

A CUT FOR THE POOR

Proceedings of the International Conference on
Managing Forests for Poverty Reduction:
Capturing Opportunities in Forest Harvesting and
Wood Processing for the Benefit of the Poor

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The **Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)** leads international efforts to defeat hunger by helping countries improve agriculture, forestry and fisheries practices and ensuring good nutrition for all. FAO is also a leading source of knowledge and information on agriculture, forestry and fisheries, and acts as a neutral forum where all nations meet as equals to negotiate agreements and debate policy. FAO's mission in forestry is to enhance human well-being through support to member countries in the sustainable management of the world's trees and forests.

The **Regional Community Forestry Training Center for Asia and the Pacific (RECOFTC)** is an international not-for-profit organization based in Bangkok, Thailand, that supports community forestry and community-based natural resource management. RECOFTC receives core funding from the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Through strategic partnerships and collaboration with governmental and non-governmental institutions, programs, projects and networks, RECOFTC aims to enhance capacity at all levels and promote constructive multi-stakeholder dialogues and interactions to ensure equitable and sustainable management of forest resources.

SNV (Netherlands Development Organisation) is a Netherlands-based international NGO that delivers capacity building advisory services to over 1,800 clients in 33 countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Balkans. In Asia, SNV provides capacity building services to government, non-government and private sector organizations in Nepal, Viet Nam, Bhutan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Cambodia and Bangladesh, as well as to a number of regional organizations and networks. SNV aims to achieve development results in two areas: (1) basic services delivery (water & sanitation, energy, health and education); and (2) production, income and job creation. Our niche in specific sub sectors (such as pro-poor tourism, Non-Timber Forest Products, biogas sector development, clean development mechanism, value chain development and participatory planning) is widely recognized and closely linked to National Development Strategies.

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FOREWORD



Approximately one-third of the world's 4 billion hectares of forests are managed primarily for the production of wood and other forest products (FAO 2005). Timber production often conjures images of capital intensive operations, big machines and large profits for a small handful of people. With poverty rates often being highest in forested areas, we thought it timely to initiate further discussion on how timber production from forests can be better harnessed for poverty reduction, particularly the role of small-scale commercial forestry in opening opportunities for the poor to benefit from forest harvesting and wood processing.

The idea for a conference was discussed initially by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the Regional Community Forestry and Training Center for Asia and the Pacific (RECOFTC) and the Netherlands Development Organisation (SNV). Many other interested parties joined this discussion, including the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of Viet Nam, who hosted the conference, the Tropical Forest Trust (TFT), the Worldwide Fund for Nature (WWF), and the Asia-Pacific Forestry Commission (APFC). Generous funding was provided by the International Tropical Timber Organisation (ITTO) and the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs Directorate-General for International Cooperation (DGIS).

The conference aimed to:

1. Review technical, economic, institutional and policy aspects of small-scale and labor-intensive forest management practices and wood processing with regard to their impacts on the poor and their potential for reducing poverty.
2. Identify constraints to, and opportunities for, managing forests and processing activities with poverty alleviation as an explicit objective in Asia and the Pacific.
3. Establish a task force that will develop a strategic plan for promoting forest management for poverty alleviation by encouraging support for small-scale forest and labor-intensive forest management practices and wood processing.

The program was developed to engage a large number of resource persons to elaborate experiences in the field of poverty reduction through small-scale timber production. The conference was centered around five sessions, focusing respectively on policies and legislation, economic issues, institutional issues, and technical aspects of small-scale timber production. The sharing of experiences from Latin America, Africa and Asia made the conference a truly international event.

The conference brought together the emerging themes into a declaration that targets key areas for attention by policy makers, the private sector, practitioners and communities. The challenge now is to take forward the agenda and ideas for further action defined at the Ho Chi Minh City Conference. We look forward to working with our many partners in the region to make this a reality.

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The *International Conference on Managing Forests for Poverty Reduction: Capturing Opportunities in Forest Harvesting and Wood Processing for the Benefit of the Poor*, would not have been possible without the energy and dedication of a core group of people, who jointly conceptualized, developed and organized the conference. These include: Thomas Enters, Patrick Durst and Pernille Lausen Hansen (FAO), Sango Mahanty (RECOFTC), Arthur Ebregt (SNV) Simon Greenaway and Vu Nam (TFT), and Pham Minh Thoa (MARD).

Staff from SNV (Pham Thu Hang), RECOFTC (Wallaya Pinprayoon and Boontida Moungrsimuangdee) and FAO (Pernille Lausen Hansen) provided logistical and administrative support to facilitate participants' travel, prepare supporting materials, and coordinate program arrangements.

Viet Nam was an excellent venue for the conference. The support of the Department of Forestry (DoF), Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of Viet Nam (MARD) in hosting the event was greatly appreciated, in particular the Director General of DoF, Nguyen Ngoc Binh and his colleagues Pham Minh Thoa, Vo Dinh Tuyen, Do Tien Dzung, Trinh Thi Thanh Ha, Kim Thi Kieu Anh and Bui Tuan Giang of DoF, and the Deputy Director of International Cooperation Department of MARD, Tran Kim Long and his colleagues Pham Trong Hien and Nguyen Thi Luan.

The engagement of our MARD colleagues helped to create a positive atmosphere for discussion and to arrange a good selection of field trips for participants, with the valuable cooperation and support of the Sub-Department of Forestry of Ho Chi Minh City, Can Gio Reserve Zone in Ho Chi Minh City, Tan Mai Paper Company in Dong Nai Province, Nam Trung Joint Stock Company and Long Viet Joint Stock Company in Binh Duong Province. Support for the field trips was also provided by Catherine Mackenzie and Harm Duiker (SNV), and Vu Nam (TFT).

The conference included many stimulating presentations by a wide range of resource persons who generously shared their experiences with the participants. Katherine Warner (IUCN) and Gary Dunning (TFD) did an excellent job in setting the scene for discussion on the days that followed with their keynote addresses. We also thank all of the other presenters: Pascal Cuny (SNV), Patrick C. Dugan (Bagong Pagasa Foundation) and Juan Pulhin (University of Los Banos), Bao Huy (Tay Nguyen University), Steve Gretzinger (WWF), Padam Chand and K.B. Ghimiri (former Nepal-Australia Community Resource Management and Livelihoods Programme), Mark Kelly (URS Forestry), James Bampton (DFID Livelihoods and Forestry Programme), Krishna Acharya (Department of Forest Research and Survey), Hans Beukeboom (Helvetas), Ben Vickers (SNV), Bernhard Mohns (Lao-German Programme on Rural Development), Michelle Pinard (University of Aberdeen), Anda Akivi (PNG Forest Research Institute), Jim Birkemeier (Timbergreen Forestry), Scott Landis (GreenWood), Duncan Macqueen (IIED), Robin Barr (TFT), Christoph Muziol (SPC/GTZ Pacific-German Regional Forestry Project) and John Marsh (Oxfam). Thanks also to Juan Pulhin for facilitating the working group on the Conference Declaration with support from Rowena Soriaga, and Hartmut Holznecht for facilitating the working group to identify follow up actions.

The editorial team for these proceedings included: Robert Oberndorf, Sango Mahanty, Kenneth Burslem and Erica Lee of RECOFTC, and Regan Suzuki and Patrick Durst, FAO.

Last, but certainly not least, the conference would not have been possible without the generous financial support of ITTO and the Netherlands Government (DGIS), for which the organizers express their sincere gratitude.

LIST OF COMMONLY CITED ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

<i>AAC</i>	Annual allowable cut
<i>AFR</i>	Annual forest royalties
<i>APFC</i>	Asia-Pacific Forestry Commission
<i>BZ</i>	Buffer-zone
<i>CBFM</i>	Community-Based Forest Management
<i>CF</i>	Community forestry
<i>CFM</i>	Community Forest Management
<i>CFUG</i>	Community Forest User Group
<i>CIAD</i>	Centre Internationale d'Appui an Developpement (Cameroon)
<i>CIFOR</i>	Center for International Forestry Research
<i>CTF</i>	Communal Tree Farming
<i>DARD</i>	Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (Viet Nam)
<i>DENR</i>	Department of Environment and Natural Resources (Philippines)
<i>DFID</i>	Department for International Development (UK)
<i>DGIS</i>	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Directorate-General for International Cooperation (Netherlands)
<i>DoF</i>	Department of Forests (Viet Nam)
<i>EC</i>	Executive Committee
<i>FAO</i>	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
<i>FECOFUN</i>	Federation of Community Forest User Groups
<i>FSC</i>	Forest Stewardship Council
<i>GTZ</i>	Deutsche Gesellschaft fur Technische Zusammenarbeit (German Development Agency)
<i>GoN</i>	Government of Nepal
<i>IIED</i>	International Institute of Environment and Development
<i>ITTO</i>	International Tropical Timber Organisation
<i>IUCN</i>	World Conservation Union
<i>MAI</i>	Mean annual increment
<i>MARD</i>	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development
<i>MDG</i>	Millennium Development Goals
<i>MFSC</i>	Ministry of Forests and Soil Conservation (Nepal)
<i>MINEF</i>	Ministry of Environment and Forests (Cameroon)
<i>MINFOF</i>	Ministry of the Environment and Forestry (Cameroon)
<i>NACRMLP</i>	Nepal-Australia Community Resource Management and Livelihood Project
<i>NRs</i>	Nepalese Rupees
<i>NTFP</i>	Non-timber forest product
<i>NWFP</i>	Non-wood forest product
<i>PRSP</i>	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
<i>RECOFTC</i>	Regional Community Forestry Training Center for Asia and the Pacific
<i>RGoB</i>	Royal Government of Bhutan
<i>SDC</i>	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
<i>SFE</i>	State Forest Enterprise
<i>SFF</i>	Society of Filipino Foresters
<i>SMFE</i>	Small and medium forest enterprise
<i>SNV</i>	Netherlands Development Organisation
<i>TCN</i>	Timber Corporation of Nepal
<i>TFD</i>	The Forests Dialogue
<i>TFT</i>	Tropical Forest Trust
<i>VND</i>	Viet Nam dong
<i>WWF</i>	Worldwide Fund for Nature

CONFERENCE DECLARATION

2006 HO CHI MINH CITY STATEMENT ON MANAGING FORESTS FOR POVERTY REDUCTION 3-6 OCTOBER 2006 HO CHI MINH CITY, VIET NAM

In consideration of the following:

- The Millennium Development Goals aim, among others, to halve poverty by 2015 and promote environmental stability.
- Forests can greatly contribute to poverty reduction while providing environmental services, considering their vast coverage, abundant resources, and the millions of people depending on them for subsistence and survival.
- Demands on forests and trees are increasing, with about 1.6 billion people relying heavily on forest resources for their livelihoods.
- Some 350 million of the world's poorest people are heavily dependent on forests for their survival.
- In most forested areas, the biggest value and income opportunities come from timber harvesting and wood processing.
- Forest resources can generate substantial capital and spur economic growth but forest wealth has generally not been shared equitably, especially with the rural poor and disadvantaged.
- Community management and protection responsibilities already provide services which must be recognized in the form of government compensation or payment for environmental services.
- Policy, institutional, socio-economic, market, and technical barriers exist in many countries, constraining the potential of forest management to reduce poverty.
- Policies, laws and rules are rarely well implemented in a way that reduces poverty, due to the lack of effective and efficient monitoring and control systems.
- Adherence to sustainable forest management principles and practices is fundamental to successful implementation of pro-poor programs and projects.
- Community-based forestry is one of the key strategies in promoting sustainable forest management and in reducing poverty in rural areas.



- Timber is often out of poor people's reach but, where rights and policy framework are favorable, evidence is growing that small and medium forestry enterprises can reduce poverty.
- New trends with respect to markets, technologies and institutions offer ample opportunities for employment and generate income in rural areas.
- There is a pressing need for the different stakeholders, including policy makers/decision-makers, development and donor organizations, development practitioners, the private sector, and local communities, to work collectively to enhance the contribution of forest management and timber harvesting in poverty reduction, thereby contributing to the overall achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

**THEREFORE, WE THE PARTICIPANTS OF THE 2006 INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
ON MANAGING FORESTS FOR POVERTY REDUCTION HEREBY CALL FOR:**

Policy makers/Decision-makers to

1. Improve access to, and expand opportunities for management of forest resources by the poor, by creating or reviewing policies that will enable local communities and individual households to economically benefit from these resources, taking into account traditional rights, knowledge systems and social values.
2. Simplify forest policies, laws and regulations on forest resource allocation, harvesting, transporting, processing and marketing and benefit sharing and enforce them equitably.
3. Facilitate and promote formation and operation of community-based organizations and ensure their empowerment and capacity building.
4. Institutionalize a comprehensive support system and incentives to promote the development of community-based small and medium scale wood-based enterprises supportive of poverty alleviation.
5. Integrate forest and natural resources into the country's poverty reduction strategic plan.
6. Develop policies on devolution of sustainable forest management practices to include economic partnerships between communities/households and the private sector for achieving poverty reduction objectives.
7. Develop and strengthen partnerships of local communities with civil society organizations.
8. Ensure regular monitoring and evaluation of policy implementation.

Forest-related development organizations and donors to

1. Support and monitor the formulation and implementation of forest policies, programs and projects that will enable poor people to have access, control and benefits over valuable timber resources in addition to other forest resources.
2. Develop and implement initiatives and methodologies that strengthen the rights, capabilities and decision-making power by local communities to sustainably manage forest resources and benefit from the commercial use of these resources.
3. Facilitate effective dialogue and participatory planning and agreement among stakeholders (public sector, private sector, local communities) towards sustainable forest management and poverty reduction.
4. Facilitate design of methodologies and local development processes that will ensure that poor people will benefit most from sustainable forest management utilization and high value forest resources, using a people-centered development approach which promotes inclusion, equity, works in the context of the existing social, institutional framework and builds on indigenous knowledge.
5. Ensure sustainability of development initiatives and benefits to the poor after project completion.
6. Support and develop monitoring and evaluation mechanisms and research that assess socio-economic impacts and document and analyze the contribution of forests in poverty reduction.
7. Improve coordination between development and donor agents, and facilitate linkages between the private sector, the public sector and local communities in order to ensure their access to information and knowledge which promotes a pro-poor focus.
8. Promote pro-poor forest enterprise development which is market driven and pays attention to poor people's capacities and potentials (e.g. quick return silvo-pastoral systems, simple technology).
9. Raise awareness of how to link enterprise/business development with livelihood improvement processes which make sense to and are determined by the poor.



Private sector to

1. Contribute to the development and operation of small and medium forest enterprises that will be of mutual benefit and at the same time support poverty reduction activities.
2. Establish mutually beneficial partnerships (medium to long term) with local communities/ households and associations to harness the social economic potentials of sustainable forest management and utilization.
3. Apply appropriate technology, make investments in forest resource rehabilitation and human resource development, and promote market access for the poor people to benefit from forest harvesting and processing.
4. Improve their social responsibilities towards their own employees.

Local communities to

1. Establish meaningful partnerships with other stakeholders to sustainably manage forest and forest enterprises and maximize benefits from their operations.
2. Institutionalize local mechanisms to ensure more equitable benefit sharing and gender mainstreaming from responsible forest management and utilization.
3. Institute a sense of responsibility, accountability and transparency among local community members to ensure that harvesting privileges and management of group funds will not be misused.
4. Adopt business approaches to the management of their forest resources.
5. Ensure that the voices of women and other disadvantaged groups are represented in the decision making and benefit-sharing.
6. Mobilize their natural and human resources to generate financial and other social capitals.
7. Play a more proactive role in the policy-making processes for forest management such as land allocation, land use rights, forest product trades, etc.