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IMFN NEWSLETTER

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IMFN Meets in Halifax in September

Since the last International Model Forest Network (IMFN) newsletter in October 1998, much has happened worldwide in model forest development and IMFN activities. This newsletter is meant to give you a taste of just some of these events and recent developments. Like model forests, the IMFN is dynamic — moving forward as interest in the model forest concept and networking continues to grow. The IMFN Secretariat along with 30 representatives from 12 countries and organizations look forward to the exchange of ideas and experience that will occur in the meetings of the Canadian Model Forest Network and in the IMFN Forum in Halifax, Nova Scotia.

Fred Johnson
Executive Director
IMFNS

Determining the Future of the IMFN

In October 1997, representatives from 12 countries (Argentina, Australia, Canada, Chile, China, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, Russia, South Africa, USA, and UK) active in the IMFN, or considering the establishment of model forests, plus the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), met in Antalya, Turkey to exchange views on model forests and networking.

Participants agreed to engage in a collective dialogue to:

- refine the criteria that define model forests,
- provide perspectives on their needs and expectations vis a vis networking,
- examine the role of model forests nationally and internationally, and
- look at approaches to coordinating and supporting an international network.

It was agreed that this consultation would take place through a series of bilateral and multilateral meetings on these issues.

Since then, multi-country regional meetings have been held in Japan, the USA, Chile, and Russia. Over 32 countries participated in this consultation process along with representatives from local non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and international organizations. Workshops and country-level and bilateral meetings with country policy advisors also took place and were successful in having participants and countries confirm their interest to continue development of the model forest concept.

Among other things, the consultations concluded that model forests are unique to their country setting (i.e. their geographical, cultural and institutional setting). To be self-sustaining they must provide real benefits to the people and participants at the local level as well as at national levels. The desire for and benefits of sharing experiences and knowledge through networking activities were also confirmed. Networking of model forest participants and activities at local, regional, national and international levels is attractive because it provides benefits to all players. It allows the communities and forestry specialists to learn from one another and thereby accelerate the application of innovative planning and management options. The IMFN was seen to be unique and not in competition with other initiatives. For the IMFN to be effective and efficient in networking, it should be facilitated and coordinated through an international Secretariat. The range of expectations for networking and coordination through a Secretariat is diverse and reflects the views and needs of developed countries, those in transition, and countries that are in

a developing stage.

Having completed the consultations and bilateral discussions with policy advisors and officials from the Antalya group of countries, the IMFNS, as facilitator, prepared a discussion paper on the future of the IMFN. This paper proposed a framework of activities for the IMFN, a governance structure, and mechanisms to support the IMFN and its Secretariat. This paper, along with a proposal for the next steps in the international consultation process, was presented to the heads of forestry organizations in a meeting held on the margins of the United Nations, FAO, Committee on Forestry (COFO), in Rome, in March 1999.

At that meeting there was broad endorsement of the discussion paper and agreement to explore options for the creation and support of a five-year IMFN development program for the period March 2000 to 2005. Discussions will focus on identifying priority areas of work, and exploring the ways and means of supporting the IMFN and its Secretariat in the Development Program. An IMFN Consultative Committee, chaired by Dan Welsh, Canadian Forest Service (CFS), and consisting of country representatives, has been established and will be focusing on these issues over the coming months.

Program Highlights

Since 1997 the IMFN has been supporting a three-year transition phase for model forest operations in Mexico and Russia. This transition period will wrap-up on March 31, 2000. In both countries, transition strategies have been developed to secure the leadership and support needed to ensure that their model forests remain sustainable and the countries continue to be active participants in the IMFN.

Mexico

The Mexican Ministry of Natural Resources (SEMARNAP) is committed to facilitating the growth of model forests and the development of a Mexican Model Forest Network. The focus continues to be on strengthening community participation in decision-making processes, and on the management and use of forest resources. The IMFNS continues to work with SEMARNAP to ensure the growth of the Mexican Program, and to encourage SEMARNAP to explore options for the coordination and financing of the Mexican Program beyond March 2000. There are currently three model forests in Mexico — the Monarch Butterfly MF, the Chihuahua MF, and the Calakmul MF.

Russia

The Model Forest program in Russia continues to operate in two main areas and both are arriving at important milestones.

The Gassinski Model Forest Association (GMFA)

The project in the Russian far east is now in the final year of its three-year transition phase. After

March 2000, it will operate independent of IMFN financial support and with greater integration of its activities with the Russian Federal Forest Service. The project will continue to focus on the development of a decision support process, GIS, monitoring local level indicators, economic development within the MF area, and the development of infrastructure and capacity for improved resource management. With reference to local level indicators, it has proposed collaborative work with the McGregor MFA and received a positive response in return.

The GMFA reports it has been awarded three contracts through USAID for work related to technology and know-how transfer of model forest-related expertise to other areas of Russia's far east.

Other Regions of Russia

The Russian Federal Forest Service (Rosleskhoz) continues to be active in exploring the development of additional model forest sites in Russia and in encouraging collaboration. This was most evident this past June during an international workshop held in Petrozavodsk, in the Russian republic of Karelia. The event, Model Forests in Russia: Experience and Prospects for the Future, was sponsored jointly by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry of Finland and Rosleskhoz, with the assistance of Peter Besseau of the IMFNS and took place from June 22 to 24, 1999. It brought together representatives from four Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) project sites in Russia (including GMFA), as well as NGOs (WWF, IUCN, MacArthur Foundation), the World Bank, and others, to look at the status and prospects for further model forest development in Russia. Discussions took place on options for collaborative work between the sites. In addition to Gassinski, other sites include WWF-sponsored projects in the Komi Republic and in the region of Pskov, and the "Taiga Model Forest" (a research forest) in Karelia, established with sponsorship from the Government of Finland.

At the workshop in Petrozavodsk, representatives of Rosleskhoz and the four sites agreed in principle to the idea of working toward creation of a Russian Model Forest Network and Secretariat. Details on what a Russian secretariat and its network members should or could do to develop the country's model forest objectives will require careful consideration and discussion, but proponents have agreed to aim for completion of terms of reference by year's end.



**Petrozavodsk workshop participants visit
interpretive Centre in the village of Matrosy**

China

Linan Model Forest Workshop

The Chinese Academy of Forestry (CFA), the IMFNS, and the CFS jointly sponsored China's first model forest workshop from March 29 to April 2, 1999. It was hosted by Linan County (three hours south-west of Shanghai). The event was attended by approximately 60 participants, including representatives from the IMFNS, the Canadian Model Forest Network (CMFN), the CFS, Germany (GTZ), and Canada (CIDA). The objective of the workshop was a detailed review of the Linan Model Forest proposal, with supporting field visits throughout the county. The participation of the CMFN Secretariat and Fundy Model Forest were particularly valuable in bringing the model forest concept and experience to Chinese participants in a way that was relevant to the Chinese context. The workshop concluded with support in principle being given to the proposal, along with recommendations for strengthening the initiative, including greater attention to the development of the local partnership.



Participants of the Linan Workshop, April, 1999

The Linan Workshop was followed by meetings in Beijing with the CFA, where strong support was voiced by the Chinese for ensuring continuation of the Linan project. The CFA views the Linan Model Forest as the first in a network of potentially as many as eight model forests across a range of China's forest regions.

(Note: Findings from the Linan Model Forest Workshop are available on the IMFN web site <http://www.idrc.ca/imfn>)

Japan

Mie Workshop

From March 23 to 27, 1999, the Forestry Agency of Japan, the FAO and the IMFNS collaborated to deliver the second of Japan's four promised annual international workshops on model forests for field-level application of sustainability, which took place in Mie Prefecture. The Mie event was attended by over 100 participants from 17 countries and focused on practical options for effectively promoting the model forest approach and for enhancing international cooperation in model forest development. The Mie River Watershed was used as a case study to stimulate discussion on partnership building, the integration of planning and consultation processes, and mechanisms for encouraging participation by all stakeholders. Workshop proceedings are to be published later this Summer.

Workshop III - Gunma Prefecture, Japan

The Japan Forestry Agency, the FAO and the IMFNS have completed plans for the third workshop in this series, to be held in Gunma Prefecture, October 19-23, 1999. The themes to be explored will be stakeholder identification and engagement, public/private partnerships, and networking. As with the previous two workshops in this series, participation will be by invitation and will draw heavily from South Asia. Canadian, US and Russian model forest representatives have been invited to participate.

Status of Japanese Model Forests

Japan plans to consider options for more effective partnership development for its model forest initiatives in Kochi and Hokkaido. In this regard, the Government of Hokkaido Prefecture recently contacted the Government of Alberta with a request that Foothills Model Forest collaborate with Hokkaido to assist it to develop its model forest project. Foothills is expected to arrange for a representative to travel to Japan this fall for discussions with counterparts in Sapporo, on Hokkaido Island.



Harvested area on top of mountain in Mie, Japan

Indonesia

An Indonesian Mission to Mexico in June 1999, was sponsored by the European Union. The delegation met with the Coordinator of the Mexican Model Forest Program, Dr. Eduardo Casas Diaz, and visited the Monarch Butterfly and Calakmul Model Forests. Kafui Dansou, Program Officer with the IMFN Secretariat was also on hand to describe the network. The delegation was particularly interested in the application of the MF concept in Mexico where local communities' livelihoods depend on forest resources. The information and understanding derived from this visit will be very valuable in the ongoing discussions in Indonesia regarding model forest development.

USA

The USA was an active contributor to the Mie Workshop, fielding two representatives and being active in both plenary and working group discussions and presentations. It is expected that the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Forest Service will support a representative from the USA model forest programme to speak at the up-coming workshop in Gunma Prefecture.

Currently, the USA is also collaborating with the IMFNS to explore options for the development of an information system which will facilitate and encourage information sharing. This project is being developed in the USA and is designed to support decision-making and to ease the identification of collaboration opportunities. The proposal is currently being reviewed by the US National Science Foundation. The IMFNS believes this development work could serve as a test bed for future information system development in the IMFN.

FAO/Japan Trust Fund for Model Forest in Asia

The Government of Japan and the FAO have finalized an exciting proposal to develop four model forest sites in South Asia. It is hoped that the project will begin in January 2000, with management out of the FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific in Bangkok. Under the proposed initiative some USD \$1.58M will be expended over the next three years to establish sites in Thailand, China, Philippines, and Myanmar. A project preparation meeting took place in Bangkok, June 8-10, which brought together representatives of the four targeted countries to get agreement on and finalize the project proposal. The meeting was hosted by the FAO Bangkok, with participation from representatives of FAO headquarters and regional office, the Japan Forestry Agency, and the IMFNS.

Russia's Gassinski MF Spins off Regional Economic Benefits

Since its establishment, the GMFA has focussed its activities on creating models of ecological and economic sustainability for the MF territory. Now, under a major economic development initiative that the GMFA played a large part in securing, the Gassinski's partners are in a position to put their economic development strategies to the test. In March of this year the McGregor Model Forest Association (MMFA) and CIDA reached agreement on a four-year project valued at CDN \$5 million (of which CDN \$3.5 M will be contributed by CIDA) for a Natural Resource-based Economic Development Initiative in the Nanaïski Raion of Khabarovsk Krai (home of the Gassinski MF). The project will develop the region's institutional and business capacity through training and mentorship by working with the best and most promising of the region's local entrepreneurs to create new business enterprises in five areas:

- Value-added wood processing,
- Non-wood forest products,
- Regional tourism development,
- Economic opportunities for the region's indigenous Nanai people, and
- Creation of a national park.

The success of the proposal highlighted the effective pooling of the model forest's skills and resources as well as its network. The Gassinski MFA provided a detailed sustainable economic development strategy for the region, a product of the Association's phase I work. The model forest's well-established network in the Krai and its reputation as a good partner, played a significant role in the success of the proposal. The project is now underway under the management of Mr. Martin Hudson of the MMFA in Canada, and Mr. Evgeny Zabubenin, formerly GMFA Project Manager, in Russia. The MMFA has put together five local teams to deliver the initiative, the majority having been long-term partners or associates. The IMFNS was pleased to facilitate linkages in this initiative and to work with proponents to take this proposal to sponsors.

Congratulations to all involved!

CIFOR Writing Workshop, Hawaii, August 1999

In March, the IMFNS submitted a proposal to the Centre for International Forestry Research (CIFOR) to participate in a writing competition on the theme "Methods for Multiple Stakeholder Management of Community Forests". The specific goal of the writing workshop was to document and analyze how stakeholders adjust to changing circumstances under a variety of adaptive co-management scenarios, the model forest initiative being one. The proposal was enthusiastically accepted and, in late July, Dr. Ron Ayling was engaged by the IMFNS to pack his survival kit and head off for four weeks' work in Honolulu, Hawaii. Output from the workshop was not only the new contacts and new appreciation for other sustainable forest management (SFM) initiatives around the globe, but also a publication describing a variety of case studies and experiences. Dr. Ayling's chapter will be one of ten in a publication expected to be out by January 2000. The IMFN chapter will illustrate, through examples from Mexico, Russia, and Canada, that the model forest concept can be effectively applied in a variety of settings and that both the communities and the resource base can benefit.

The IMFNS and the Canadian Model Forest Network Secretariat (CMFNS) were pleased to collaborate in support of this initiative.

So, You Want to Build a Model Forest?

Final edits are now being made to the "Model Forest Development Guide" based upon feedback from a number of astute readers throughout the network, as well as from the FAO. The Guide was put together by the IMFNS with the help of model forests. It addresses a number of key questions about model forests: where the concept came from, how it evolved, what is a model forest, how is one established, and what exactly does a model forest do?

Two things have argued in favour of creating such a guide. First, there continues to be great demand for information from around the world about model forests and the network. Second, with six years of experience in Canada, and five internationally, there is more than enough expertise and experience to answer those questions clearly in an easy-to-use format. In putting the Guide together, the objective was, in fact, to keep it simple so that the core messages are given the prominence they deserve, and, more importantly, so that the document can be easily updated.

The Guide consists of a short (23 pages) main text and a separate annex. The annex is made up of documents from individual model forests that show, among other things, partnership

composition, organizational charts, and programme areas. We hope that the model forest message will be clear and accessible, and that readers share with us their thoughts on how it might be further improved.

The draft guide is currently in English, French and Spanish. Russian, Japanese and Chinese versions are expected to be available in late 1999.

New Partnership

Over the past few years, the Manitoba Model Forest (MMF) and the Monarch Butterfly Model Forest (MBMF) have been exploring opportunities to work together in the areas of ecotourism, sustainable communities and education.

Their collaboration has progressed to an agreement-in-principle, reached between the MMF, the MBMF in Mexico and the Earthbound Environmental Inc., to place a Canadian intern with the MBMF to work for six months on joint MMF/MBMF ecotourism projects. The intern, a recent Canadian graduate, will work under the direction of MMF staff. Salary will be provided by the Canada/Mexico Environmental Internship Project, and the model forest will be responsible for room and board. It is proposed that the intern will then work for six months in the Manitoba MF. The possibility of an additional intern for the MBMF, to work on issues of domestic waste management, is also being considered.

Madame Jiang Visits the Long Beach MF

In July 1999, Madame Jiang, President of the Chinese Academy of Forestry, had the opportunity to visit the Long Beach Model Forest (LBMF). In addition to other Chinese colleagues, Madame Jiang was accompanied by Mrs. Maureen O'Neil, President of the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) and Dr. Gordon Smith, Chairman of the Board of Governors of IDRC. It was an opportunity to tour the LBMF area and to learn about forestry issues in the region and some of the activities underway in LBMF. The visit was opportune as the Chinese Academy of Forestry is the lead organization for the development of model forests in China.

Chiloé MF — a New Approach to Education

Education has been identified as a priority area by the Chiloé Model Forest Partnership. Schools in Chiloé are strongly rooted in the community life and their programs could help improve the households' productive activities.

The Chiloé Model Forest wishes to work with schools and the teaching community to promote and develop curricula and activities which would integrate formal education subjects with environmental and sustainable management issues. This would also help the model forest raise awareness in Chiloé of sustainable forest management issues and spur on innovative community-driven ideas for the wise use and conservation of the island's natural resources.



Chilean delegation meets teachers from Fundy MF

The Chiloé Model Forest is looking to Canada to learn from the experience of Canadian model forests and other organizations. With the assistance of the IMFNS and the Canadian Model Forest Network Secretariat, they have collected information on model forest projects dealing with education. In March 1999, Adriana Hoffman and Martin Cox, from the Chiloé Model Forest, visited Sussex, New Brunswick, to discuss environmental education with partners of the Fundy Model Forest. As follow-up, a Chilean delegation of teachers and municipal education officers will return to Canada in mid-September 1999. The activities planned for this mission include:

- participation in the Fundy Teachers Seminar,
- examination of Eastern Ontario Model Forest's efforts in education, and
- visits to other Canadian institutions involved in environmental education.

This work and other Canadian-Chiloé MF linkages are being supported under a CIDA Cone Fund Project which is administered by the IMFNS.

People on the Move

Mr. Richard Baerg has left the IMFNS and will be pursuing a new career as an expert consultant in forestry. As many of you know, Richard made a significant contribution over the last five years to the development of model forests internationally. We all wish Richard the best in his new endeavours and we have no doubt that Richard's work will see him involved in IMFN activities in the future.

Peter Besseau, formerly with the McGregor Model Forest, is now working in the IMFNS as the Senior Program Officer covering Russia, Australia and Asia.

Early in 1999, **Mr. Luis Poot Chan** assumed the role of General Manager of the Calakmul

Model Forest. Mr. Poot Chan comes to the MF program with extensive experience in forestry and social development projects.

After four successful years with the Gassinski MFA, **Mr. Evgeny Zabubenin** has moved on to become the Russian coordinator of the McGregor MFA's CIDA-sponsored project for the Nanaiski Raion. **Mr. Dmitri Pevin** has assumed Mr. Zabubenin's former position as Gassinski's Project Manager.



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