

Expert Workshop on Restoration and Adaptation of Mountain Forests in Central and Northeast Asia

19-22 October 2015, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan

Land use and governance systems have changed dramatically over the last century in Central and Northeast Asia. Development of large-scale irrigated agriculture, establishment of the mining industry to extract oil, natural gas, iron, copper, and complex ores, and related industrial enterprises have taken their toll on the natural environment. Many countries in the region were affected by the dissolution of the Soviet Union, which was accompanied by privatization of land that has allowed a variety of resource exploitation, such as overgrazing of pastures, forest logging, and unsustainable use of water resulting in the erosion and salinization of soils. During this transitional post-Soviet period, there has been increased hunting pressures on wildlife. Much of the area of Central and Northeast Asia has been affected by some degree of anthropogenic desertification that will be exacerbated by future changes in climate.

A workshop of invited experts will be held in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan from 19-22 October 2015. The purpose of the workshop is to provide a forum for exchange of information on the ecology of forests in Central and Northeast Asia, focusing on mountain forests. Of particular interest is the regeneration of important forest types, silvicultural systems, and current threats from natural and human disturbances. Restoration needs and currently used methods of reconstruction, rehabilitation, and reclamation will be shared. Integration of information across biomes (particularly commonalities and differences) and identification of knowledge gaps will provide needed information for pursuing restoration pledges in support of the Bonn Challenge.

This workshop is sponsored by IUFRO Unit 1.06.00 Restoration of Degraded Sites, Unit 1.01.05 Mountain Forest Management, and the Task Force Forest Adaptation and Restoration under Global Change. It provides a targeted follow-on to the workshop held in 2014 in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia and to the Keep Asia Green work supported by the ASEAN-Korea Environmental Cooperation Project (AKECOP) and the Special Programme for Development of Capacities (SPDC) of the International Union of Forest Research Organizations (IUFRO). This current workshop is supported by the Forest Institute of National Academy of Sciences, Kyrgyz Republic; the Korea Forest Research Institute; and the US Forest Service through IUFRO-SPDC.

The Workshop will be conducted in Russian and English (simultaneous translation will be provided). A detailed agenda will be forthcoming at a later date but generally, the Workshop will be three full days; two days of presentations and structured discussion and an all-day field trip. Lodging, meals, and local transportation will be provided for all invitees; some limited international travel assistance will be available.

Invited participants are expected to prepare a written report and oral presentation that summarizes key aspects of mountain forests in their respective countries including ecology, genetic resources, silviculture, restoration and climate change adaptation.