

**APN Land Use and Cover Change Synthesis Workshop  
(APN 2002-LUCC)**

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## **APN funding**

US\$ 26,500

## **Participating countries**

Participants from the following countries were funded: Australia, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Mongolia, Nepal, P. R. China, Philippines, Viet Nam, and USA.

## **Brief introduction and background**

In the past few years APN has funded several global change research projects with a focus on land use and cover change (LUCC) in Southeast Asia. Many of the projects have been individually producing important results relating land use and cover change to the carbon cycle, trace gas emissions, ecosystem dynamics, forest management, human dimensions and drivers of land cover change, and data and information systems. This workshop was aimed at developing a synthesis of this body of APN funded research. It also provided a venue for the community of APN-funded Principal Investigators who have been active in LUCC related research to compare results and identify key common emerging questions, and to assist APN in formulating key priority areas for future projects. The workshop was held over a three-day period with presentations, panel discussions, and open discussions.

## **Outline of activities conducted**

The workshop was held at the APN Centre in Kobe from 9-11 September 2002, and was attended by most of the APN funded investigators who have been working on LUCC-related research in Southeast Asia for the past 5 years. Also in attendance was staff from the APN Secretariat. There was an emphasis on developing both a current synthesis and a method for making syntheses an on-going part of research in the region. The workshop began with outline presentations from investigators, followed by a panel discussion lead by Sharifa Mastura (Malaysia), Daniel Murdiyarso (Indonesia) and Ryosuke Shibasaki (Japan). The remainder of the workshop was focussed on open discussion of key findings and ways to develop a synthesis assessment and a synthesis report. The workshop aimed to assess and synthesize APN-funded LUCC research in SE Asia, to address the present state of LUCC scientific research and identify answers to scientific questions related to it. The workshop also stressed the importance of linking science to decision-making, with considerable discussion devoted to identification of modes of operation in funded research projects that would most efficiently make science accessible to policy and decision-making. Most of the participants agreed that past LUCC research in the region has been relevant and important to policy and decision-making, but the right balance between the science itself and decision support was important. There was consensus that in some key areas, the basic data was not yet available for sound decision-making, and in other areas there was not enough consensus in the science to make informed decisions. Hence, while APN should continue to stress its objectives to bridge science and policy, it should also give priority to capacity building and fundamental work on key global change science questions.

### **Outcomes and products**

The workshop provided a venue for researchers to evaluate their own research and assess their results in the context of other projects in the region. It thus was able to identify both key advances and important gaps. The workshop will produce a Synthesis Report by the end of February 2003. This report will provide APN with an evaluation from the perspective of its key investigators, the current results of prior investments, a synthesis of overall insights and accomplishments, and directions for future investments. One of the major conclusions of the workshop was that APN strategies for future projects and for leveraging current results to the benefit of policy makers should be built on the framework of existing projects in the region. Workshop participants considered great opportunities for APN to now begin to invest in efforts which would lead to LUCC decision support systems that would include a standard land cover classification system, baseline datasets and LUCC change detection analyses, assessment of areas of most rapid change, models of the drivers of change with both diagnostic and prognostic capabilities, risk assessment and environmental indicators.

### **Future directions and follow-up work**

The incorporation of a formal synthesis process in future LUCC research seems to be a very promising and effective way for APN to both coalesce its individually-funded projects into a more coherent regional perspective and, at the same time, chart future programme initiatives and key priorities for future investments. Further discussions will identify mechanisms, such as workshops, to provide on-going synthesis. Synthesis is not a one-time event but a process within both individual projects and the programme as a whole. The Synthesis Report will be finalized in February 2003, with recommendations for next steps in the development of active synthesis efforts in the region.