

WFC SIDE EVENT: *Traditional values, practices and forest policy: transforming local challenges into renewed partnership*

Wednesday 9th September 2015

Moderator: John Parrotta (US Forest Service & IUFRO)

Panelists:

Edna Kaptoyo (International Alliance Of Indigenous And Tribal Peoples Of The Tropical Forests, Kenya)

Bharati Kumari Pathak (FECOFUN, Nepal)

Oscar Simanto (Kenya Forest Service, Nairobi, Kenya)

Howard Rosen (International Wood Culture Society)

Coert Geldenhuys (FORESTWOOD cc, Stellenbosch University & University of Pretoria, South Africa)

Main points from presentations and discussion:

- The integration of traditional knowledge and values into policy-making and development of forest management planning remains a significant challenge, despite the growing recognition of its many values and benefits;
- Policy makers and land planners need to become more aware of and respect the conservation and sustainable use outcomes (for livelihoods, food security, biodiversity conservation, human health, etc.) of traditional forest (and landscape) management practices, and their adaptability to changing environmental and socio-economic conditions;
- There is considerable scope for greater involvement of traditional forest and landscape managers (i.e., indigenous and local communities) in policy development and management planning, but this requires incentivizing local communities via stronger recognition of rights, customary law, and traditional practices and associated institutions;
- There is a need to bridge the communication/understanding gap between traditional forest managers /users and those in other segments of society, including decision-makers – part of this will involve challenging how we think about forests and landscapes, and broadening our understanding of traditional knowledge systems (beyond formal scientific knowledge)
- Non-governmental organizations (among others) have an important educational role to play to promote greater understanding among all sectors of society – especially among youth and urban populations – of the cultural values of forests and traditional forest products, and the linkages between these values and traditional management practices;
- The erosion of traditional forest-related [ecological] knowledge is a serious challenge for most traditional societies for a variety of reasons requiring action to both preserve, pass on (to the younger generation) and facilitate continued development of TK and associated management practices.
- **Key words/phrases:** Valuation; education; awareness; recognition of rights; inclusiveness --> RESPECT & CELEBRATE DIVERSITY !