



**Thank you for joining us for the second day of the Asia-Pacific Forest Governance Forum.**

We hope you enjoyed the sessions and found them as informative as we did. Please find below a summary of some of the key points made. All presentations and recordings will become available [on the CIDT website](#).

**Highlights, 28th September 2021**

Communities and CSOs are on the ground, employing advanced technologies to gather accurate, neutral data required for appropriate decision-making at all levels. Today's session, **Monitoring forest change at the global and local levels: How scientific tools and datasets, together with monitoring on the ground, can improve transparency and accountability and drive effective forest governance?** explored some of these technologies, and how they can help defend community rights, halt illegal logging and, as due diligence rules are put in place globally, assist timber operators in assessing risk.

Professor Dr Ahmad Ismail, President of the long-standing Malaysian Nature Society, chaired today's session, and swiftly got proceedings underway.

Broad platforms and systems put technology at the service of many across national boundaries:

- The World Resources Institute (WRI) has developed two tools to encourage "radical transparency and accountability" in the timber sector. Achille Djeagou presented the **Open Timber Portal (OTP)**, actively used in five Congo Basin countries, that makes accessible data compiled on the ground, standardised IFM reports, and documents based on FLEGT legality systems; importers can better understand legal frameworks and access data crucial for due diligence risk assessment. With translations available, OTP is expanding into Asian markets, and authorities and companies are increasingly willing to share information.
- Gabrielle Nussbaum presented **WRI's Global Forest Watch (GFW)**, a user-friendly platform that mobilises and facilitates local action by combining remote-sensing data, satellite data and cloud computing in a manner that allows comparisons and analyses of weekly change. Its ForestWatcher app permits suspected violations to be reported in real time and has been employed by HaKA NGO in Indonesia to alert to 9000 instances of illegal logging and encroachment in a habitat used by sun bears, orangutans and tigers, leading to 80 cases and several arrests.
- BirdLife International UK's Mike Crosby explained how the **Forest Loss Dashboard** is creating mapped outputs for advocacy uses. Developed to allow BirdLife's partners to monitor forest change in 670 forested Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs), it relies on data from Google Earth, satellite imagery and geospatial data sets. Using 2000 as a baseline, annual forest loss is revealed in layers. In Papua New Guinea and Malaysia, users can zoom in on an interactive, 30m x 30m pixel map that details recent losses in red – particularly useful in flagging recent activity and pinpointing where ground-truthing missions are needed. Graphs and charts allow statistical comparisons over time and across regions. Future adjustments will even be able to distinguish between monoculture plantations and more biodiverse forests.

On more local levels, communities and Indigenous Peoples are using various technologies to play a stronger role in environmental monitoring and enforcement and to better defend their rights.

- To overcome unavailable/insufficient data on Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs), Haribon, the BirdLife affiliate in the Philippines, initiated a "crowd-sourcing data-collection" system, the **Citizens' Action for Monitoring Ecosystem (CAME)**. Josiah Quimpo explained. CAME teams composed of local environment authorities, business members, civil society, other stakeholders and a trained *Bantay gubat* (volunteer forest guard; +100 have been trained) shape their own forest protection and law enforcement plans and patrolling strategies. **KaPatrol**, an android app, enables anyone to report wildlife and forest observations; the CAME teams access the data through a dashboard, analyse and validate it; this information is then used to encourage accountability, and identify needed action in consultation with forest governance agencies and decisionmakers.
- JPIK Indonesia has developed **Rakyat Memantau (monitoring by the people)**, a system of forest & timber legality monitoring by Indigenous and local people, Muhammad Ichwan said. SVLK, Indonesia's timber legality system was developed in response to rampant, destructive illegal logging; in 2016 Indonesia became the first country to issue FLEGT licences. JPIK, a monitoring network of 68 NGOs trains local partners and Indigenous Peoples to monitor both upstream and downstream forest industries, and regularly publish factsheets. Independent monitors ensure the credibility of the system but are hindered by lack of access to government/company data, limited funds for monitors and missions and too few independent monitors for the number of certified companies, and timber traceability and enforcement are insufficient. The system must be updated to simplify complex monitor registration procedures that preclude communities without internet, and to integrate local and Indigenous wisdom, as this is what is most effective in saving the forest.
- In the mountainous northern regions of Thailand ethnic minority communities are vulnerable to eviction because of overlap of conservation areas on community lands. Thaowan Giorno and Sarinthip Promrit of the Raks Thai Foundation & RECOFTC, described a **Participatory Geographic Information System (PGIS)** used to demarcate customary land use based on an impressive level of consensus. Stakeholders are involved at every step, from presence of all users on the day of survey, inputting data surveyed into GIS software to create and agree on the detailed maps. Communities secure a joint verbal agreement with local government on uses, and a working group that includes elderly, women, youth and various occupations, monitor its respect. The GIS Web Portal allows users to zoom – even to the level of household plots, a Dashboard option summarises data, while a 'swipe tool' allows comparison over time. Conflict has been reduced, information is accessible by all and land use rights are protected; they are now working to have customary land use recognised at national level.

During the Q&A session, one participant asked about how a nature-based curriculum can be used in schools to inculcate social responsibility and forest conservation.

- Depending on proximity to local forests, JPIK has worked with community schools to develop a 'tree adoption' programme, where each student adopted a tree to take care of.
- Josiah Quimpo pointed out that adult literacy programmes were implemented to help certain communities participate in the CAME programme and encourage use of the KaPatrol app, allowing "communities to share information and their own thoughts – one of our success stories."

Another participant noted the importance of sharing experiences and lessons internationally, and asked about projects to encourage such exchanges:

- Gabrielle Nussbaum said that many NGOs need to find ways of better communicating – perhaps by collaborating on communicating stories, noting that most civil society work depends on partnerships.
- Achille Djeagou added that different tropical countries face similar obstacles, sharing experiences and bringing this information to the donors is important, so that such exchanges can continue.

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**Coming up tomorrow - Wednesday 29th September**

**The role of non-state actors of different kinds in forest governance and biodiversity conservation: How can civil society organisations bridge the gap between public and private interests? How do we build capacity of CSOs and their (local, national, regional) networks?**

08.00-10.00 UK • 14.00-16.00 THAI, WIB • 15.00-17.00 MLY, PHI • 17.00-19.00 PNG

**Speakers include:**

 <b>Abu Meridian, Kaoem Telapak,</b>	 <b>Samson Pedragosa, Haribon Foundation</b>	 <b>Jean Thomas, Tenkile Conservation Alliance</b>
 <b>Riki Firmandha Ibrahim, Director of Geo Dipa</b>	 <b>Dr Ernie Guiang, USAID</b>	 <b>Zuraidah Said, World Resources Institute (WRI)</b>

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