



Thank you for joining us for the third 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, 29th September 2021

Bruno Cammaert, Regional Coordinator of FAO-EU FLEGT Programme, based in Bangkok FAO, who chaired today's session, invited the more than 150 participants to explore "**The role of non-state actors of different kinds in forest governance and biodiversity conservation**", how they bridge gaps between conflicting interests and build networks, and how they can become more involved. Many of the below cases underscore that, only by establishing relationships and working across personal, sectoral and national boundaries, does anything get accomplished.

Zuraidah Said described how WRI Indonesia has relied on **Global Forest Watch (GFW) and CSO involvement in tracking deforestation**. Working with both the JPIK mandated Independent Forest Monitoring (IFM) network, and the 'Eyes on the Forest' network of nonmandated IFM organisations, they have delivered forest monitoring training, backed by tutorial videos to reinforce learning. GFW and ForestWatcher are crucial in IFM, generating alerts to forest destruction and allowing data to be entered even where Internet connections are unstable. WRI Indonesia developed the *Pantau Jejak* method, a five-stage process that distinguishes between legal and illegal logging to identify priority 'Places to Watch', and it updates these areas quarterly. So far, the *Pantau Jejak* method has been introduced to HAKA an organisation in Aceh, who then shared it with forest rangers, regional police and journalists. WRI Indonesia also introduced JPIK, whose network spans Indonesia, to the GFW and ForestWatcher apps to encourage cooperation in collecting data, and collaborate in field missions in Central Kalimantan and Jambi with the hope to expand in future to cover the whole of Indonesia.

Samson Pedragos, of Haribon Foundation shared insights from his experience with **Civil society participation in forest policy advocacy and decision-making**. In the Philippines, civil society's role was enshrined in the Constitution of 1987. Haribon has recently led the push for a new forestry law, after succeeding in having a previous 'Industry Bill' withdrawn. Although the passion of parliamentary debates was not for the faint of heart, former adversaries learned to respect other views. To be more effective, NSAs must be involved from the outset of legislative processes and must approach debates with evidence-based data that can withstand outside scrutiny gathered by cooperative networks on the ground – hence the importance of capacity-building. A new Sustainable Forest Management Act was approved in the House in early 2021 and awaits action in the Senate.

Law enforcement presents challenges for civil society, and Abu Meridian of Kaoem Telepak, in Indonesia described some of the difficulties encountered. It is difficult, for instance, for CSOs to follow the changing *modus operandi* of the illegal timber trade and track illegal logging activity in national parks, for example, to international markets such as Malaysia and China. Progress is possible, as for example a 2005 case that received presidential attention and provoked action on the ground. Monitoring organisations should cooperate with PPATK (Indonesia's Financial Transaction Report and Analysis Centre) Financial Information Unit in order to follow complex money-laundering links, as well as to communicate with networks beyond national borders. Whereas in 2005, only low-level illegal operators were prosecuted, in 2013 a high-profile case targeted a director, resulting in jail time. Without media attention, however, it is unlikely prosecution will be pursued, so it is crucial to inform the media of cases involving 'big fish' to raise the profile and obtain a government response. The past 20 years have seen improvements in transparency and civil society involvement, and shown the importance of connecting with people in business, in government, in other relevant countries, to strengthen market-side regulation and ensure that markets receive only legal, sustainable timber.

Dr Ernie Guiang of USAID and FAO-EU FLEGT, described the **Challenges, opportunities and constraints of Community-Based Forest Management in the Philippines**. Natural resources responsibilities for managing forests and watersheds are shared between the Department of Environmental and Natural Resources (DENR) and the Forest Management Bureau; a 1995 executive order institutes Community-Based Forest Management to ensure sustainable development of forestlands. Despite these mandates, field units implementing policies in forestlands confront the challenge of balancing protection and conservation with production; they are confused about where to place focus. The confusion, frequently compounded by unclear tenure, affects some 25 million people across more than 11 million hectares of land. Productivity is low and poverty very high among upland farmers as a result, and communities need significant capacity-building, access to technology and local government support. CSOs must work to ensure that implementing rules are not 'siloes' – fragmented across ministries – and that they are balanced, simple and emphasise smallholder rather than industrial production.

The only NSA from the private sector, Andika Yudiansyah described **Geo Dipa Energi's Involvement in Indonesia's Mt. Patuha Forest**, showing how enlightened private interest can help advance conservation. Indonesia is the world's second largest geothermal energy producer, and Geo Dipa both produces and transmits power. Geothermal processes do not use fossil fuels but magma to heat water, and the forest watershed is essential to this process. GeoDipa's forest concession is 17+ ha. but the forests its operations rely on are much larger, and home to the Javan leopard, gibbon and eagle, among other rare species. The company cooperates with environmentalists and local communities to support livelihoods and ensure that forests are monitored, and has developed a biodiversity-monitoring tool with Burung Indonesia; together, they train participants and compile and disseminate results. Across 21 local resources important to villagers, a pilot run recorded 29 ecosystems disturbances, and 207 biodiversity encounters with 65 bird species. They are also working to improve management of a coffee plantation with the local community, e.g., to replace chemical fertilizer with organic compost production.

For two decades, Jean Thomas and her husband have lived in Papua New Guinea, working on **Empowering local communities for equity and sustainability**, through the Tenkile Conservation Alliance; this proximity has fostered understanding of the Indigenous and local communities with whom they work to protect the endangered tree kangaroo (Tenkile) and its habitats. TCA works with 43 Indigenous Peoples across the Torricelli mountain range to build skills needed to speak to government structures. TCA relies exclusively on locals and on Free Prior Informed Consent in all aspects of their work to supply training, a research centre and basic equipment. To address the two main biodiversity threats in the area, overhunting and habitat loss (forest destruction/degradation), TCA secured a hunting moratorium that it complements with food security projects, yielding observable results. Work to establish a conservation area has encountered a lack of political will to finalise gazetting. To replace a government-funded app that was discontinued when grant funding ended, TCA has developed its own 'mother nature' app for collecting and recording real-time forest data and incorporating Indigenous concerns in its research. They work to identify local leaders with a view to handing over control of TCA.



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