# APF Net Curriculum 3 INternational dialogue on forestry issues

## **Lecture 2 International developments of the Sustainable Forest Management concept**

## **Part A Transcripts Duration: 00:18:57**

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This is the second lecture in module one but I would like to share with you

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the development in the concept and practice of sustainable forest management internationally. Within this course, you will hear a lot about the term itself and how it is applied locally, nationally and sometimes internationally. But in this series of lectures, since we are talking about international dialogue, I will tell you about how this concept came about to be utilized, how well did that appear internationally, and then of course, was adopted nationally in many cases. By the way, what you see in the picture are some logs somewhere in the tropics. And you will see that they have so many numbers and figures just to show they have been certified, and they are coming from sustainability managed forests, we will talk about this later on. Of course we have to trust the certifiers on that this is already coming from sustainably managed forest. Later on, I will tell you the definition of sustainable forest management, but how did it come about?

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Well, historically back in late 60s and early 70s, everybody was taking about the destruction of the forests, the effects on the environment, and people were very much concerned about the environment, especially the unsustainable harvesting of the forests. The picture you see here was taken somewhere in British Columbia, and huge trees were cut, and the environment was destroyed, and there was a big abroad about this, not only in British Columbia, but in many parts of the world, especially in the tropics. And the environmental communities were very upset. They campaigned against this destructive harvesting of the forests, and the governments followed, of course, governments respond to the attention of people, and there is a lot of discussion about the alarming rates of deforestation. I think, if you look back historically, humanity cut more forests, destroyed more forests in the last century than ever before, so everybody was so concerned and the governments followed.

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So, there was a major conference in Rio de Janerio back in 1992, almost 22, 23 years ago. It is called the UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), Earth Summit, in Rio de Janerio, Brazil where the issue of the climate change, biodiversity, and desertification were raised, and these three areas managed to get themselves conventions, I will talk about this later on, when countries agree to do something about legal, have a legal agreement. But for forestry, part of the main outcomes of the UNCED, the UN Conference on Environment and Development, was something called the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, or in other words, it was named Agenda 21 with the intention that those countries, what they want to do in the 21st century. So they started in 92, never too early to talk about what should we do as countries in the 21st century to protect and save our environment. And a major component of this, although there was no convention in forests, was that the, what it is called the Statement of Forest Principles, and this is some kind of an agreement among countries what should we do about forests in the world, and what should we do to reduce deforestation.

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Because it was growing at a very very high rate at that time. So, countries got together and the United Nations, discussing what can we do about the forests. First, in 1995 there was something called Intergovernmental Panel on Forests (IPF) where all the countries got together under the UN to talk about forests and there was a lot of discussions among countries, and among the invited NGOs, the several societies, the private sectors and so on to discuss what can we do about forests. And these discussions went on for five years but the outcome was not as strong as the countries' hope for because there were a lot of different interests when it comes to forests. If you look at something like climate change I think everybody agrees that even as early as 92, that we must do something about climate change, we must do something about conserving biodiversity, and stopping the deforestation or the desertification, but when it came to forests because of the sovereign rights on this resource, because of the trade, because of the national policies, national interest groups around the world, there was no agreement but the discussion was open and the same happened in the year 2000 and the year 95 countries they said we should continue talking about forests and discussing these in the United Nations so they form an Intergovernmental Forum on Forests (IFF). So they went from panel to forum, and the same discussions continue around the world. But these discussions created a lot of facilitation, a lot of understanding, a lot of agreement about what can we do about the international forest policy. So during these 10 years which is very tedious process, countries met at least once a year to talk about these processes. The main thing was that the dialogue among countries continue, they start talking to each other, they continue to talk to each other, there was no abrupt stoppage of the discussion. A lot of partnerships were built. Many countries got together, rich countries, poor countries, North countries and tropical countries got together, trying to do something about the forest, and the main outcome of these 10 years of discussion was confidence building, like the countries were showing some confidence that really can reach some kind of agreement but there was a lot of collaboration between the north and the south, and a lot of south-south collaboration as well.

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In the meantime the other forums related to forests kept emerging in those ten years, mainly the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the UNFCCC, and the Convention on Biological Diversity, they were very active. They got ratified and they started working, and there was a lot of forestry discussion in the conferences or parties of these conventions. When the countries who are members or who are signatures to these conventions, they got together once a year, there was a big part of the discussion related to forests. Although in the forest forum we did not have a convention but in these conventions they were discussing forestry very intensively and they wanted to do a lot of activities related to climate change and the biodiversity within the forest sector. In the meantime, the thinking of foresters and forestry in general shifted a little bit. In the past as you would hear in some other courses, the main appropriate patient of forests was sustainably lead which means that you cut if you are managing your forests sustainably that means you continue to lead the purposes of the forest to get more and more wood. Place I just put it very simply, you should look at the annual growth like you have a 100 m³ per hectare for example, you come next year and measure it and it becomes 105, so eventually if you want to cut trees, you should cut not more than 5 which is the annual growth, this is just over-simplification. If you have a million hectares, that would be about 5 million m³ annually, which is huge by the way, but that is what you characteristically should harvest in order to maintain the same rate of increase. Alright, but this is beyond sustainability because it is not only that. The thinking in the last 20 years of the last century shifted from sustainable yield that forest as only for timber, to forests for environment services, for biodiversity, for mitigation of climate change, for the water, for the people who live in it. So there was a big shift and that is why started talking about managing the forests sustainably which means that we look at the forest as a combination of economic services, environmental services, and social services. It is not only the wood even some people went to the extent saying that in the future, in the near future, forest would be managed for the environmental services while the timber would be a secondary product. See instead of having the timber, the wood as the primary product became the secondary product relative to environmental services. So in order to be sustainable, people thought that the time which would prove to be not really adequate that we manage the forest for its environmental services and get the timber as a secondary product or forget about the timber, which did not work. By the year 2000, the discussion in the U.N. after the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests, and the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests and in year 2000, the members of the U.N. were discussing forests, decided to establish a new body called the United Nations Forum on Forests. So again the discussion continued from the year 90 to 95 we established some collaborations or partnerships, and 95 to 2000 was a lot of understanding what do we need from the forest. We started talking about sustainability and by establishing the UNFF, United Nations Forum on Forests by United Nations General Assembly in the year 2000 there was a very worldwide recognition of the importance of sustainable forest management, which started to be well defined. That's the year 2000. And the UNFF when it was established by the U.N., its aim was to promote management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests. This is a very loaded statement. The aim of this forum under the U.N. were all the high level diplomats, politicians. The aim is to promote the management, very important, conservation and sustainable development for all types of forests, which means that for the first time officially within the U.N. System we look at the forest from the management which includes economic use, social aspects, economic aspects and the conservation because conservation was very high on the agenda at the time and in general we talk about the sustainable development of all types of forest, not only the tropical forests because everybody was dropping, accusing the tropical countries of misuse of their forests in the tropics. Now everybody is collaborating so that we address all types of forests from the boreal, to the temperate forests, to the tropical forests, even the dry forests that forests in the dry land are well concerned. When it was established in 2000, they started discussing what do we need from the forest in terms of sustainability, sustainable forest management. By the year 2000 they have reached an agreement on Four Global Objectives for the forest operations. And I just mentioned today but later on in this course I'll be talking in details about this agreement, signed in 2006.

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But the Global Objectives on Forests summarize what the world in need from the forest. First we need to reverse the loss of forest cover worldwide through sustainable forest management. You know the high rate of deforestation we need to stop that, we need to reverse that and this will be done through sustainable forest management. This is where the term was going agreed upon and respected internationally. This will include protection, restoration, afforestation, reforestation and increasing the efforts to prevent forest degradation. So that is quite important. What you see in the picture there is a typical example of forest conversion in the tropics. You will see the old forest and cleared the forest and substituting the trees with oil palm. You can look at this as an economic activity that people need to do this. You can look at it as deforestation, you can look at it as conversion, but that is what is happening. The forest is decreasing and converted to something else where it is needed by the country or it's an economic activity or not, but that is the combination of forest use.

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The second global objective on forests is to enhance forest-based economic, social and environmental benefits including by improving the livelihoods of forest-dependent people. That is a very good objective. So we look at the forest now from the three dimensions of sustainability which is the economic, social and environmental benefits, not only one by them they have to be looked at collectively, but most important to start looking at the people who live in the forests that is also first language to appear that we have to work through these three pillars of forest sustainability to look at improving the livelihoods of forest-dependent people, these people who live in the forests, or live outside the forests but use the forests.

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The third global objective was in response to the conservation communities or protection or environmental community which is right that our objectives as countries and global citizens that to increase the area of protected forests worldwide, not only in the tropics. And look at the other aspects of sustainably managing the forests, how are we going to measure the sustainability? how to make sure that it is sustainable? and looking also at the portion of forest products from sustainably managed forest. The systems were developed after that for certification, for looking at if these forest products are from sustainably managed forest or not, and that's the origin of forest certification which you would hear a lot about in some other lectures or modules in this year.

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The last global objective on forests was to reverse the decline in official development assistance for sustainable forest management and mobilize increased new and additional financial resources from all sources for the implementation of sustainable forest management. That is also something very generic and very important that it costs money to manage the forests sustainably. If you want to protect the forests, if you want to protect the people who live in the forests, their social, their livelihood, there is a cost in that. This money comes from either donation or assistance from rich countries, they call it "Official Development Assistance", to give it a nice name "ODA", but this is when the rich countries pay for the poor countries to maintain the forests and improve the forests. And the idea was to help increase or demand the increase in this finance either new or additional from all sources, whether it will be official development assistance, will be private money or local money. And the main idea is to help the implementation of sustainable forest management which comes with a cause as we will show later on.

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[End of Module 1, Lecture 2, Part A. Thank you for watching.]