

**APN International Symposium on
Land Use and Cover Change and Vegetation Recovery -
Global Environmental Change Research and its Application
in Conservation Measures (APN-LUCC-VR-SYM)**

Project Organiser:

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APN funding

US\$ 20,000

Participating countries

Participants from the following countries were funded: Australia, Cambodia, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Nepal, Pakistan, P. R. China, Philippines, Russia, Sri Lanka, and Thailand. (Symposium audience was composed of civil society and invited participants of the 2nd Workshop on Vegetation Recovery in Degraded Land Areas.)

Brief introduction and background

In 2003 APN conducted a Land Use and Cover Change (LUCC) synthesis of past and present APN LUCC-related projects, and also held the 2nd Workshop on Vegetation Recovery in Degraded Land Areas. As a follow-up to these activities, the APN organised an international symposium on “Land Use and Cover Change and Vegetation Recovery - Global Environmental Change Research and its Application in Conservation Measures” to publicise the latest progress in scientific knowledge in these fields. The symposium also facilitated innovative liaison between experts in LUCC and Vegetation Recovery research.

Outline of activities conducted

The Symposium on LUCC and Vegetation Recovery convened on 28 November 2002 at the Hyogo Prefecture Museum of Art in Kobe, Japan. Following opening addresses by APN Director, Mr. Sombo Yamamura, and the Vice-Governor of Hyogo Prefecture, Mr. Tomio Saito, five presentations were given:

Prof. Sharifah Mastura Syed Abdullah, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, (co-project leader of the APN LUCC Synthesis Workshop) presented outcomes of the latest LUCC research projects, and introduced the integrated LUCC project – highlighting that much of Southeast Asia has experienced intensive deforestation due to increasing urbanisation, and both population and economic growth.

Prof. John Fox, Curtin University of Technology, Australia, presented his experience highlighting that the comprehensive management of vegetation recovery is tremendously important. The methodology he presented may be appropriate for some, but not all, areas. In order to complete the utilisation of a comprehensive approach to Vegetation Recovery, both experimental research and subsequent adjustments play extremely important roles.

Prof. Satoru Matsumoto, project leader of the Vegetation Recovery Workshop, described his experiences in Western Australia where salinity was excessive due to mining and arid lands. His presentation focussed on how to remove salt from the soil

and how to replant in arid areas. He concluded that the introduction of salt-tolerant plants is important as a first step to re-vegetation of saline and arid areas. He also added that vegetation recovery will stabilise population dynamics and aid sustainable environmental management.

Prof. Tohru Nakashizuka, Research Institute for Humanity and Nature (RIHN), Japan, represented DIVERSITAS (integrated programme biodiversity). He introduced the Scientific Plan of DIVERSITAS where core projects focus on three aspects of biodiversity research: monitoring/assessment, prediction, and sustainable use. Biodiversity should also be evaluated from the viewpoint of human dimensions. In addition, he presented the research programme of DIWPA (DIVERSITAS Western Pacific and Asia). DIVERSITAS also believes that the integration of natural and political sciences is essential, and that the earth system science partnership (IGBP-WCRP-IHDP-DIVERSITAS) is crucial. Therefore APN's regional and global efforts should be valued.

Finally, Mr. Kazuaki Hoshino, Nature Conservation Bureau, Ministry of the Environment of Japan, introduced the achievements of the WSSD and the new Japanese National Strategy for Biodiversity. He also presented two biodiversity-related projects: conservation of critical ecosystems (in collaboration with the World Bank, and international environmental NGOs) and the protection of habitats of Asia-Pacific migratory water birds (in collaboration with Australia).

Following presentations, a panel discussion was chaired by Prof. Matsumoto which welcomed questions from the floor. A number of questions and comments came from participants of the workshop on vegetation recovery as well as members of civil society, and in conclusion both panellists and the audience noted that, as we all share the same global resources, we should "*think globally, act locally*".

Outcomes and products

- The symposium provided an excellent opportunity for civil society to raise its awareness of deforestation and re-vegetation, not only in Japan but in other Asia-Pacific countries as well.

Future directions and follow-up work

- Proceedings of the Symposium will be published in 2003.