



## Fourth Asia Pacific Forestry Education Coordination Mechanism Conference *Regional*

*Forestry Education Resources Sharing and Mutual Course Recognition*

### Details of the Presentations and Discussion in Session II

24 February 2016 Pampanga, Philippines

#### **Keynote Speeches**

Dr. S.S. Negi, Director General (Forest), Government of India, introduced international collaboration of forestry education in India. He briefly talked about the history and development of forestry education in India. Now more than 35 universities in India are involved in imparting forestry education at undergraduate as well as post-graduate levels. In Dr. Negi's speech, challenges facing forestry education include inadequate faculty with a forestry background, lack of job opportunities for forestry students, etc. On the other side of this, he discussed opportunities for international collaborations in India, such as climate change mitigation and adaptation, and the increasing role of forestry in international conventions and strategies.

Dr. Youqing Luo, Vice President, Beijing Forestry University, China, reviewed the sharing quality education resources in Chinese forestry education. He firstly brought up the status of forestry education in China and summarized that the rapid development of China's higher education has led to undersupply and unbalanced distribution of quality education resources. He suggested that Chinese forestry education must be strengthened by sharing domestic and international education resources through online education platforms, such as MOOCs. Dr. Luo mentioned that various MOOC platforms and open online courses are emerging in the higher education system in China now; however regulations must be in place for evaluating the learning effects and credit transfer for the online courses.

Dr. John Innes, Chair of the Steering Committee, Dean, Faculty of Forestry, UBC, officially launched the SFM Online Courses and presented the development of the first six SFM online courses. These six courses are the first available online courses in sustainable forest



management and apply innovative methods that will transform the forestry education system.

The main goals are to create a program that leads to a credentialed degree in Forestry and to develop and build self-directed learning courses with course content as open education resources for the Asia-Pacific region. Supported by APFNet, the University of British Columbia (UBC), Beijing Forestry University (BFU), University of Melbourne (MU), University Putra Malaysia (UPM), and University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB) have worked together to create the first six online SFM courses. Dr. Innes showcased one of the six courses and the access to the course blog sites. He also introduced a new AP-FECM Certificate program initiated by the SFM online courses which will be migrated to the APFNet-UBC edX edge platform. Based on the development of the SFM online courses, six new SFM online courses focused on tropical forests will be proposed to multiple course selection. Furthermore a Web-based SFM Master's degree program will be established to further enhance SFM education in the Asia Pacific region.

### **Case and Experience Sharing**

**Based on the experience of previous Forestry College Deans Meetings that discussed issues and challenges on forestry education and potential actions, participants mainly focused on sharing their experience and cases of regional and international cooperation in this conference.**

**Case Sharing 1:** Dr. Guangyu Wang, Assistant Dean, Faculty of Forestry, UBC, and Dr. Junchang Liu, Director of International Relations Office, BFU, delivered a joint presentation on undergraduate transfer programs between Beijing Forestry University and the University of British Columbia. They talked about the main goals for creating this forestry educational platform from UBC and BFU's perspectives. Challenges, strategies, and actions of this joint educational platform were discussed by Dr. Wang and Dr. Liu in this session. During the cooperation of this platform, high-quality education resources have been shared, good friendships have been built, and strong support has been provided to students. All these contributions have led to the win-win outcome for both universities.



**Case Sharing 2:** Prof. Nobuya Mizoue, Faculty of Agriculture, Kyushu University, and Prof. Akira Osawa, Graduate School of Agriculture, Kyoto University, gave an overview of Japanese forestry education sharing in the Asia-Pacific region. Prof. Mizoue firstly presented the forestry education and internationalization programs in Japan. He introduced the international courses in Kyushu University and research projects between Kyushu University and Southeast Asian economies. Prof. Mizoue emphasized that international education programs are leaders in collaborative research projects in the region. He showed successful examples from work involving Japan, Cambodia, and Myanmar. The challenge surrounding international collaboration is the lack of balance in course design between international forestry programs and domestic forestry programs. Prof. Mizoue also believes that online courses will be an efficient way to advance international cooperation between Japan and other economies in the region. Later, Prof. Osawa shared experiences in joint forestry education programs at Kyoto University. Undergraduate, Master's/Doctoral degree, and non-degree programs are offered between Kyoto University and ASEAN University Network. Students and faculty from Kyoto University are also participating in the joint research programs through Japan-ASEAN Science & Technology Innovation Platform. In the discussion, Prof. Osawa also put forward the challenges facing forestry education, indicating that international collaborations are inadequate for international forestry courses, because many forestry courses are included in agriculture program.

**Case Sharing 3:** The advanced education programs in collaboration with universities of Vietnam and USA were presented by Dr. Bui The Doi, Vice President, Vietnam National University of Forestry and Dr. Tran Quoc Hung, Dean, Faculty of Forestry, Thai Nguyen University of Agriculture and Forestry. Affected by climate change, population growth, etc., Vietnam has a big demand for forestry education. Students and faculty in agriculture and/or forestry universities are increasing in Vietnam, however nearly 30% of graduates cannot find a proper job and need to be re-educated (2012). As a result, both presenting universities from Vietnam are committed to offering higher forestry education by developing international collaborations.



Dr. Bui The Doi introduced the Natural Resource Management program in cooperation with Colorado State University, USA, and Dr. Tran Quoc Hung told us of the joint advanced academic programs with the University of California Davis, USA and other international universities.

**Case Sharing 4:** Prof. Juan M. Pulhin and Prof. Willie P. Abasolo, Dean, College of Forestry and Natural Resources, University of the Philippines Los Baños presented a talk on UPLB's internationalization initiatives in forestry education and research. Prof. Pulhin demonstrated their efforts to enhance UPLB's internationalization through curricular review and revision of forestry education programs and the creation of interdisciplinary study centers. He highlighted the new proposed joint Master's program in tropical biodiversity and conservation, which is in collaboration among the Philippines, Indonesia, and Malaysia. At the end of this session, Prof. Pulhin discussed some challenges for fulfilling their internationalization initiatives.

After four case sharing sessions, a discussion session continued the dialogue. Mr. Qu Gui Lin raised a couple questions, such as what is behind the low enrolment in forestry education; forests are so important but why do they get neglected; and what are the opportunities for forestry education in the context of climate change and green investment. Participants showed high passion in their responses to those questions and discussions. It is widely agreed that limited funding, less incentive, low employment rate, geographical restriction, working environment, etc. may be among the major reasons for low enrolment in forestry education.

**Case Sharing 5:** Dr. Chris Weston and Prof. Rod Keenan, University of Melbourne, Dr. Rex Victor O. Cruz, University of the Philippines Los Banos, and Dr. Hounghet Chanthavong, Dean, Faculty of Forestry, National University of Laos, delivered a joint presentation in tertiary education collaboration across national borders – opportunities and challenges. In this case sharing, the context for forestry education, benefits of the exchange across national borders, and global issues for forestry education were fully described. Collaboration based on research-led teaching collaborative learning will be one of the important methods in future forestry education.



Mutual course recognition and equitable access should be the focus when developing cross national programs. This group also introduced the existing platforms for collaboration in the region and the research-led collaboration between University of Melbourne and National University of Laos.

**Case Sharing 6:** Dr. Gamini Pushpakumara, Dean, Faculty of Agriculture, University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka, introduced the forestry education status and revealed that there is no undergraduate forestry degree due to low importance of the forestry industry in Sri Lanka. Changes are needed to improve forestry education in Sri Lanka, and universities are trying to be the agent to bring in new partnerships with international universities, organizations, and institutes.

**Case Sharing 7:** Dr. M. Al-Amin, Dean, Institute of Forestry and Environmental Sciences, Chittagong University, briefly reviewed the history of forestry education in Bangladesh. He mentioned support from international universities and organizations that have contributed to the development of forestry education, especially the establishment of the Institute of Forestry and Environmental Sciences, Chittagong University. Dr. Amin also analyzed the weaknesses and strengths of collaborative research projects.

**Case Sharing 8:** Mr. Mika Rekola from IUFRO-IFSA Joint Task Force on Forestry Education presented a new project, Global Outlook on Forest Education (GOFE). The aim of this project is to analyze competences from forest science (FS) centered curricula and multiple ecosystems curricula, complete a comprehensive analysis of gaps at the international scale using up-to-date scientific methods, and analyse the possibilities of new learning methods and approaches, especially those related to e-learning and Life Long Learning. A behavioural event interview is being conducted, with the results being produced for IUFRO's 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Congress. Local teams involved with this project are calling for professors and students to participate.



**Additional Case Sharing 9:** Dr. Von Monin, Dean of Forestry Faculty, Royal University of Agriculture (RUV), Cambodia, took this opportunity to introduce RUV and involvement of RUV in forestry education. He mentioned that forestry is not an attractive subject in Cambodia, and they have limited human resources and facilities to support forestry education. However, opportunities still exist in Cambodia as forestry plays an important role in many sectors.

**Additional Presentation:** As a new member of the Mechanism, Prof. Daowei Zhang on behalf of Dr. Janaki Alavalapati, Dean, School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences, Auburn University, USA, briefly introduced Auburn University and his faculty. He expressed his delight in joining the Mechanism and looked forward to working with all members.