual was conceived as a guide for the identification of seedlings in Peninsular Malaysia, it has wider applicability on account of the occurrence of the genera outside Malaysia. The CD-ROM provides easy access to information through menus structured according to family and genus names. Free text search of the entire data base and a botanical identification are other additional features of the CD. The cost of the publication is US\$ 15 (including mailing) and can be ordered directly from the CIFOR Library (Center for International Forestry Research, P.O. Box 6956, JKPWB, Jakarta 10065, Indonesia).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

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