



The Forests Dialogue

THE FORESTS DIALOGUE

TFD STEERING COMMITTEE 2006

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Dialogue on Intensively Managed Planted Forests in China

The Forests Dialogue (TFD) will convene a dialogue with associated site visits in Southern Guangxi Province, China in April 2006 to discuss and explore the issue of intensively managed planted forests (IMPFs). This will be the first of a series of dialogues and field visits by this working group. This group of experts has come together to learn from each other and try to reach agreement on the conditions under which IMPFs could deliver an optimal and equitable mix of economic, social and environmental benefits both locally and globally. The group will do this through dialogue and field visits to key IMPF regions around the world. The China field visit aims to provide a reality check on the working group's knowledge of IMPFs and, in addition, contribute to ongoing national policy discussions on how the role of IMPFs in meeting China's future fibre demands. Therefore, one of the key priorities of this dialogue will be to involve key Chinese officials in this ongoing international process.

Dates Monday 3rd – Thursday 6th April 2006

Location Beihai, Guangxi Province, China

Overview

The shift from natural forest management to IMPFs is one of the most important trends in sustainable forestry today. IMPFs contribute one-third of the world's industrial wood supply, with technological change and increasing global demand for forest products projected to favor IMPFs over alternative forest resources in the future. The current challenge is to optimize the future economic, social, and environmental contributions from IMPFs while mitigating associated negative impacts and meeting global demands for forest products. Divergent management approaches for planted forests have been developed by various stakeholders including third-party forest certification systems, intergovernmental bodies, NGOs and forest products companies. TFD is interested in bringing together key leaders on this issue to explore different approaches and attitudes to IMPFs and to investigate potential future development, investment and management strategies which would enhance opportunities for collaboration among stakeholders.

IMPFs in China

China's rapid economic growth is projected to have a significant impact on global wood flows and place additional pressure on forests in the region. The Chinese wood products industry is highly competitive and expanding. Will this increased demand be filled by existing IMPFs? Will IMPFs expand enough in China to handle the increased demand or will the industry in China continue to meet its needs through imports? Can the benefits of an expanding IMPF estate reach the rural poor and strengthen landscape level ecological integrity? Will expanding IMPFs in China reduce pressure on other forests? If so, what needs to change in current development, investment and management practices?

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Participants will explore these questions in detail and hear from leading experts to find the answers. As a primer, Christian Cossalter of the Center for International Forestry Research has prepared a brief for this dialogue on the IMPF situation in China that will help inform the discussions.

Objectives

TFD held a multi-stakeholder scoping dialogue at the IUCN Headquarters in Gland, Switzerland in June 2005 (*Co-Chair's summary: www.theforestsdialogue.org/ifm.html*) to explore management strategies and provide clarity on the opportunities for increasing consensus and future cooperation between IMPF stakeholders. This dialogue in China will be the first in a series of site visits aimed to situate the Gland dialogue within regional contexts relevant to the needs of local stakeholders. It is hoped that stakeholders can strengthen and inform the working group's understanding of IMPF issues through sharing of experience and knowledge.

One subject we will explore is the development of a planted forest code, a set of best practices for planted forest management being coordinated by the FAO. The FAO recently held an expert consultation in Rome and intends to use the expertise convened by this dialogue to examine in detail the emerging code with particular focus on its application in China.

Specifically we intend to:

- ➔ Learn about current and future plans for planted forests in China;
- ➔ Raise awareness among government, business, and civil society about the unique issues presented by development and management of IMPFs in China, amid the growth of its timber-based industry in domestic, regional and global terms;
- ➔ Review, solicit input and react to the draft FAO code, and other systems of best management practices such as forest certification schemes, in the context of their implementation in China;
- ➔ Explore how the FAO code and other systems of best management practices could act as a basis to minimize conflict and support the delivery of balanced sustainable development outcomes;
- ➔ Explore social aspects such as tenure, property rights and environmental concerns of large-scale plantations and balancing supply and demand drivers of major investment projects.

Expected Outcomes

- ➔ Test and refine the improved understanding that came from the Gland IMPF meeting against the reality of the current situation and future potential of Chinese IMPF development;
- ➔ Contribute to national IMPF policy discussions in China and link Chinese decision-makers into the TFD network of learning on planted forests;
- ➔ Contribute the working groups collective learning and knowledge to the development of the FAO code and other best management practice systems.

Format and Content

The field visits will precede the dialogue. Two days will be spent in the field examining several different IMPF types in Guangdong and Guangxi province. Planned visits include industrial plantations in Hepu County, traditional government managed plantations in Leizhou County and rural collective plantations in Bobai County.

Following the site visits, the group will meet in Beihai, Guangxi Province, for 1.5 days to hear from Chinese and international experts and review what was learned on the visits. The dialogue will include a series of presentations by Chinese and international experts on IMPFs and forestry in China, followed by a discussion among all dialogue participants. Presentations and updates on the FAO code from participants at the Rome meeting will be followed by a moderated discussion about the code and about its prospects and relevance in China. Participants will aim to establish groundwork for future collaboration among stakeholders working on IMPF issues.

Preliminary Itinerary

- 2 April* Arrive in Zhanjiang (Guangdong province)
Stay at Crowne Plaza Hotel
- 3 April* Visit Leizhou Forestry Bureau eucalypt plantations
Travel to Beihai (Guangxi Province)
Stay at Shangri-La Hotel
- 4 April* Visit Stora Enso eucalypt plantations in Hepu county
Visit community oriented plantations in Bobai and Pubei county
- 5 April* Dialogue at Shangri-La Hotel-Beihai
- 6 April* Dialogue at Shangri-La Hotel-Beihai
Adjourn by 13:00
- 6 or 7 April* Travel from Beihai to international airports

Event Follow-Up

Following the dialogue, a summary of the outcomes will be distributed broadly. The group and the TFD Steering Committee will then discuss the next phase of this IMPF dialogue and begin planning for the next site visits. It is expected that most of the participants of this dialogue will continue on as members of the working group and participate in future dialogues and site visits.

Participants

Approximately 25 invited participants will participate in the China IMPF dialogue. Participants will include leaders from environmental and social NGOs, forest owners, forest products industry, retailers, researchers, intergovernmental organizations and the Chinese government. Although there is no fee for participation, participants are expected to cover their own travel related expenses such as airfare, transfers accommodations and non-sponsored meals. Those invited participants who are unable to do so should contact the TFD Secretariat immediately to discuss the options for support (info@theforestdialogue.org).

Planning and Organization

A small group of TFD Steering Committee Members are working to develop this IMPF dialogue series. They include James Griffiths (WBCSD's Forest Industry Working Group), Gerhard Dieterle (the World Bank), Stewart Maginnis (IUCN's Forest Conservation Program), and Matti Karjula (Stora Enso) with Gary Dunning (TFD's Secretariat). TFD is also working with a number of local and regional IMPF experts on the development of this dialogue.

More Information

For more information about The Forests Dialogue please see the website at www.theforestdialogue.org or e-mail info@theforestdialogue.org

Further Reading

Cossalter, Christian and Chris Barr. 2005. *Fast Growing Plantation Development and Industrial Wood Demand in China's Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region*. CIFOR. Bogor Indonesia. 22 December. c.cossalter@cgiar.org

Kanowski, Peter. 2005 *Intensively Managed Planted Forests*. Pre-Gland Dialogue Background Paper. www.theforestdialogue.org/ifm.html

Shengxian, Zhou. 2006. *Forestry in China: Historical Transitions and Industry Developments*. Thomson Learning. Singapore. www.thomsonlearningasia.com or tlsg.info@thomson.com