

STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN FOR THE LFCC SECRETARIAT OF THE TEHRAN PROCESS

Introduction

As a result of the International Meeting on Special Needs and Requirements of Developing Countries with Low Forest Cover and Unique Types of Forests, hosted by the Islamic Republic of Iran and held in Tehran 4-8 October, 1999, agreement was reached to launch the Tehran Process to address common issues and concerns. Shortly after the session, a Secretariat was established by the Islamic Republic of Iran to lead and coordinate regional and international efforts in terms of follow-up, namely to:

- place key concerns on the political and policy agenda in future international deliberations;
- prepare draft approaches and strategies, for approval, based on the report of the Tehran meeting;
- enhance cooperation among LFCCs and partnerships with organisations, institutions and donor countries, including the exchange of information and experience; and
- implement the recommendations of the meeting.

This document reflects an analysis of the components of the Tehran Process that require further action and proposes a mandate and action plan for the LFCC Secretariat over the next five years. Activities should be reviewed on an annual basis, modified in light of gains made and updated as new information becomes available to ensure the Secretariat responds to current and emerging trends. As important is the need to ensure all elements of the programme of work complement, rather than duplicate, efforts undertaken elsewhere. For example, close collaboration with national action programmes for desertification and biological diversity will be essential in considering regional projects in related areas.

All proposed activities are deemed relevant to accomplishing the tasks identified by LFCCs during their deliberations. However, the extent to which they can be carried out will depend, in large measure, on available funding. Much of the success of the Tehran Process will also be related to the level of commitment of LFCCs, individually and as a group.

It should be noted that the Islamic Republic of Iran has already invested significant resources for the cause of LFCCs and for the Tehran Process, in addition to those expended to host last year's international meeting of experts referred to above. During the previous twelve months, it has spent approximately USD50 000 and over the same coming period, it expects to spend up to USD250 000 to support the Secretariat, in the hope that partners will each, at a minimum, match this level of funding. As part of its contributions, the Government of Iran is providing office space, equipment and full-time personnel. It is also undertaking several initiatives to raise the profile of LFCC issues in Iran and to increase collaboration and team work among its relevant ministries and

Inputs

2001

- two person months of consultant fees;
- air travel and ground transport of two consultants to three selected countries in LFCC regions - shared with planted forests sub-component;
- DSA or subsistence costs for two person months;
- translation (English/French, English/Arabic), printing and dissemination of the study reports to LFCCs;

2002

- two joint workshops - preparation, venue, interpreter, administrative support;
- sponsorship of travel and DSA for fifteen LFCC participants to attend the workshops;
- travel and DSA for attendance of two FAO HQ and one regional staff member at workshops;
- translation (English/French and English/Arabic), printing and dissemination of two workshop proceedings and action plans.

Action Area : Non Wood Forest Products and Trees Outside Forests

Objectives

- assist the LFCC Secretariat and the LFCC countries to implement the Teheran Process with special attention to the valuation of the non-wood forest products; the promotion of tree-based systems in integrated landscape management;
- support the Technical Committees in integrating trees-outside-forest resources and NWFP considerations within the framework of the national forest programmes, and the criteria and indicators previously identified for LFCCs and strengthening information and data system; and
- provide technical expertise through study papers and workshops to recommend strategies and plans of action for LFCC countries and develop proposals for implementation of select national forest programmes (NFPs) as pilot initiatives.

Outputs

2001

- two study reports, in preparation for two regional thematic workshops in order to develop a regional strategy and a plan of action: a) one study on integrated landscape management and tree-based systems, and b) one study on the valuation (focus on economics) of NWFP on forest and non-forest lands (reports published in English/French in Africa and English/Arabic in Near East and disseminated);

2002

- proceedings of two joint workshops on a) landscape planning and tree-based systems outside forest and on b) NWFP valuation, including a proposed regional strategy and a regional plan of action (published in 3 languages and distributed);
- general recommendations on the implementation of indicators in relation to NWFP and tree-based systems outside forest,
- one plan of action (including funding and partnership mechanisms) to implement the recommendations on NWFP and tree-based systems outside forests in the framework of three NFPs in Near East and Africa (including the Islamic Republic of Iran and two other countries).

Indicators

- Implementation of action to promote NWFPs in key countries.
- Implementation of extension programmes to promote trees outside forests and agroforestry.

Activities

2001

- two regional thematic consultant evaluations to collect data and write a study report on integrated landscape planning and trees-outside forests and valuation of NWFPs;
- publish in English/French (Africa), English/Arabic (Near East) and distribute the reports;

2002

- two joint regional workshops (shared with planted forests) on landscape planning based on the previous studies on NWFP and tree-based systems outside forests to propose a strategy, a plan of action;
- publish in English/French (Africa) and English/Arabic (Near East) and distribute the proceedings;
- develop a proposal for the implementation of the recommendations in the framework of the three NFPs in select countries in Near East and Africa;
- publish in English/French and English/Arabic and distribute the proposal for the three NFPs.

2002

- two regional workshop approved action plans addressing priority needs in LFCCs;
- proceedings and action plans of workshops translated and disseminated; and
- case studies planned in three select LFCCs to demonstrate the balance of policy, planning, technical and investment required for inter-sectoral sustainable development.

Indicators

- adoption of realistic action plans in key LFCC countries;
- expansion of area planted in appropriate tree species; and
- case studies planned.

Activities

2001

- conduct two consultant evaluations to address priority needs (review the critical economic, environmental and social role of planted forests in sustainable forest management; identify and recommend key legislative, policy, regulatory, planning and institutional reforms needed to facilitate increased planted forests and tree planting activities; and identify and recommend the key technical reforms needed to successfully establish a planted forest and tree planting programme in LFCCs);
- translate and disseminate the consultant reports in English and French (Africa) and English and Arabic (Near East) prior to the regional workshops

2002

- conduct multi-lingual regional workshops in two geographic locations with working groups to address topics in accordance with those researched by the consultants;
- report proceedings and action plans of workshop in host country language;
- translate and disseminate the workshop proceedings and workshop recommended action plans in English/French (Africa) and English/Arabic (Near East); and
- design and prepare case study proposals in two geographic locations (Africa and Near East and Asia).

Inputs

2001

- three person months of consulting fees;
- Air travel and ground transport of two consultants to three representative countries of each of Africa and Near East;
- DSA or subsistence costs for three person months;
- translation (English, French, Arabic), printing and dissemination of the consultant reports to LFCCs;

2002

- two workshops - preparation, venue, interpreter, administrative support;
- sponsorship of travel and DSA for twenty LFCC participants to attend the workshop;
- travel and DSA for attendance of two FAO HQ and one regional staff member at workshops; and
- translation (English, French and Arabic), printing and dissemination of three workshop proceedings reports; and
- networking with LFCCs and posting of publications on web sites

Activities

Activities are proposed in Africa (SADC: [Lesotho, Mauritius, Seychelles and Swaziland]; CILSS: [Chad, Gambia, Mali and Niger]; IGAD: [Kenya (central), Djibouti, Eritrea and Somalia]), Middle East (Algeria, Egypt, Iraq, Islamic Republic of Iran, Jordan, Lebanon, Mauritania, Morocco, Syria and Tunisia) and Asia (Bangladesh, Maldives, Mongolia, India and Pakistan).

2001

- internally validate the criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management previously developed by the Dry-Zone Africa Process and the SADC and CILSS initiatives to select those most applicable for their social, environmental, ecological, economic and political conditions;
- develop and publish a set of practical guidelines for the assessment, measurement and follow up of criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management of dry forests in Asia under the Dry Forest Asia Initiative;

2002

- conduct an international meeting to further develop a set of criteria and indicators more suitable for the LFCCs; discuss practical guidelines for Asian dry forests and determine their applicability in the other LFCCs; and draft an action plan to facilitate implementation at both the national and forest management unit levels; and
- reports by national consultants and FAO on the consolidated, national level criteria and indicators.

Inputs

2001

- technical and financial support to select countries (detailed above) in CILSS, SADC, IGADD, Middle East and Dry Asia to validate criteria and indicators and assist in establishment of guidelines;
- three person months of regional consultants to consolidate and validate results in the three regions;
- translation, printing and dissemination of three consultant reports;

2002

- international meeting – preparation, venue, interpreter and administrative support under CSA;
- sponsorship of travel and DSA for twenty five LFCC participants for four days at the international;
- travel and DSA for one Forestry Officer to attend 6 days at the international meeting (including 1 day prior, 1 day post); and
- translation, publication and dissemination of international meeting proceedings.

Action Area: Enhancement of the Role of Planted Forests

Objectives

- support member countries to translate recommendations of appropriate processes, institutions and instruments into actions to establish a sound foundation for planted forests to contribute positively to conservation of forests, sustainable forest management and livelihoods of rural communities (food security, fuelwood, fodder, wood and non-wood forest products) in LFCCs;
- foster multi-disciplinary collaboration at the national, regional and international levels to address both the inter-sectoral causes and effects of deforestation and forest degradation; and
- share information and lessons learned on the contribution of planted forests to sustainable forest management, between LFCCs.

Outputs

2001

- Reports on regional priority needs strategies and methodologies, based upon select LFCC evaluation in each of two regions: Africa and Near East.

Action Area: Development and Implementation of Criteria and Indicators

Objectives

- assist low forest cover countries in Asia, Near East and Africa to further develop and implement criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management at the national and forest management unit levels;
- help monitor action already under way in order to validate and improve existing criteria and indicators and help monitor the effects of prevailing forest management practices with the aim of achieving sustainable use of their forest resources to meet present-day and future social, economic, protective and productive needs at national and regional levels;
- stimulate and help guide the identification of agreed-upon criteria and indicators at the forest management unit level to clarify urgent, trade related issues, including forest product certification, aimed at ensuring the continued availability of international markets for wood and non-wood products originating in countries in the region;
- provide an opportunity for exchange of information and experiences in sustainable management of forests among low forest cover countries in Asia and Africa and between these countries and other, developing and developed countries;
- ensure compatibility between criteria and indicators developed for the Near East, dry-zone sub-Saharan Africa and dry Asia;
- provide guidance and technical assistance to countries in the region in order that they may reach to a common agreement on concepts, terminology and definitions used in the formulation, development and implementation of criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management; and
- ensure that activities carried on are consistent and complementary with indicators being developed within the framework of other related developments.

Outputs

2001

- consolidated national level criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management applicable to LFCCs in Africa, Near East and Asia;
- practical guidelines for the assessment and measurement of national level criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management for Dry Asia;
- low forest cover countries validated sets of national level criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management;
- three background documents prepared by national consultants.

2002

- detailed plan of action to make implementation more efficient and timely in select LFCCs including plan of activities for country testing of these tools at the forest management unit level;
- reports of validation exercises;
- international meeting on criteria and indicators in LFCC countries;
- an overview paper prepared by FAO; and
- a final report including lists of consolidated national level LFCC criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management; action plans responsibilities by countries and institutes to action agreed workshop recommendations).

Indicators

- Extent to which national level criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management are implemented in LFCCs in Africa, Near East and Asia;
- Implementation of guidelines for assessment of criteria and indicators in key LFCCs;
- Validation of sets of national level criteria and indicators in key LFCC's; and
- Adoption and implementation of action plans for implementation of criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management in key LFCC's.

Collaboration with other agencies is carried out under two broad umbrellas:

- The Inter-Agency Task Force on Forests (soon to be replaced by the Collaborative Partnership on Forests);
- Regional Forestry Commissions in the Near East, Africa, Asia-Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean, FAO is uniquely placed to address LFCC issues on a regional basis.

Potential collaborators for Low Forest Cover issues include:

UNEP, UNFCCC, UNDP, UNESCO (Man and Biosphere Programme), CIFOR, ITTO, ICRAF, IFAD, the Global Mechanism of the CCD, IUFRO, the World Bank, GEF, IUCN, SADC¹, CILSS², IGAD³, the African Timber Organisation (ATO), The Arab Centre for Studies of Arid Zones and Drylands (ACSAD), the Arab Organisation for Agricultural Development (AOAD), bilateral donors (Canada, Sweden, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Norway, Belgium and others), Secretariats of other international, regional and national organisations, NGOs (IUCN, WWF and others) and private sector with respect to LFCC issues and actions for sustainable forest management.

The work will be carried out in collaboration with:

- the above stated international organisations;
- LFCC Secretariat (the Islamic Republic of Iran hosted);
- Forestry Commissions representing LFCCs;
- major NGOs (e.g. CIFOR, IUCN);
- key agencies in selected national government; as agreed between FAO, the Netherlands and the selected countries.

Within FAO, technical support for this proposal will be co-ordinated by:

- the Forest Resources Division;
- FAO regional and sub-regional forestry officers;
- staff in key FAO field projects; and
- other FAO Headquarters Departments (Sustainable Development, Agriculture, Economic and Social, and Technical Co-operation).

FAO has played a pivotal role with other international agencies in the processes or interventions in development of criteria and indicators as tools for achievement of sustainable forest management.

Those relevant to LFCCs include:

- Near East Process (FAO/UNEP Expert Meeting; Cairo, Egypt; 10/1996) included northern African LFCCs;
- Dry Zone Africa Process (Nairobi, Kenya 11/1995) including also sub-regional initiatives for SADC and CILSS countries (UNEP/FAO Expert Meetings; Lilongwe, Malawi; 12/1998 and Dakar, Senegal; 12/1999).

In Asia, FAO/UNEP/ITTO along with the Indian Institute of Forest Management organised an Expert Meeting which marked the beginning of the "Regional Initiative for the Development and Implementation of National Level Criteria and Indicators for the Sustainable Management of Dry Forests in Asia" (Bhopal, India; Nov.-Dec/1999). The follow up in development and application of the criteria and indicators has been slow because of the deficiencies of institutional capacities and training of those in charge of implementation.

Action Areas The FAO Forestry Department plans to address the problems of LFCC's in four main areas in the context of the FAO/Netherlands Partnership:

- development and implementation of criteria and indicators;
- enhancement of the role for planted forests; and
- non wood forest products and trees outside forests.

¹ SADC: Southern Africa Development Community;

² CILSS: Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel;

³ IGAD: The Intergovernmental Authority on Development

LFCCs recognised that the main policy, strategic planning and institutional issues require inter-sectoral and multi-disciplinary approaches to address:

- severe poverty alleviation;
- advancing desertification;
- pressures of urban and peri-urban development;
- balance between economic and environmental sustainability;
- secure rights to land, land-use and crop ownership;
- greater participatory planning with communities, rural people and NGOs;
- response to market signals and market economy.

The main **constraints** related to sustainable forest management reported at the Tehran Process included:

- a lack of knowledge on the extent of forest resources and true value economic, environmental, social and cultural importance of these ecosystems for the well being of poor rural people;
- a lack of legislative, policy and strategic planning framework, the institutional structures and capacity and capability (technical and financial) to manage natural and planted resources in a sustainable way; and
- lack of local participation in planning and decision-making, settling land tenure questions, in the improvement of rural infrastructure and improving the status of rural communities.

Recommendations relating to sustainable forest management included:

- collection, analysis, and dissemination of forest resource information for planning, management and monitoring;
- development of criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management benefiting from the existing processes, particularly Dry-zone Africa and the Near East;
- conduct joint research projects on issues affecting LFCCs, particularly the development of models for management and rehabilitation of natural forests and woodlands;
- greater participation of stakeholders (communities, rural families and NGOs) to take into account a broader perspectives in forestry planning, implementation and monitoring;
- greater emphasis on food security and non-wood forest products in the rural community, including provision of fuelwood and fodder;
- greater account of the role of forests in carbon sequestration;
- review institutional structures and strengthen capacities to address the newly defined priority needs of stakeholders;
- secure international support to facilitate sustainable forest management;
- direct increased resources and priority to reforestation, regeneration, afforestation and rehabilitation of degraded lands in LFCCs to achieve sustainable forest management;
- match species/provenance with site and incorporate indigenous species whenever possible; and
- promote renewable energy programmes based on wood.

Supporting countries to develop and implement appropriate technical approaches targeted at clear development priorities and through building partnerships to achieve sustainable forest management is at the core of the FAO Forestry Programme. Planted forests and tree planting complement natural forest formations in both productive and protective functions, particularly in LFCCs. FAO works to build a better understanding of the factors that influence sustainable forest management and help to strengthen the capacity of government agencies, communities and NGOs to provide adequate support to sustainable forest management.

Collaboration with other organizations

The second session of the IFF (Geneva, 24 August – 4 September, 1998) reviewed progress in implementing IPF's proposals for action, including those related to fragile ecosystems affected by desertification and drought and those regarding low forest cover countries (LFCCs). Recommendations were made to co-ordinate implementation and recommendations of IPF proposals for action regarding the restoration of degraded forests and initiatives in LFCCs for sustainable forest management.

The immediate outcome of the IPF/IFF process was the Tehran Process mentioned earlier, in which FAO is much involved as a process facilitator and by providing technical and financial support.

FORESTRY COMPONENT 2:

CONSERVE FORESTS AND ADVANCE SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT:

SUB-COMPONENT: 2a

LOW FOREST COVER COUNTRIES

Background and Rationale

71 countries are characterised by low forest cover, with less than 10% of their land area covered by forests. Low forest cover countries (LFCC) are found in all continents except North America, ranging from developed to developing, with most in arid or semi-arid zones. The estimated total land area of low forest cover countries (LFCCs) is 4,000 million ha with only 140 million ha of forest cover (3.5%). Within LFCCs natural forests are estimated at 71 million ha (52%) and planted forests, 69 million ha (48%). Between 1990-95 the planted forest areas of LFCCs increased from 1.8 million ha to 2.4 million ha (+29%), particularly in tropical countries of Asia (+218%) and Africa (+125%). The population of developing LFCCs exceeds 850 million people, of which 470 million (55%) are rural dwellers depending heavily upon agriculture, fisheries and forest resources for their livelihoods.

The scarce natural and planted forest lands in LFCCs are particularly significant for their economic, social, cultural and environmental values. Forests and trees in LFCCs are critical to providing subsistence rural communities and are deeply integrated in the fabric of rural societies. Increased population pressure and widespread poverty are resulting in an alarming rate of deforestation and forest degradation. The consequent loss of productivity of natural resource management and biological diversity is adversely affecting the quality of life and livelihoods of these people.

From the scarce and fragile forests of LFCCs the 1996 production of sawnwood was estimated at 80 million m³ and fuelwood at 177 million m³. Continued production and consumption at these rates will result in more deforestation and degradation of forests, leading to a crisis. The area of forests in LFCCs is only 0.1 ha/person, however, due to the incidence of poverty and lack of development, exploitation of forests in LFC countries will continue at alarming rates without intervention.

The 14th Session of the Near East Forestry Commission, addressed the special needs and requirements of developing countries with LFC and unique types of forests. Constraints, issues, conclusions and recommendations of the "Tehran Process" related to sustainable forest management are synthesised below to highlight the direction requested by the experts for interventions to support sustainable forest management in LFCCs.

The Tehran Process, which emerged from IFF, concluded that:

- the existing legislative, policy and institutional frameworks have failed to adapt to meet increased demand for forest goods and services in LFCCs;
- measure and record the quantity and quality of forest resources more effectively;
- there is a need to adopt participatory processes with communities, rural families and NGOs, to equitably share benefits, adopt rural development programmes, decentralise administration; conduct and apply relevant ecological and social research; and derive sound criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management;
- there is an urgent need to develop successful development programmes for regeneration, afforestation and reforestation in LFCCs in order to increase forest cover and meet their diverse forest products needs, particularly in wood energy;
- the removal of energy price distortions through subsidies, the reconciliation of potentially conflicting sectoral policies (agricultural sector, marketing and market development and the provision of information related to technology improvements) is necessary; and
- a high level political priority and support to apply modern technology and environmentally sound practices (including criteria and indicators) are necessary to achieve sustainable forest management.