APFNet

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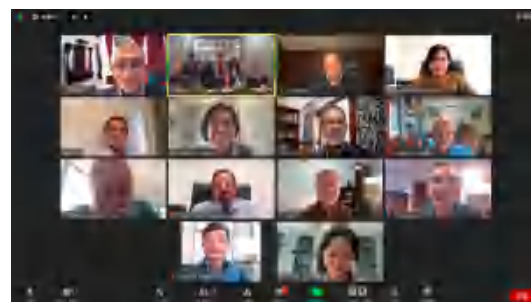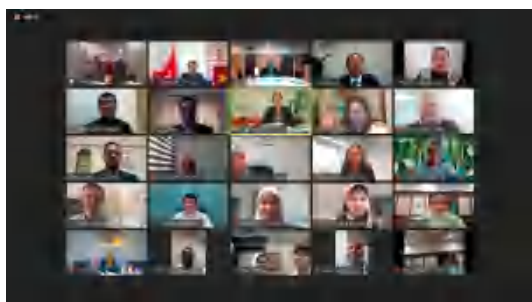- Reporting research progress and plans of the Sino-ASEAN Network of Forestry Research Institutes

APFNet Board of Directors and Council meet online in 2020

Special Meetings of the APFNet Board of Directors and Council were held online from 15–16 December 2020, in place of the Sixth Meeting, cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Eleven board members attended the Board

Meeting, including two new members appointed in February 2020. Mr Lu De, Executive Director of APFNet, reported on APFNet's work for 2020 and presented an outline of proposed work for 2021. A draft framework of the APFNet Strategic Plan 2021–2025 was reviewed and discussed at the meeting.

Representatives from 16 APFNet member economies and organizations attended the Special Council Meeting. Members were briefed on the Board's decisions during the year as well as progress on projects and programmes. Discussions on the need to review the Operational Framework of APFNet and a membership application from Chile were held. For more information visit www.apfnet.cn

Reviewing progress on building forest monitoring capacity in the Greater Mekong Subregion

The project Regional Forest Observations for Sustainable Forest Management was officially launched in 2018. It aims to build capacity for forest monitoring using advanced remote sensing technology and strengthen technical collaboration for forest observation among the Greater Mekong Subregion economies.

On 20 January 2021, over 20 people representing project partners in Cambodia, China, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, Thailand, Viet Nam and the leading executing agency, Chinese Academy of Forestry, met online to review project progress. Led by an independent consultant, meeting participants reviewed project documents and held discussions with project stakeholders. Overall, project performance was rated positively by evaluators. Most project activities have made sound progress, including forest coverage mapping, development of a model for forest carbon estimation and annual forest change detection. Capacity building activities were successfully conducted in the early stages of the project, including two training workshops in China (Yunnan and Guangxi) and one online workshop.

Some activities, such as field surveys and scholar exchange among research institutes, were suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic. It was suggested that the project team make appropriate adjustments to the work plan based on current progress and develop alternative plans for activities that may be affected by the pandemic.

APFNet Scholarship Program strongly contributes to forestry professional development in Asia-Pacific

Launched in 2010, the APFNet Scholarship Program (ASP) is an important component of APFNet's efforts to develop capable forestry practitioners by investing in education and the development of human resources in the Asia-Pacific region.

Following an evaluation in 2020 to assess the effectiveness of the program and develop recommendations for further improvement, consultant Professor Wil de Jong shared key findings with APFNet stakeholders on 5 March 2021. The review assessed program application, subjects and quality of teaching, faculty support, off-campus activities and students' post-scholarship careers.

The achievements and impacts of the program were shown to be positive. Data and statistics collected during the evaluation indicate that ASP provides a great opportunity for further education in the Asia-Pacific region and strongly contributes to forestry talent development in APFNet member economies.

APFNet and Shanghai Cooperation Organization strengthen cooperation on forest restoration

The Secretary-General of Shanghai Cooperation Organization, Vladimir Norov, and Executive Director of APFNet Secretariat, Lu De, agreed to strengthen cooperation to enhance ecosystem security in Greater Central Asia.

Mr. Lu welcomed the visit of the Secretary-General on 11 March 2021 to highlight the development achievements of APFNet and other activities carried out under the framework of the Greater Central Asia Forestry Cooperation Mechanism, an APFNet initiative.

Greater Central Asia is characterized by arid and semi-arid climates, and economies within the region share common environmental challenges such as water scarcity, low soil water retention and productivity, and severe desertification, which are all exacerbated by climate change and economic development. Vegetation restoration and prevention of land degradation will help address drought and desertification problems.

Mr. Norov agreed that the organization is willing to strengthen pragmatic cooperation with APFNet. 2021 marks the 20th anniversary of Shanghai Cooperation Organization. A preliminary consensus was reached on methods of cooperation and issues of shared interest.

Understory planting of epiphytes for ecological and economic enhancement

In China, secondary forests account for half of the forest area and integrated secondary forest management will be of great importance to China or the entire Greater Mekong Sub-region (GMS) in the future. Thus, one objective of the APFNet-funded Integrated Forest Ecosystem Management Planning and Demonstration Project in GMS (Pu'er Project Site, P.R. China) is to establish demonstration plots that showcase the concept of integrated forest ecosystem management and select optimal forest management models based on an evaluation of advanced techniques and best practices.

Based on the natural conditions of the secondary forest at the project site, different silvicultural techniques, such as understory planting, were adopted to increase forest productivity.

For more

Connecting forests, wildlife and people: @Wild's practices initiated in Cambodia

Deep in the semi-evergreen monsoon forest in Choam Ksant Forest Landscape, camera traps have been set up to capture the movements of protected wild fauna. The 376,941 ha forest landscape serves as habitat for more than 300 species of mammals, birds, amphibians and reptiles and houses more than 6,000 rural households whose livelihoods depend on the natural resources provided. Exploring a good balance among local livelihood improvement, habitat protection and wildlife conservation is thus crucial to this area, which is being increasingly challenged by forest degradation and fragmentation. In a first step to address this issue, APFNet, under its @Wild initiative, launched a baseline review project at the beginning of this year, aiming to assess the current status of forest and key wildlife species and investigate human activity impact on the forest ecosystem.

For more

New APFNet centre for young scholars boosts regional forestry science and technology cooperation

The Asia-Pacific Network for Sustainable Forest Management and Rehabilitation (APFNet) Centre for young scholars is now open. In 2019, the Sino-ASEAN Network of Forestry Research Institutes (SANFRI), initiated by APFNet, launched a Visiting Scholar Programme at the Yunnan Academy of Forestry and Grasslands, hosting ten scholars from four ASEAN economies to conduct research programmes in Yunnan.

Co-constructed by APFNet and the Yunnan Academy of Forestry and Grasslands, the Centre will provide excellent learning and research facilities; and accommodation for young forestry scholars in the Asia-Pacific region. The Centre is located at the Yunnan Academy and includes offices, a library, multimedia auditoria and guest rooms. In response to the impact of COVID-19, APFNet and the Yunnan Academy launched an initiative to upgrade the Centre, which was successfully completed in eight months.

The Centre can now offer better support for the SANFRI Visiting Scholar Programme, boosting cooperation, innovation and skills among outstanding young students to address emerging research needs in forest science and technology.

Reporting research progress and plans of the Sino-ASEAN Network of Forestry Research Institutes

Jointly organized by Yunnan Academy of Forestry and Grassland and APFNet, an online info-exchange meeting of the Sino-ASEAN Network of Forestry Research Institutes (SANFRI) was held on 15 December 2020.

Representatives from seven SANFRI member institutes and 18 members of SANFRI Young Scholar Team attended the meeting. Participants reported on SANFRI activities during 2020, including the successful launch of the 2020–2021 APFNet Small Research Grant and implementation of all research projects. The 2021 work plan and planned activities at the newly refurbished APFNet Center for SANFRI Young Scholar Exchange was discussed.

Young scholars from China, Indonesia and Viet Nam presented the progress and outcomes of three research projects. Funded by APFNet Small Research Grants in mid-2020, the projects address the growth characteristics of precious rosewood tree species; alternative methods for reforestation using bio-fertilized seed briquettes and bare-root seedlings; and propagation of Lithocarpus ducampii (Hickel & A. Camus) A. Camus seedlings using super-light and self-decomposing bags. These projects are on-track and will be completed by the end of 2021.

The 2020 APFNet Conference Attendance Support and Visiting Scholar Program was suspended due to the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic.

APFNet ALUMNI
NEWSLETTER

MORE ALUMNI ARE USING THE ONLINE PORTAL

[Issue No.5 of APFNet Alumni Newsletter released in March](#)

Wangyedian Forest Experience Base