



WORKSHOP REPORT

Moving Forward with Purpose: Realizing Strategic Forest Planning

FPN Workshop
28 March 2018
Beijing, China



Table of Contents

Background	3
Objectives	3
Participation	3
Summary of sessions	3
Annex I: Workshop agenda	9
Annex II: List of participants	10
Annex III: Summary of feedback during discussions in the FPN Annual Meeting	12
Annex IV: Worksheets for SMART indicator workshop	14
Annex V: Workshop slides	错误！未定义书签。

Background

The Forestry Planning Network (FPN) is an informal knowledge network that aims to strengthen economy-level forestry planning processes in the Asia-Pacific region, through experience exchange, capacity building and the provision of technical support. It engages with policymakers and forestry planners across the Asia-Pacific region. The three main areas of FPN activities are: 1) regional network meetings, 2) technical and policy support, and 3) information and knowledge development.

The regional network meetings are held approximately once a year. On 28 March 2018, the Asia-Pacific Forestry Planning Workshop was held in Beijing, China as part of the 10th APFNet Anniversary conference. The target participants of the workshop were forestry planners and policymakers from Asia-Pacific economies.

The workshop was implemented in two main parts: first, an annual FPN meeting to review the progress of activities in 2017 and workplan for 2018 (mainly facilitated by Consultant and previous APFNet Program Manager Ms. Alexandra Wu and FAO-RAP Forestry Officer Dr. Yurdi Yasmi), and second, a brief workshop on SMART indicators with the aim to improve the monitoring and measurement aspects of forestry strategic planning (mainly facilitated by Forestry Planning Expert Dr. Gil Mendoza).

An overview of the workshop sessions can be found in the agenda in Annex I.

Objectives

The objectives of the workshop were:

1. To update forestry policymakers and planners (target groups) in Asia-Pacific economies on the FPN development progress and activities in 2017;
2. To consult with the target groups on the workplan for 2018; and
3. To discuss and briefly practice the use of SMART targets for improving monitoring and measurement (based on the recommendations of the Baseline Review and Gap Assessment on Forestry Strategic Planning in Asia-Pacific Economies).

Participation

Twenty-one participants from APFNet member economies composed the target participants of the workshop. The full list of participants is given in Annex II.

Summary of sessions

PART 1: Annual FPN Meeting

The workshop began with welcome remarks from Assistant Executive Director Mr. Xia Jun, who highlighted the importance of forestry strategic planning and the alignment of the Forestry Planning Network to APFNet's focus on forest rehabilitation. He expressed his hopes that

participants will share their vibrant feedback and actively shape the network, so that the FPN can continue to provide the best possible support to their work.

Reporting on FPN in 2017 and presenting the 2018 workplan

This session began with a recap by Ms. Alexandra Wu on the scope and objectives of the FPN, including its main activity areas and desired outputs. An overview of **activities that were implemented in 2017** was given, covering the Forestry Planning Workshop in January 2017 which defined the strategy of the FPN, the establishment of the FPN website and blog, the Baseline Review and Gap Assessment on Forestry Strategic Planning in Asia-Pacific Economies and the FPN side event during the 26th Session of the Asia-Pacific Forestry Commission.

The recap included the findings of the **Baseline Review and Gap Assessment Study**, which was implemented with the purpose to better understand the forestry strategic planning needs of member economies and recommend areas where the FPN can provide support. The study identified a number of strengths, weaknesses and needs in forestry strategic planning in the region, as well as recommended three areas of support for the FPN to fulfill some of the identified needs. They are:

- 1) Strengthening monitoring and evaluation;
- 2) Assisting economies with strategic communication; and
- 3) Enhancing the understanding and knowledge of regional and global agendas and issues that relate to forests.

An **overview of the 2018 workplan** was also presented to the participants. Participants were informed that it was developed largely based on the findings and recommendations of the Baseline Review and Gaps Assessment. Its thematic focus follows the first recommendation listed above, which is to support economies to improve on the monitoring and evaluation aspects of forestry strategic planning. Building on this theme and the three main activity areas of the FPN, the following activities were proposed for 2018:

- 1) Network development – continued coordination and engagement with members
- 2) Communication – through the FPN website and blog
- 3) Policy support – through the development of policy briefs.
- 4) Capacity building – including trainings on monitoring and evaluation
- 5) Technical assistance activities – based upon individual requests from economies or other opportunities as identified.

Feedback session: General feedback on FPN progress and 2018 workplan

Following the recap, participants were asked to discuss and share their reflections of **FPN's activities in 2017** in terms of the usefulness, relevance and impacts, as well as suggestions for improvement. In general, the report of 2017 activities received positive feedback from FPN members at the workshop. Participants expressed that the activities have been useful in providing a network to address forestry strategic planning issues and improve practices.

Some highlights of participant feedback and suggestions include: the value for FPN to engage the same individuals from past FPN regional meetings and other activities in future activities, to sustain continuity and build on previous efforts. Participants also identified that the FPN initiative is still quite new and more efforts should be placed on promotion and communication. For more details on participant feedback, please see Annex III.

On the **Baseline Review and Gap Assessment Study**, participants who were involved in the study also raised examples of its indirect impacts on their local context. In the Philippines for example, the study brought to light that the development of the Philippine National Forestry Master Plan had unintentionally neglected to communicate and transfer the plan from the national to local level. Since this FPN study, the Philippine Forest Management Bureau is now working to translate the master plan into multiple minority languages and actively disseminate the plan to local authorities.

While some participants expressed interest for the FPN to implement a second iteration of the study, it was also noted by other participants that the original purpose of the study may have been fulfilled for now, since it has produced useful information and helped to define the direction and general next steps of the FPN in the medium term.

A few participants raised minor errors on the Baseline Review and Gap Assessment report. To correct these errors, it was agreed that FPN organizers will contact the economy representatives of the project individually. FPN organizers were also requested to circulate the report for review among participating economies.

Participants were also asked to provide feedback on the **2018 work plan** in terms of how they would like to engage or provide support, and also to provide suggestions for improvement. A variety of suggestions was given. One example is for the FPN to reflect the findings and recommended priorities resulting from the Baseline Review and Gap Assessment Study in the 2018 strategic plan, as well as communicate the findings on a wider scale.

Different economies also expressed different challenges being faced individually. For example, while Myanmar has forestry plans to manage natural forests, they identified that concrete plans and strategies are lacking for plantation forests. Malaysia highlighted the desire of the national government to improve community forest management policies and are seeking to learn about the experience and approaches of other economies, such as China. It will be important for the FPN to provide support to economies in a way that helps to address their issues while staying focused on its mission and overall strategy. See Annex III for a detailed summary of reflections given during the feedback sessions.

Separately, a session was held to focus on **policy briefs** mainly led by Dr. Yurdi Yasmi. This began with a short presentation on introducing policy briefs, covering what it is, its purpose and applications. It was understood that policy briefs are short, neutral summaries of particular issues or problems. A policy brief discusses the issue-at-hand from various perspectives (including pros and cons), provides evidence to support those perspectives and poses

recommendations on policy options. The ultimate purpose of a policy brief is to inform and facilitate policy-making. The presentation slides in Annex V provide further details on the introductory presentation.

In groups, participants then discussed and shared specific ideas on how policy briefs can help address challenges and improve policy development related to forestry strategic planning in their respective economies as well as across multiple economies. For example, a representative from Thailand proposed the idea of preparing a policy brief to support policymakers' interests to convert protection forests into sustainable production forests. One other example is to support PNG's plans to expand its domestic wood processing industry, as an idea of a technical assistance or policy brief activity. Trainings on monitoring and evaluation (similar to the SMART indicators sessions in the second half of the workshop) was also discussed as a potential capacity building activity.

It was highlighted that ideas for activities should be assessed on whether similar efforts have already been implemented (or already exist), and whether the proposed activity should attempt to align with existing activities or be adjusted to avoid unnecessary duplication.

For more details on feedback related to policy brief activities, please see Annex III.

Summary of next steps

At the outset of the workshop, two major next steps were identified as follows:

- To circulate the Baseline Review and Gap Assessment report to project participants for feedback;
- To refine the workplan for 2018 taking into consideration the feedback received at the workshop; and
- To follow up with FPN members accordingly on activities, including policy brief, capacity building and technical assistance activities.

Part 2: SMART Indicators Workshop

Introduction to SMART indicators

Forestry strategic planning and monitoring expert Dr. Gil Mendoza was the main facilitator of the sessions on SMART indicators. This session began with an introductory lecture on forest criteria and indicators, and the importance of ensuring that indicators are as SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and timebound) as possible, to maximize the effectiveness of monitoring the implementation of forestry strategic plans. See the presentation slides in Annex V for more information on SMART indicators.

Interactive exercises

To put theory into practice, participants were placed in groups to complete two exercises to better understand what SMART indicators are and make improvements on sample indicators by making them 'SMART-er'. The exercises required participants to apply specific criteria to test

the specificity, measurability, achievability, relevance and time-boundedness of real forestry indicators and discussed them in detail. For more information on the design of the exercises, please see Annex IV for the worksheets that were used by the participants.

Summary of workshop evaluation

Before the close of the workshop, participants were requested to provide feedback to the day. Suggestions were given to provide more time in future workshop sessions (especially those related to training), to expand the inclusion of more individuals in future activities and to provide more materials for background review (such as the 2018 workplan) before the start of the workshop.

Positive feedback was given to the high level of engagement and interaction in the design of the sessions and quality of facilitation. Participants also showed appreciation in the opportunities the workshop provided for networking and relationship building between economies.

Annexes

Annex I: Workshop agenda

<i>Time</i>	<i>Activity</i>
8:45-9:15	Welcome remarks and ice breaker
9:15-10:00	Reporting on FPN in 2017 and presenting the 2018 workplan
10:00-10:30	Feedback session: General feedback on FPN progress and 2018 workplan
10:30-10:45	Coffee break
10:45-11:00	Feedback session: General feedback on FPN progress and 2018 workplan (continued)
11:00-12:00	FPN policy briefs: introduction and consultation
12:00-13:30	Lunch
13:30-14:15	Introduction to SMART indicators
14:15-15:15	Exercise 1: Understanding SMART indicators
15:15-15:30	Coffee break
15:30-17:15	Exercise 2: Making indicators SMART
17:15-17:30	Sum up and final reflections

Annex II: List of participants

Name	Economy	Title & Department
Mr. Bikash Chandra Saha Roy	Bangladesh	Senior Research Officer, Development Planning Unit, Forest Department
Dr. Ruma Hossain	Bangladesh	Research Officer, Development Planning Unit, Forest Department
Lim Bunna	Cambodia	Deputy Chief, Planning, Statistics and Consolidation Office, Forest Administration
Chey Dina	Cambodia	Chief, Office of Planning, Statistics and Consolidation Office
Olivia Sekilekutu Vakaloloma Koroï	Fiji	Senior Economic Planning Officer
Mr. Villiame Rokovu	Fiji	Forest Officer Planning, Ministry of Forests
Dr. Edi Sulistyo Heru Susetyo	Indonesia	Deputy Director, Evaluation of the Kalimantan Ecoregion Monitoring Center
Dr. Muhammad Zahrul Muttaqin	Indonesia	Researcher, Forestry and Environment Research, Development and Innovation Agency (FOERDIA), Ministry of Environment and Forestry MoEF
Mr. Saysamone Phothisath	Lao PDR	Deputy Director General, Department of Forestry, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry
Mr. Bounkham Inthachack	Lao PDR	Deputy Director of Planning and Cooperation, Department of Forestry, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry
Mr. Hamden Mohammad	Malaysia	Acting Director, Forest Department of Sarawak
Dr. Bo San	Myanmar	Staff Officer, Forest Department
Dr. Dhanajaya Paudyal	Nepal	APFNet Council Representative
Ganesh Paudel	Nepal	Planning Division, Department of Forestry
Edna D. Nuestro	Philippines	Chief, Forest Management Specialist, Forest Management Bureau
Rabbie Lalo	PNG	Planning Analyst, Forest Policy and Planning, National Forest Service, PNG Forest Authority
Damis Kaip	PNG	Manager, Policy & Aid Coordination Branch, Forest Policy & Planning Directorate, Papua New Guinea Forest Authority
Mr. Wasantha Tikiri Bandara Dissanayake	Sri Lanka	Additional Secretary (Environment Policy & Planning), Ministry of Mahaweli Development and Environment
Mr. Surat Kanchanakunchorn	Thailand	Director, Planning and Information Bureau, Royal Forest Department
Sapol Boonsermsuk	Thailand	Director, International Forestry Cooperation Division
Mr. Nguyen Huy Thieng	Vietnam	Deputy Director General, Forest Inventory and Planning Institute (FIPI), Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD)

Gil Mendoza	Expert	University of Illinois (Retired)
Yurdi Yasmi	FAO	FAORAP
Alexandra Wu	APFNet	Former Program Manager
Ben Forrest	APFNet	Program Officer
Yijue Chen	APFNet	

Annex III: Summary of feedback during discussions in the FPN Annual Meeting

The following list is a summary of the feedback provided during the feedback sessions of the workshop regarding FPN activities and development.

Feedback on activities in 2017

- The FPN activities that have been useful and relevant are: providing a network and platform for forestry strategic planners to share strategic planning experiences, the baseline and gap assessment study, the side event during the APFC in Sri Lanka
- To improve, the FPN is recommended to:
 - reflect the findings and priorities from activities in 2017 in the 2018 workplan and future strategies;
 - try to engage with the same individuals at the annual workshops and activities (as applicable and deemed useful); and
 - increase the promotion of the network, contact and reach out to more economies

Feedback on 2018 workplan

- In 2018, it is recommended that the FPN enhance networking for economies to further share information and data.
- Policy brief development, trainings and technical assistance are deemed as useful methods to support forestry strategic planning. Activities can also seek to share practical project experience, conduct exchange visits.
- Highlights of specific ideas that FPN may consider providing support to are:
 - Enhancing cross-sectoral collaboration (e.g. agriculture and tourism)
 - Simplifying forestry plans into the appropriate form for use at the local level
 - Developing communication strategies to promote, disseminate and increase the adoption of strategic plans. Trainings might be useful in this regard.
- Highlights of economy-level needs that FPN may take into consideration are:
 - Myanmar: has plans for natural forests but no policies or strategies for plantation forests
 - Vietnam: has long coastal areas in which protection is important
 - Thailand: acknowledges the need to adopt new technology and digital tools to address issues such as illegal logging
 - Malaysia: support in learning about the experience and approaches of other economies (e.g. China) to transfer experience on community forest management policies

Feedback on policy briefs

- Ideas for policy brief topics that apply to all economies:

- The need for enhancing the capacity of human resources with the target to develop effective strategic plans
- Developing strategic forestry plans that can adapt to rapid political changes
- Minimizing the gap between national and subnational planning processes
- The application of technologies in forestry strategic planning
- Landscape level planning approaches to achieve long term forestry goals
- Management and control of invasive species
- Ideas for policy briefs for individual economies:
 - Thailand: Policies to convert protected forests into production forests to increase the generation of income in community forestry while ensuring sustainable resource use
 - Nepal: Forestry enterprise development, integrating forestry into broader socioeconomic development planning, conservation of wildlife in community forests
 - Myanmar: Development of hydropower in culturally important areas
 - Bangladesh: Social forestry management and sustainable alternative livelihood
 - Vietnam: Development of forestry plans at the regional level
 - Lao PDR: Export of timber in plantation forests
 - PNG: Enhancing timber processing from natural forests
 - Malaysia: Reducing the impacts of logging in forests
 - Philippines: Incentives for forest-based industries
 - Cambodia: The need to expand community forestry to preserve forests
 - Sri Lanka: Interest in production forestry
 - China: Forest landscape restoration, climate change adaptation at the regional level, transboundary cooperation in protected areas to prevent forest fires and illegal logging (Nepal also showed interest in this)

Annex IV: Worksheets for SMART indicator workshop

Worksheet for Group Exercise 1:

The purpose of this exercise is to enable the participants to examine a 'set of indicators'. The participants will be divided into groups of 5 or 6 members. Each group are expected to discuss each indicator (about 8 indicators per group), deliberate and in the end make a rational judgment with respect to whether the indicator is considered SMART, relatively/partially SMART, or non SMART. Each group should organize themselves so that roles are properly assigned (e.g. record keeper, presenter, etc)

The worksheet below will serve as a guide for the group to evaluate each indicator. The highlighted part of the worksheet serves as an illustrative example.

The indicators included in the worksheet were selected from different sources at different scales (globally, regionally, and nationally).

Instructions:

1. Each participant, on his/her own, is encouraged to examine each indicator and make initial assessment whether the indicator is SMART or not
2. For each indicator, discuss and deliberate whether it meets each of the SMART criteria
3. Observations, reactions, comments about each indicator should be noted in the Remarks section of the table. These remarks will be used in Exercise 2.
4. After all the indicators have been assessed with respect to each SMART criterion, provide a general assessment of the 'SMARTness' of the indicators. It is likely that indicators, at this 'narrative' stage of the assessment process, will not meet all the SMART criteria. Make a subjective judgment about the 'closest' or 'best educated guess' of the status of the indicator.

Indicators	Is it...								
	Specific	Measurable	Achievable Attainable, Acceptable	Relevant	Timely	Result			Remarks ¹
						Yes	Partially	No	
Global Indicators (FAO-UNNF Core) ²									

¹ Provide summary narratives on how the indicator can be improved or made 'more' SMART. Specify the SMART element/s needed to be improved.

² Selected from 23 indicators developed from Organization-Led Initiative (OLI) – United Nation Forum On Forests.

• <i>Forest area net change rate (%/year)</i>	x	x	?	x	?	X			Specify the amount of net area change (A); Period (number of years) of change should be specified
• <i>Proportion of forest area located within legally established protected areas (%)</i>									
• <i>Forest health and vitality: % of forest area damaged (fire, insects, pollution etc.)</i>									
Regional Indicators (ITTO)³									
• <i>Extent and percentage of total land area under comprehensive land-use plans</i>									
• <i>Extent of forests committed to production and protection</i>									
• <i>Vulnerability of forests to natural disturbances</i>									
National Indicators									
• <i>People's incomes have increased in real terms since the establishment of forest plantations</i>									
• <i>Fair and effective mechanisms for conflict resolution exist</i>									
• <i>Yield regulations by area and/or volume are set out</i>									

Worksheet for Group Exercise 2

³ Selected from New set of ITTO C&I released September 2016

Assessments on whether an indicator is **SMART/NON-SMART MAY BE SUBJECTIVE, BUT NOT ARBITRARY** because the evaluation is based on a **rational and structured assessment process as shown in the example below.**

This exercise is an extension of Exercise 1. The purpose is to examine more closely those indicators in Exercise 1 that were judged as **Partially SMART** or **Non-SMART**. The goal is to revise these indicators so that they satisfy, or are significantly consistent with, the SMART criteria; that is, they are modified to become SMARTer.

Instructions:

1. Review the results of the group's assessment of the indicators in Exercise 1.
2. Identify those indicators that were considered **Partially** or **Not SMART**
3. Examine each indicator that is **Partially** or **Not SMART** more closely and discuss how they can be modified or improved to make them SMARTer. Consider the comments/observations under the 'Remarks' section in Exercise 1 in the discussions/deliberations.
4. If more in-depth assessment of the indicator is needed, e.g. use of the guide questions, take note of the detailed responses/comments about the guide questions relative to each indicator.
5. Each group will report the results/output of their assessment.

To illustrate the process, a simple case/demonstrative example is provided below.

Original Sample Indicator (Global FAO Core indicator)

"Financial resources from all sources for the implementation of sustainable forest management"

Each group, through the properties or characteristics of each SMART Criterion, may be able to assess and arrive at a consensus evaluation on how well the indicators meet each criterion as demonstrated in Exercise 1. In some cases, assessing indicators may not be as straight forward and may require more in-depth analyses of each SMART criterion. In this case, the Guided Questions may be used to focus and frame the discussion/deliberation of the assessment process as shown below.

Table 1: For the **Specific Criterion: Guided Question**

Guide Questions for Specific Criterion	Does the indicator meet the guided question			Remarks
	Yes	Partly	No	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is it clear exactly what is being measured? Has the appropriate level of disaggregation been specified? 			x	Too broadly stated; not clear where the financial sources are
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the indicator capture the essence of the desired result/outcome? 			x	Not clear how the indicator relates or affects SFM
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the indicator specific enough to measure progress towards the result? 			x	Not clear how much, or no indication how many percent of financial resources is reinvested to SFM

Hence, the indicator **DOES NOT** meet the **S**pecific Criterion

Table 2: Checklist of Criteria

SMART Criteria	Does the indicator Meets the criteria ¹			Remarks/Modification Needed
	Yes	Partly	No	
Is this indicator Specific ?			x	Indicate sources of financial resources (e.g. PES); proportion of financial resources reinvested to SFM
Is this indicator Measurable ?		x		Specific financial resources once specified should be verified; indicator does not reveal how it meets the

				SFM goal
Is the indicator Attainable ?			x	No target specified; specific targets must be specified in the Monitoring
Is the indicator Relevant and related to the input/output/outcome being measured?		x		Indicate how the indicator helps achieve the SFM goal
Is this indicator Time-bound ?			x	No time frame specified; Time frame should be specified in the Monitoring system

¹The Guide Questions may be used to answer the assessment question.

Table 3: For the **Masurable Criterion: Guided Questions**

Guide Questions for Measurable Criterion	Does the indicator meet the guided question			Remarks
	Yes	Partly	No	
Is the indicator Measurable?				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are changes for which indicator was developed objectively verifiable? 		x		Specific sources of financial resources may be verifiable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the indicator a reliable and a clear measure of results? 			x	Indicator itself does not state how the indicator meets the SFM goal; it is not clear measure of SFM
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the indicator sensitive to changes (e.g. policies, management regimes 		x		Not clear how sensitive the indicator is to changes of policies which must be specified.

Hence, the indicator only **Partially** meets the **M** measurable criterion

For the other SMART Criteria, the indicators were assessed without using the Guide questions.

HOW THE INDICATOR CAN BE IMPROVED TO MAKE IT SMARTer

1. Re-phrase the indicator to make it more 'sharp' and reflects the suggested modifications.

Example: Suggested re-phrasing of sample indicator.

“Adequate funds collected from PES-like initiatives/policies and allocated for implementing SFM”

2. The Monitoring and Evaluation (ME) system should be designed to reflect the comments and suggested revisions and modifications summarized in Table 2.

Using the demonstration example: ME System should monitor financial resources and transactions such as:

- Amount of fees/service charges per customer
- Total amount collected
- Distributions/allocations of collected PES funds
- Amount allocated/reverted to SFM activities
- Specify targets (e.g. total collection; areas targeted for specific SFM activities; cost associated for each SFM activities)
- Program and schedule (Implementation Plan) of specific activities

3. In Reporting the indicators, the report should also address the modifications/revisions summarized in Table 2, with special emphasis on the ME system

Guide Questions For Each Indicator: (Can be used as a Template Worksheet for the indicators)

Indicator X:

SMART Criteria	Does the indicator meet the guided question			Remarks
	Yes	Partially	No	
<p>Specific:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is it clear exactly what is being measured? Has the appropriate level of disaggregation been specified? Does the indicator capture the essence of the desired result/outcome? Is the indicator specific enough to measure progress towards the result? For example, using the indicator “increase/decrease by 20 per cent from baseline?” <p>Measurable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are changes for which indicator was developed objectively verifiable? Is the indicator a reliable and a clear measure of results? Is the indicator sensitive to changes (e.g. policies, management regimes) <p>Achievable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are the result(s) realistic? Are the required data and information available or can actually be collected? <p>Relevant</p>				

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the indicator capture the essence of the desired result? • Does the indicator 'fit' with the 'system' for monitoring the results/outcon? • Is it consistent with the intended outputs/result/outcome? <p>Time-Bound</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the indicator time-referenced or attached to a time frame (e.g., Data collection, when to measure; frequency) • Is the timing of data collection and period of validity specified? 				
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