

REPORT OF THE ECO-REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON INTENSIVE FOREST MANAGEMENT

K.M. Siddiqui, Director General, Pakistan Forest Institute Peshawar.

In accordance with the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) Approved Calendar of Events the Regional Conference on Intensive Forest Management was held in the Pakistan Forest Institute, Peshawar on 21-28 May, 1993. Participants from Iran, Kirghizstan, Turkey, Turkish Cyprus, Uzbekistan and Pakistan attended this Conference at the invitation of Government of Pakistan. Representatives of Afghanistan and Turkmenistan were not able to attend the Conference. Although, they had already confirmed their participation.

Main Objectives

The Main Objectives of the Conference were as follows:

- i. To provide a forum for scientists, forest managers and policy makers to exchange knowledge and experiences on the range of issues

pertaining to the intensification of Forest Management in the ECO countries.

- ii. To share the experiences and results of Intensive Forest Management Projects of all important forest types, to identify strengths and weaknesses of intensification.
- iii. To present case studies on the intensification of forest management in the ECO countries.
- iv. To identify areas and forests where intensification should be given priority.
- v. To formulate suggestion and recommendation to help policy makers introduce Intensive Forest

Management in their forestry programmes.

- vi. To formulate recommendation for inter-country cooperation in Intensive Forest Management within the framework of the ECO.

Inauguration

The conference was Inaugurated by H.E. Mir Abdul Rahman Jamali, Minister of State for Food and Agriculture of Islamic Republic of Pakistan. In his inaugural address, he explained the importance of the forests as a renewable resource and called them as the greatest blessing from Almighty God for the people on the earth. With pointing out the common problems of deficient natural renewable resources, he emphasized that all ECO member states should pool all their possible knowledge and wisdom to tackle the problem. He also emphasized that all ECO member states should try to find ways and means to combat the desertification process engulfing their rich agricultural land and habitations.

Welcome Address

Dr. K.M. Siddiqui, Director General, Pakistan Forest Institute, Peshawar, in his welcome address expressed the hope that the conference would be in a position to formulate suitable recommendations for promotion of forestry in the ECO member countries as well as suggested measures for forging regional cooperation.

ECO Sectt. Representative Address

Mr. Hossein M. Abdullahi, ECO Secretariat representative in his address thanked the Government of Islamic Republic of Pakistan

for warm hospitality and making excellent arrangements for the conference. He pointed out the importance of forestry as well as agriculture for the ECO member countries. He expressed the hope that discussions and deliberations in the conference would result in formulating sound proposals for further cooperation in the field of forestry, with particular reference to the areas where the technical assistance from international organizations/agencies might be sought.

Key Note Address

Mr. Abeerullah Jan, Inspector General of Forests of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan in his key note address listed the common problems of the ECO member countries in the field of the forestry like population pressure, agro-pastoral economics, nomadic lifestyles, low forest resource base, primitive forest management practices, harsh climate, low per capita income, inadequate means of communication and limited job opportunities for forest workers and forest industries.

He stated that due to population pressure and commercial fellings, forests in the ECO region have been depleted to varying degrees during the past 50 years. He explained that under these circumstances, proper utilization of the existing forests and creation of new plantations on public and private lands is an urgent task and the only option before the professional foresters in the ECO region.

He highlighted forest functions in three main categories and stated that if man and material resources are inadequate to achieve all these functions simultaneously, in that case which function should be assigned high priority.

He concluded that the ECO region has a small forest resource base. If it is not

managed properly, it will disappear under the pressure of population in the accessible areas and because of death and decay due to old age in remote localities. He stated that it is time to act and act promptly before it is too late.

After the key note address, the Minister of State for Food and Agriculture declared the conference open.

Election of the Chairman

Mr. Abeedullah Jan, Inspector General of Forests, Government of Pakistan was unanimously elected as the Chairman.

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| 1. Eng. Haji Mir Sadeghi Mohammad Ali | IRAN |
| 2. Mr. A. Ibraimov | KIRGHIZSTAN |
| 3. Mr. Mahmood Iqbal Sheikh | Pakistan |
| 4. Mr. A.S. Bukhari | Pakistan |
| 5. Mr. Yosapov Sher Mohammad | UZBEKISTAN |
| 6. Mevlut Duzgun | TURKEY |
| 7. Mr. Bener Said Erkmen | Muslim Turkish Community of Cyprus |

The conference held Five Plenary Session on 22nd, 23rd and 24th May, 1993 and were followed by two field visits to Kaghan and Changa Manga area. During the sessions, delegates from all participating countries presented their country reports and some of the delegates also presented video films and slides for more elaboration.

The following papers on various facts of Forestry and Intensive Forest Management in ECO Member Countries were presented by the participants;

- i. National report on Forestry Activities and Intensive Forest Management in Islamic Republic of Iran, by Eng. Mohammad Ali Haji Mir Sadeghi, followed by video film.

Adoption of Agenda

The conference adopted the Agenda, which consisted of country reports, case studies, proposals for regional cooperation in forestry matters and formulation of drafting committee.

Drafting Committee

A drafting Committee was appointed for formulating proposals and recommendations put forward during the conference. The Composition of the Drafting Committee was as follows:

- ii. Forestry of the Republic of Uzbekistan, by Mr. Yosapov followed by video film.
- iii. Report on the intensive forest resources of the Muslim Community of Cyprus by Mr. Bener Said Erkmen.
- iv. Intensive Forest Management in NWFP. Pakistan presented by Mr. Mohammad Sadullah Khan.
- v. Multipurpose Forest Management for the benefit of rural population in the vicinity of forests in Turkey, by Mr. Mevlut Duzgun.
- vi. Case study on Pakistan's North Western Frontier Province, by Mr. Yar Mohammad Khan.

- vii. Intensive Forest Management in Sind Province by Mr. A.R.Kharal.
- viii. Forestry in the Republic of Kirghizstan by Mr. Ibraimov.
- ix. Report on forest situation in Azad Jammu and Kashmir by Kh. Ahmad-ud-Din.
- x. Essentials of Intensive Forest Management by K.M. Siddiqui.
- xi. Case study on farm energy forestry project intensive forest management practices in the private sector by Mr. Amin Khan.
- xii. Forestry situation in Sindh. Presented by Bashir Ahmad Moriani.

Recommendations

In view of the excellent presentations made by distinguished participants of the Conference, it could be easily concluded that the main objectives of the Conference were realized at this forum and provided ample opportunities to ECO member states for getting first hand knowledge of the ECO member countries and also current policies regarding the intensive forest management.

The following recommendations were formulated from the discussions and deliberations:

1. A sound data base is fundamental to planning and integrated forest management. Accordingly urgent steps should be taken to collect and disseminate data on land use patterns, forest and rangeland resources, wood based industries, demand and supply of timber; fuelwood and other forest products such as

medicinal plants, status of wildlife and its habitat; technical man-power; training and research facilities and research achievements. Towards this end a questionnaire be developed by ECO secretariat for circulation to the member states for furnishing the information within a specified time. A mechanism should also evolved for the continued flow of information in an organized manner.

2. Urgent steps should be initiated to support and strengthen the development of research activities in the member states. Traditionally the fields of forestry research have been silviculture; forest management, forest ecology; mensuration; genetics etc. In the recent years, the socio-economic side of forestry has come to the forefront. There is a need to conduct research on the role of forestry in rural development; impact of forest management practices on environmental services; role of forestry in ecological stability and flood control and pest management. Donor agencies are taking increasing interest in funding research and training programmes. The establishment of ECO Regional Forestry Research and Training center at a suitable place may therefore be considered essential for conducting mutually beneficial research projects with donor assistance. The member states should therefore strengthen their national and regional training institutions to produce a cadre of professionals qualified to management and improve the overall productivity of various types of forests.

3. Following activities are considered essential for forest conservation and appropriate forest management. They should be adopted keeping in view the

locality factors.

- introduction of improved inventory measures for assessment of growing stock.
 - quick and easy access to the forests through a network of roads
 - mechanization for timber harvesting
 - use of improved methods and tools
 - appropriate silvicultural systems
 - introduction of commercially important fast growing species
 - requisite inputs to increase yields per unit area
 - Protection from insect pests and diseases.
4. Members states are urged to arrest the present trend of deforestation and desertification. Information available on revegetation of desertified lands, establishment of windbreaks and shelterbelts should be exchanged and suitable measures in the form of massive afforestation and rehabilitation of denuded areas should be undertaken to stop the march of desert.
5. To improve the quality of growing stock and the productivity of the resource base, exchange of seed and seedlings and collaboration in Tree Improvement Programme should be promoted and facilitated among the member states. A well documented seed directory containing

relevant information should be prepared by the ECO secretariat and circulated.

6. Most of the countries of ECO region have facilities of research and development within their forestry organization. In order to promote research programmes on bilateral or multilateral basis or to undertake research programme of mutual interest such as seed source and provenance trials, there is a need to make arrangements for networking or twinning of existing research institutions. ECO secretariat would be best placed to encourage this activity.
7. Failure of natural regeneration in the forests is directly related to grazing pressures in these areas. Ways and means should be adopted to guard against this problem to promote natural regeneration which is much cheaper way of establishing tree crops. In that very context it would be helpful to cull the undesirable livestock replacing with lesser number of high quality breeds.
8. The NGOs are playing an important role in the conservation and improvement of natural resources by stimulating and organizing the local communities world over. In the ECO region this role is still confined to social welfare activities on a small scale. There is therefore a need to activate the NGO sector for biomass production and conservation of nature. Member states should encourage the NGO sector to complement the efforts of the forestry departments in achieving the desired objectives.
9. Symposia, seminars, workshops and exchange of visits may be arranged

periodically in the member countries. In order to ensure coordination of various activities and to follow up the recommendations of this conference an expert group (EGM) may be set up by the member states.

10. There are some unique natural ecological habitats such as junipers and mangroves in the member countries which are under great stress due to adverse environmental factors. Efforts should be made to preserve the biodiversity and genetic resource of such areas so that these are not lost for ever.
11. In recent years a new breed of foresters, technically and biologically skilled and equipped with social awareness and flexibility, has emerged. There is a need to develop a directory of experts in forestry and allied disciplines which can be used for the exchange of experienced professionals, for advisory and consultancy services in the member states. ECO secretariat is well placed to compile this directory in consultation with the member countries.

Concluding Session

Mr. Abeerullah Jan, Inspector General of Forests, Pakistan in his concluding address stated that forestry is getting prominence the world over because of environmental considerations, but we in the ECO region, need forests more for our survival than for material needs. He emphasized that we must respect nature and laws of nature. He mentioned that this conference provided opportunities for all participants to learn and gain from each other experiences both success and failures, is tremendous. The ECO network foresters, should significantly contribute to the success we all will attain and develop and strengthen, forest management system in our respective countries.

Adoption of the Report

The Conference unanimously adopted the report.

Vote of Thanks

The Conference ended with the vote of thanks to Government of Islamic Republic of Pakistan for the excellent arrangements made for the Conference and to the Chairman for his very excellent conduct of the Conference.