

REGIONAL WORKSHOP ON REVIEW OF ADB FOREST POLICY

14-15 February 2002, ADB Headquarters, Manila, Philippines

WORKSHOP SYNTHESIS REPORT

1. About 140 participants attended the workshop, representing 11 developing members countries (DMCs), 16 international organizations, 15 nongovernment organizations (NGOs), 14 private sector and consulting companies, 2 academic institutions, and ADB staff and consultants. Following an Introduction by Mr. Akira Seki, Director General for Regional and Sustainable Development Department, the Workshop was opened by Mr. Joseph Eichenberger, Vice President Operations (2), and a keynote address was presented by Dr. David Kaimowitz, Director-General of Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR). A total of 17 presentations were made in plenary session covering the studies undertaken during policy review and strategic framework development process, the Framework itself, critiques by representatives of major stakeholder groups, and aspects of the implementation of the policy and strategy in the future. In addition, four working groups deliberated upon separate issues that are considered to have the most important bearing on future priorities and direction for the policy and strategy. This report synthesizes the discussions that took place during the plenary sessions following the presentation of papers, as well as the reports from the four working groups.

2. The Draft Forest Sector Strategic Framework that was presented has four parts. The first part covers the lessons learned from the reviews of the performance of the previous ADB Forestry policies and strategies, the portfolio of projects, and the forest sector in the region as a whole. The second part sets out the challenges that forests and forestry in the region faces in the light of the development goals and the major demographic and economic trends. The third part sets out ADB's vision for forests and forestry in the region, and a framework to guide investment towards realizing that vision. The final part of the document sets out a strategy for implementing the vision, covering the types of interventions foreseen, the implementation methods and modalities, the operational implications, and monitoring and evaluation.

3. The general conclusions of the Workshop were that the right lessons had been learned and that the challenges facing the sector had been correctly identified. The change in emphasis compared with previous policies, from focusing on best forest resource development and management practices, to the sustainable management of the resources to contribute as much as possible towards achieving the international targets for reducing poverty and sustainable development, was generally welcomed. Most of the discussion and recommendations focused on the vision and conceptual framework, implementation modalities, the operational implications for ADB, and monitoring and evaluation of progress and achievements in the future. The remainder of this report will summarize the outcome of the discussion under these four headings.

A. Vision and Conceptual Framework

4. There was general consensus with regard to appropriateness and adequacy of the proposed conceptual framework and the vision laid out in the draft strategic framework, which focuses on: (i) improving forest governance by addressing forest land and tree tenure issues with particular attention to economically and socially disadvantaged groups; (ii) rational land use

planning process for improved forest resource protection and sustainable management; (iii) enhancing impact of public and private sector investments for social capital development, and increasing rural non-farm employment opportunities and income; (iv) enhancing capacity of local communities and institutions to become effective forest stewards and managers; and (v) increased emphasis on regional cooperation. The discussion provided many suggestions for clarification or adding more detail to the Draft Strategic Framework Document. However, The ADB staff pointed out that there are severe limitations on the length of the final document, but that every effort will be made to make adjustments that take account of the points raised. These can be considered under four general headings:

1. Approach

5. A number of comments relate to the general approach implied by the framework and call for additions to the text to improve clarity and strengthen justification.

- (i) The priorities for interventions need to be spelt out more clearly than currently in paragraphs 47-66, which give priorities but no ranking.
- (ii) The complexity of the proposed “landscape approach” may be underestimated, and it needs to be made clear that it is not “landscape planning” but more a concept of focusing multiple interventions within defined geographical regions.
- (iii) The importance of cross-sectoral interventions needs to be emphasized, as it may require capacity building for other sectors as well as forestry.
- (iv) The link between ADB interventions and national forest programs (NFP) needs to be made clear.
- (v) The issue of access to land and forest and rights of use and tenure will only be resolved slowly, and so the timeframe for ADB interventions needs to take this into account.
- (vi) Institutional reform is not limited to the forest sector and in particular will need to cover other sectors that interact with forestry like agriculture, water, infrastructure, etc.
- (vii) Although the private sector potentially has much to contribute to poverty reduction and development, there need to be safeguards that the interests of the rural communities and especially the socially and economically disadvantaged are not adversely affected.
- (viii) It would help general understanding of the proposed framework if some examples of how the approach would work in practice could be included in boxes or an appendix.
- (ix) The framework considers the need for support to DMCs to reform forest policies, but there may be a need to look at other policies that affect poverty and the means of reducing it. (e.g. rural finance, health, etc.).
- (x) Different approaches may be required towards areas of high and low conservation value.

2. Forest functions

6. Other comments refer to the various functions that forests fulfil and the emphasis given to these functions in the framework.

- (i) The multiple functions of forests need to be stressed and an over-strong emphasis on the production function of forests should be avoided.

- (ii) The role of forests in environmental sustainability and reducing poverty needs to be more clearly defined.
- (iii) Some idea should be provided on the end-use for trees and forest products.
- (iv) The role of forests in conservation of genetic resources and the need for sectoral policies to conserve and utilize traditional knowledge and deal with the risks from invasive alien species (IAS) requires more attention.
- (v) The framework should be more explicit on the need for different approaches to high and low value conservation forests, and should mention important forest function of carbon sequestration, ecotourism and biodiversity as well as the related management tools such as habitat connectivity and corridors, buffer zones, forest certification and labelling, and green accounting.
- (vi) ADB needs to develop a position with regard to the role of forests and forestry in relation to global climatic change.
- (vii) Technical issues should not be ignored, and the relative merits of natural and plantation forests needs to be made more explicit.

3. Stakeholders

7. Comments referred to various stakeholder groups that need to be mentioned or have reference to them be more emphasized.

- (i) Gender issues and in particular the role of women and the way in which forests can contribute to meeting women's needs should be better integrated throughout the document.
- (ii) The "Vision" statement should make reference to "participatory stewardship".
- (iii) It should be stressed that community involvement is a continuous process and not something that happens once.
- (iv) Intervention packages aimed at communities and poor people must include large-scale information, education and communication (IEC) activities.

B. Implementation Modalities

8. The implementation modalities outlined in the Draft Forest Sector Strategic Framework were generally considered to be comprehensive and appropriate. A few queries were raised and some suggestions for clarification or strengthening the proposed modalities were made.

1. Queries

- (i) Are ADB modalities suited to the slow process involved in improving access to resources, especially rights of use or tenure for land and forests?
- (ii) Are ADB modalities suited to reaching out to community-based groups?
- (iii) Can ADB modalities cope with the increased complexity of implementation that is likely to result from adopting a sectoral approach as opposed to a project approach?

2. Clarification

- (i) Full integration of communities into the development process so that the intended beneficiaries really do progress needs long-term arrangement, especially for rights of use and access.

- (ii) Community-based activities will need to include investment in IEC activities (see 7 [iv] above).

3. Strengthening

- (i) The move towards a sector-wide approach will need stronger and better partnerships with other development agencies and donors to maximize synergy.
- (ii) The future investments should include provision for experimentation with piloting innovative approaches.
- (iii) Attention should be focused on to innovative sources of funding under global conventions and other bilateral and multilateral arrangements; e.g. Debt for Nature Swaps, etc.
- (iv) The emphasis on regional activities should be strengthened, especially where they can deal with cross border issues, and possibly promote transfer payments for environmental services.

C. Operational Implications for ADB

9. Reference was frequently made to the fact that the forest sector does not function in isolation from other sectors, and there can be strong positive and negative impacts between the forest sector and these other sectors. In particular agriculture, water, energy, and industry can have strong interactions. Many of the constraints that affect the forest sector also apply to these and other sectors, and may need broad-based reforms. In addition issues such as governance, decentralization or devolution of authority and institutional reform cut across most sectors. Therefore it is important that:

- (i) There is consistency between the forest sector strategy and other sector policies and strategies within ADB, and the position of the forest sector strategy within the overall ADB policy environment needs to be clear.
- (ii) Cross-cutting safeguard policies such as gender, indigenous people, and environment are always fully applied when implementing the forest strategy.
- (iii) ADB projects in other sectors “do no harm” to forests; e.g. road projects that open up forest areas to encroachment and illegal logging.

10. The Forest Sector Strategic Framework sets out a number of new approaches, and puts greater emphasis on operational issues such as the design of investment projects. In particular it is recognized that the design stage for investments will be longer, more participatory, and more complex than hitherto. There is also a clear need implied in the strategic framework for more advocacy relating to forestry on the part of ADB in order to raise awareness of the importance of the sector and also help forest departments appreciate the difference between their role as “forest authority” and “resource manager”. These considerations have a number of implications:

- (i) The resources made available by ADB need to be adequate.
- (ii) The revised business processes need to be supportive of the need to improve the selection and design of investments that are consistent with the strategic framework.
- (iii) There needs to be greater clarity in how ADB will build partnerships, especially with other donors and NGOs, in providing TA aimed at institutional reform and capacity building.
- (iv) The role of consultants needs to be defined so that they can improve their skills.

- (v) It may be necessary for ADB to consider performance-based management fees for executing agencies as a means of improving the quality of management and overall performance.

D. Monitoring and Evaluation

11. The attention given in the Strategic Framework to Monitoring and Evaluation was welcomed. The need to have appropriate and well-defined targets, outcomes, deliverables and milestones was emphasized, and the question was asked “who will monitor ADB”? Monitoring should not be restricted to specific projects, but also needs to cover the sector as a whole throughout the region in order to check on the overall relevance of ADB’s strategy for the sector.

E. Follow-up

12. The ADB expressed its appreciation to participants at the Workshop for their support and contributions and stressed the importance of continuing a broad based dialogue via the forestry network, established at the conclusion of the workshop, in order to further refine and improve the draft strategy.

13. Responses to this synthesis of the discussions during the Workshop are requested by 15 April 2002 at the latest. Thereafter the next draft of the Strategic Framework will be available on the website. (<http://www.adb.org/projects/forestpolicy>)

14. ADB is open to requests for further dialogue with interested groups either in country during scheduled staff visits, or via video conferencing from the resident mission offices. All external inputs are required before end August 2002, when formal discussion of the Strategy is expected by ADB Board of Directors.