

## Green Technologies and Products for Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation

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Climate change is a global problem, with global causes and effects. It affects the basic elements of life for people around the world – access to water, food production, health, and the environment.

The recently intensified debates and discussions on climate change have introduced many additional challenges to the efficient and sustainable utilization of forest products. Efficient processing technologies and maximized wood utilization constitute major components in the green business strategy designed to conserve resources, reduce impacts to the environment, human safety and health, and promote greater overall efficiency. In addition, alternatives, such as using bio-fibre waste or by-products of other industries, are continuously being sought to reduce dependence on non-renewable natural resources. The ultimate objective is to improve carbon reduction, carbon sequestration and carbon conservation leading to overall carbon emission reduction for climate change mitigation and adaptation.

From 14-16 December 2009, the Asia and the Pacific Forest Products Workshop on "Green Technologies and Products for Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation" was held in Marawila, Sri Lanka, with the aim to provide a forum for linking various agencies and institutions dealing with climate change issues in forest products processing and utilization, and to share strategies, experiences and knowledge, related to green forest products technology.

Dr Dave Cown, a senior scientist of Scion, New Zealand; and also the Coordinator of Division V, IUFRO, led a panel discussion with Dr Hiran Amarasekara (Sri Lanka), Dr GS Rawat (India), Dr Jegatheswaran Ratnasingam (Malaysia) and Dr Arsenio Ella (Philippines). There was a general consensus that climate change is inevitable



Courtesy of Sri Lanka Forest Department

and unavoidable, and the impacts are evident in many countries. The role of science in the climate change debates shall be strengthened and there is a need to create sufficient awareness and contribute to policy formulation. Strategies should be developed to reduce dependence on natural forests. More environmentally friendly products, including 'green' buildings, would need to be developed and promoted. In addition, it is the people that need to be convinced to adopt the proposed strategies and policies for action.

However, prices of wood products are still low. Climate change mitigation and adaptation is a good opportunity to raise awareness for the need to demand higher prices for wood products. Life Cycle Analyses and assessments of carbon footprints would be good tools to provide the justification to support higher prices for wood products.

In many of the Asian and Pacific countries, wood products and forestry experts do not influence policy formulation. Furthermore, in the forest products industries, the industrial associations typically have different views and different expectations. However, without the significant participation of and consultations with all stakeholders, especially research and industrial communities, most of the problems faced will remain unsolved as policy implementation would prove to be ineffective.

The workshop was an initiative IUFRO, funded by an allocation from contributions of the Korean Government, through the Korea Forest Research Institute (KFRI), to IUFRO. The workshop was organized by the Asia Pacific Association of Forest Research Institutions (APAFRI) in technical collaboration with the Sri Lanka Forest Department, Forest Research Institute Malaysia (FRIM), and KFRI. It was held in Marawila, Sri Lanka, from 14-16 December 2009 and attracted 35 participants from 11 countries across the Asia-Pacific region. A total of 22 papers were presented in three technical sessions. For more information, visit: <http://www.apafri.org>