



WORKSHOP WRAP-UP REPORT

Title	: International Forestry Education Workshop 2015
Date	: 25 th May 2015
Location	: Faculty of Forestry, Universiti Putra Malaysia, Serdang, Selangor, Malaysia
Organizer	: Faculty of Forestry, UPM in collaboration with APAFRI
Moderator	: Prof. Dr. Jegatheswaran Ratnasingam
Panelists	: Prof. Dr. Mohamed Zakaria Hussin (Dean) Prof. Dr. Juan Pulhin Mr. Songklod Jarusombuti Dr. Gusti Bagus Rai Utama

Workshop Summary

The International Forestry Education Workshop 2015 was a collaborative effort between the Faculty of Forestry at Universiti Putra Malaysia and the Asia-Pacific Association of Forestry Research Institutes (APAFRI). The primary objective of the workshop was to expose forestry-curricula students on the developments in forestry education throughout the South East Asian region, and identify the salient changes that should be made to ensure forestry education remains relevant in the future.

Background

Forestry & Forest Products Education (FFPE) throughout the world is faced with decreasing enrollment and the need to reformat its relevance to the sustainable growth and development. In this context, forestry as a field of study is no longer a stand-alone field of applied botany, but incorporates knowledge from multi-disciplines such as sociology, environmental science, ecosystem services, human-environment interaction, forest products, etc.

Most of, if not all, of the disciplines have far-reaching implications on the use of forest resources in the ASEAN countries. This varied utilization, requires a better understanding of the traditional forest-related knowledge, and facilitate establishing sound and long-term sustainable forest management policies and strategies.

Countries in the Asia Pacific region, especially in the sub-region of Southeast Asia, have followed traditional forestry curriculums, which must be re-examined to ensure its continued relevance in a world that is increasingly globalized and environmental

conscious. Hence, it is a challenge to understand and establish trends in forestry education at the local, regional and global levels.

The Faculty of Forestry at Universiti Putra Malaysia has envisioned the idea of a regional gathering of forestry educators to establish the trends in forestry and forest products education and to streamline the curricular needs to meet the expectations of the various stakeholders. This is a first-time event that aims to fill the gap in ascertaining the needs of professional forestry education in the region, not only to boost the future of forestry and forest products education but also enhance its contribution towards sustainable development.

Objectives

The goals of the event were:

- (1) To provide a platform for sharing of information and exchanging experiences related to forestry and forest products education with special emphasis on the Southeast Asian region.
- (2) To discuss the means and ways of documenting the trends in forestry and forest products education, with a focus on rebranding, stakeholder engagement and sustainability of knowledge.

Resources

APAFRI provided the necessary financial support to invite and host three key-note speakers from the Philippines, Thailand and Indonesia to the event, which provided a well-rounded regional perspective to the workshop.

Activities

The workshop began with opening address by the Chairman of Organizing Committee, followed by the welcoming address by Prof. Mohamed Zakaria Hussin, Dean of Faculty of Forestry, Universiti Putra Malaysia. This was followed by a presentation by Prof. Dr. Faridah Hanum Ibrahim on the status and challenges of forestry education in Malaysia. This presentation set the tone for the workshop.

The discussions in this workshop were divided into three sessions: forest management, wood science and technology and forest recreation and park management.

(1) Session 1: Forest Management

The keynote paper for this session was the “Regional Overview of Forestry Education” presented by Prof. Dr. Juan Pulhin (UPLB). This was followed by a student’s presentation on the perspective of forestry education among young graduates.

(2) Session 2: Wood Science and Technology

The keynote paper for this session was entitled “Wood Science and Technology Education in Thailand” presented by Mr. Songklod Jarusombuti (KU). This was followed by a student’s presentation on the perspective of Wood Science Education among young graduates.

(3) Session 3: Forest Recreation and Park Management

The keynote paper for this session was entitled “Forest Recreation and Tourism Education in Indonesia” presented by Dr. Gusti Bagus Rai Utama (Bali). A student’s presentation on the Forest Recreation Education was the final presentation in this workshop.

During the panel discussion, several recommendations were made to improve the delivery of forestry curriculum for the future.

Attendance

A total of 87 students attended the workshop.

Evaluation

92% of the students found the workshop and the discussions useful as it provided them with useful insights into the trends in forestry education both in Malaysia as well as in the region.

Recommendations based on the workshop

Based from the workshop, the following recommendations were made:

- (1) Incorporate environmental and biodiversity perspectives to the curriculum.
- (2) Establish closer links between universities and stakeholders to ensure program relevance.
- (3) Provide students with global perspectives to forestry practices.

Follow up action plan

It was also suggested that similar workshop should be held on an annual-basis to foster closer regional collaboration between forestry organizations in the region. This will inevitably improve the overall perception of forestry education.

Conclusions

The International Forestry Education Workshop 2015 served as an excellent platform to enable students to obtain regional perspectives to forestry education.

Acknowledgement

The support and assistance of APAFRI in making this workshop a reality is much appreciated.

Thank you.

Prof. Dr. Jegatheswaran Ratnasingam
Chairman of Organizing Committee,
International Forestry Education Workshop 2015.



Participants at the International Forestry Education Workshop 2015



The Organizing Committee of the International Forestry Education Workshop 2015 together with the Keynote Speakers