



Asia-Pacific Network for Sustainable  
Forest Management and Rehabilitation



Asia-Pacific Network for Sustainable Forest  
Management and Rehabilitation

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# Strategic Plan 2021–2025

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*Adding green for Asia and the Pacific*

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# ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

<b>APAFRI</b>	Asia-Pacific Association of Forestry Research Institutes
<b>APEC</b>	Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation
<b>AP-FECM</b>	Asia-Pacific Forestry Education Coordination Mechanism
<b>APFNet</b>	Asia-Pacific Network for Sustainable Forest Management and Rehabilitation
<b>ASEAN</b>	Association of South East Asian Nations
<b>CIFOR</b>	Center for International Forestry Research
<b>FAO</b>	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
<b>GMS</b>	Greater Mekong Subregion
<b>ha</b>	hectare(s)
<b>ITTO</b>	International Tropical Timber Organization
<b>IUFRO</b>	International Union of Forest Research Organizations
<b>KTC</b>	Kunming Training Center of APFNet
<b>SANFRI</b>	Sino-ASEAN Network of Forestry Research Institutes
<b>SFM</b>	sustainable forest management
<b>UN</b>	United Nations

## BACKGROUND

The Asia-Pacific Network for Sustainable Forest Management and Rehabilitation (APFNet) is an international organization dedicated to advancing sustainable forest management (SFM) and forest rehabilitation in the Asia-Pacific region. The establishment of APFNet was proposed by China in cooperation with Australia and the United States and adopted at the Fifteenth Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Economic Leaders Meeting in September 2007. The formation of APFNet was included in the 2007 Sydney Declaration on Climate Change, Energy Security and Clean Development to promote and improve SFM and forest rehabilitation in the region. APFNet was launched formally in 2008.

APFNet is open to and welcomes participation from all economies, civil society, the private sector, academic forestry institutions and international organizations in the Asia-Pacific region. Its operations to date have been guided by two strategic plans spanning 2011–2015 and 2016–2020. Through the implementation of these plans, APFNet has helped its member economies and organizations promote SFM and forest rehabilitation via capacity building, demonstration projects, policy dialogues and information-sharing – the four key pillars of APFNet’s activities. This third strategic plan for APFNet is based largely on the outputs of the Independent Ten-Year Review of APFNet Operations 2010–2020 and the results of a review of the implementation of the second strategic plan, both of which were completed in 2020.

The pace of economic development accelerated in many Asia-Pacific economies over the last decade. The region’s share of global gross domestic product increased from 27.3 percent in 2000 to more than 40 percent by 2017<sup>1</sup>. Understandably, economic policy in developing economies has long focused on maximizing growth in view of the imperatives of poverty reduction and job creation. This is evident in the Asia-Pacific region, where decades of high economic growth have transformed the socioeconomic landscape – 1 billion people have been lifted out of extreme poverty in the last two decades, and living standards have been raised for even more<sup>2</sup>. This growth has been accompanied, however, by rising inequality of income and opportunity and the potential to breach planetary limits for environmental damage, thus endangering the well-being of future generations. According to a 2020 report by the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific on progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Asia-Pacific region is not on track to achieve any of the 17 SDGs<sup>3</sup>. The region has either stagnated or regressed on several environment-related SDGs,

<sup>1</sup> See FAO. 2019. *Forest futures-sustainable pathways for forests, landscapes and people in the Asia-Pacific region*. Bangkok, pp.106-111.

<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless, some APFNet member economies still have per-capita incomes of less than USD 10000 per year.

<sup>3</sup> Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. 2020. *Economic and social survey of the Asia Pacific 2020*. United Nations Publication E.20.11.F.16. Bangkok.

with the biggest regression related to SDG 12 (“ensuring sustainable consumption and production patterns”). In this context, more than 130 economies worldwide are now participating in the Belt and Road Initiative, a far-reaching infrastructure and development programme initiated by China that recognizes the need to strengthen cooperation in ecological and environmental protection to help realize the SDGs.

The pace of economic development in the Asia-Pacific region is creating both opportunities and challenges for forest conservation and management. Annex 1 summarizes changes in forest cover in APFNet member economies between 2010 and 2020<sup>4</sup>. Overall, net forest cover in APFNet member economies expanded by 12.3 million ha over the period. Eleven member economies recorded stable or increasing net forest cover, with the largest increases in China (19.4 million ha), Australia (4.46 million ha) and India (2.66 million ha). Seven member economies experienced net forest-cover losses, with the largest in Indonesia (7.53 million ha), Myanmar (2.90 million ha) and Cambodia (2.52 million ha).

Globally, the role of forests in providing various goods and ecosystem services – including climate-change mitigation and adaptation, biodiversity conservation, energy development, combating desertification and land degradation, protecting watersheds, producing wood, and supporting public health and food security – is now better understood and being discussed at the economy, regional and global levels. Economies are implementing programmes designed to help meet the SDGs and the targets set by the 2015 Paris Agreement on climate change, with an increasing number of economies starting programmes to reach net-zero carbon emissions by 2050. The United Nations (UN) General Assembly has adopted the UN Strategic Plan for Forests 2017–2030 and the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration 2021–2030. Large-scale forest landscape restoration has emerged as an important global priority. The Bonn Challenge (2011) and the New York Declaration on Forests (2014) both call for the restoration of 350 million ha of degraded forests globally by 2030. Annex 2 provides an overview of some of these processes.

The implementation framework of the UN Strategic Plan for Forests recognizes that regional and subregional bodies and processes provide a crucial bridge between international policies and economy-level actions and are important partners in efforts to implement the plan and achieve its Global Forest Goals. One of these goals is to “reverse the loss of forest cover worldwide through sustainable forest management, including protection, restoration, afforestation and reforestation, and increase efforts to prevent forest degradation and contribute to the global effort of addressing climate change”; the goal includes a target of increasing the forest area by 3 percent worldwide by 2030.

The UN Strategic Plan for Forests sees roles for regional and subregional bodies in information exchange, enhancing cooperation, raising awareness, strengthening stakeholder engagement and building capacity to scale up best practices within and across regions. APFNet will work with its member organizations – the

<sup>4</sup> All data taken from: FAO. 2020. *Global Forest Resources Assessment 2020*. Table A1, pp. 137–142; FAO did not separately report for Hong Kong, China or Chinese Taipei.



Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO), the Pacific Community, RECOFTC and The Nature Conservancy to deepen and extend regional cooperation on forest landscape restoration<sup>5</sup>.

Several APFNet member economies – Bangladesh, India, Mexico, Mongolia, Peru, Sri Lanka and the United States – have made pledges under the Bonn Challenge. Of these, the largest pledge is by India, which aims to increase its forest area by 21 million ha by 2030. The smallest pledge is by Sri Lanka, which aims to achieve an increase of 200,000 ha. To date, pledges made by APFNet member economies total 49.22 million ha (Annex 3).

Ten APFNet member economies – Canada, Indonesia, Mexico, Mongolia, Nepal, Peru, the Philippines, Thailand, the United States and Viet Nam – have endorsed the New York Declaration on Forests. Seven APFNet member economies – Australia, Canada, China, India, Indonesia, New Zealand and Thailand – have made notifications of voluntary national contributions under the UN Strategic Plan for Forests. Australia and New Zealand have both indicated that they plan to plant 1 billion trees over a ten-year period beginning in 2018. Viet Nam announced plans to plant 1 billion trees by 2025, and India indicated that it would expand its forest cover by 200,000 ha per year<sup>6</sup>. Indonesia reported that it hoped to reduce its net deforestation rate from 920,000 ha per year to 320,000 ha per year by 2030. The Government of Thailand is committed to maintaining primary forest cover while increasing forest land reclamation and the rehabilitation of degraded forest areas.

China's voluntary national contribution outlines how existing programmes will contribute to the Global Forest Goals. China plans to increase its forest cover to 26 percent of the land area by 2035, at a rate of expansion of 1.9 million ha per year.

Despite the increasing global focus on forest restoration, however, natural forests continue to be degraded and lost in many economies in the Asia-Pacific region. The drivers of this degradation and loss are complex, including policy and market failures and the limited technical, human and financial capacity of forestry agencies. With accelerating climate change, extreme forest fires are becoming more common in many economies in the region, increasing the challenge of achieving SFM and forest rehabilitation.

In its third strategic plan, APFNet will maximize the Organization's learning and leverage potential to galvanize practical actions on the ground to support the efforts of member economies and organizations to achieve SFM and forest rehabilitation. APFNet will explore, summarize, demonstrate and disseminate effective models and best practices in multifunctional forest restoration; strengthen policies and capacity building; promote policy exchanges and innovation among economies; and encourage synergies between the regional forest aspiration and forestry strategy of economies.

<sup>5</sup> In 2018, APFNet joined FAO and others in jointly formulating and publishing the Asia-Pacific Regional Strategy and Action Plan for Forest and Landscape Restoration. This has been agreed to by the 33 members of the Asia-Pacific Forestry Commission; see [www.fao.org/3/i8382en/i8382EN.pdf](http://www.fao.org/3/i8382en/i8382EN.pdf).

<sup>6</sup> Note that this is an order of magnitude less than India's pledge under the Bonn Challenge.

## MISSION

APFNet is committed to helping the economies and people of the Asia-Pacific region by promoting and improving SFM and forest rehabilitation.

## PRINCIPLES

APFNet's work is governed by a set of core principles to ensure that its activities are open to scrutiny with the participation and guidance of stakeholders. These principles aim to foster cooperation, avoid duplication, ensure that activities are targeted at the specific needs of beneficiaries, and enable the sharing of lessons learned throughout the network. The principles are as follows:

### ✔ Openness and participation

APFNet is a collective network and, as such, it is responsive to the needs of members and the wider community of forest stakeholders. APFNet will continue to uphold the principles of openness and participation to ensure transparency and to encourage the participation of governments, non-governmental organizations, the private sector, international and regional organizations, academic and research institutions and other forest stakeholders in its programmes and activities.

### ✔ Complementarity

As an action-learning network, APFNet builds partnerships and collaborative arrangements on an ongoing basis to pool resources and knowledge from across the region to support member economies and organizations in addressing the challenges of SFM and forest rehabilitation. Such cooperation will enhance the effectiveness of actions, avoid duplication and overlaps, and streamline mutual learning among partners with similar missions.

### ✔ Beneficiary-focused

APFNet is a membership-based organization, and it has been established to assist the forest-related activities of its members. Its actions will always be guided by the needs and priorities of its members.

### ✔ A focus on learning and leverage potential

APFNet has access to the experience and insights of its members and sufficient funding to support catalytic activities and programmes across its four pillars of: 1) capacity building; 2) demonstration projects; 3) policy dialogues; and 4) information-sharing. APFNet will always seek to maximize the learning and leverage potential of the programmes and activities it supports.



## VALUES

APFNet implements all activities in accordance with the following core values:

### ✔ Respect for differences

APFNet respects the diversity of views and differences in opinions, beliefs, pathways and approaches that exist for adapting and adopting SFM and effective forest rehabilitation. APFNet will continue to undertake its work on the premise that there is no “one-size-fits-all” solution to achieving SFM in the Asia-Pacific region.

### ✔ Action-oriented

APFNet seeks to assist its members to accelerate positive change on the ground. Decisions and activities, therefore, will be action-oriented at the grassroots level.

### ✔ Creative and innovative thinking

APFNet will remain innovative, inquisitive and exploratory. APFNet encourages thinking outside the box and promotes the exploration of new ideas and approaches for addressing forest-related issues.

### ✔ Member needs are the first priority

APFNet is a member-driven network. The needs and priorities of members will always be the first consideration when decisions are made about programmes and activities.

## OBJECTIVES

APFNet seeks to explore, summarize, demonstrate and disseminate effective models and best practices on forest restoration; strengthen policy and capacity building; promote policy exchanges and innovation among member economies and organizations; and promote synergies among economies in the Asia-Pacific region and their economy-level development policies and priorities. APFNet programmes and activities aim to:

**a.** Contribute to the efforts of member economies and organizations to substantially increase the area of restored multifunctional forests in line with APFNet’s mission, and the objectives of its members, and in the framework of multilateral aspirations and processes such as the Bonn Challenge, the UN Strategic Plan for Forests, the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration, and the Asia-Pacific Regional Strategy and Action Plan for Forest and Landscape Restoration.

**b.** Help enhance forest carbon stocks and improve forest quality and productivity by promoting the rehabilitation of existing but degraded forests and the reforestation and afforestation of suitable lands in the region.

**c.** Help reduce forest loss and degradation and associated greenhouse gas emissions by strengthening SFM and enhancing biodiversity conservation.

**d.** Help increase the socioeconomic benefits of forests in the region.





## KEY PRIORITIES IN 2021–2025

APFNet will contribute to the achievement of global goals and targets related to forests, particularly those articulated in the UN Strategic Plan for Forests, the UN Decade on Ecological Restoration, the Sustainable Development Goals and the New York Declaration on Forests. In its third strategic plan (2021–2025), APFNet will focus on the following priorities:

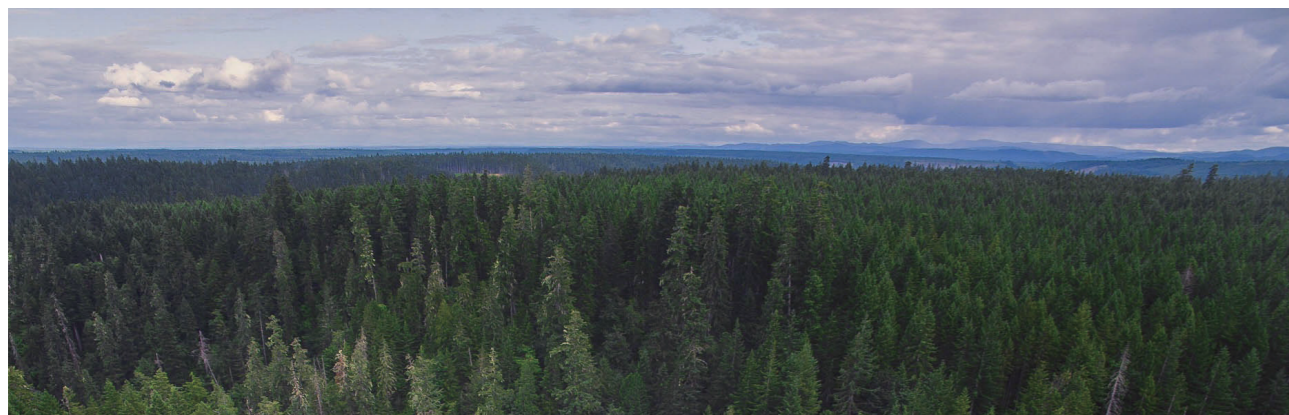
**PRIORITY 1:** Contributing to forest restoration

**PRIORITY 2:** Reducing forest degradation

**PRIORITY 3:** Enhancing forest ecosystem functions

### PRIORITY 1 ▶ Contributing to forest restoration

As noted above, most APFNet member economies have made commitments in support of multilateral efforts to increase global forest cover in the present decade. APFNet will contribute to an increase in forest cover globally by supporting its member economies in restoring their degraded forests and lands. APFNet will pursue blended strategies to enhance the capacity of economies to implement multifunctional forest restoration. For example, it will support initiatives that promote cost-effective forest restoration through the use of natural regeneration, assisted natural regeneration and, where appropriate, planting. Special attention will be given to supporting initiatives undertaken by or in partnership with local communities living in or near forest restoration areas. APFNet will also facilitate the exchange of knowledge and experiences among high-level policymakers and practitioners on forest restoration policies and practices across the region. And it will support activities that build public support and political commitment for forest restoration and provide an effective platform for regional policy dialogues.



### PRIORITY 2 ▶ Reducing forest degradation

Gains have been made in the last five years in restoring degraded forest in the Asia-Pacific region through various economy-level and multilateral programmes. Nevertheless, forest loss and degradation continue to undercut these gains, leading to declines in the multiple benefits and services that forests provide. In particular, the increasing frequency of unplanned, high-intensity forest fire is leading to the loss and degradation of both natural and planted forests in many economies. Thus, reducing forest loss and degradation is essential for maximizing returns on investment in forest restoration. This will entail sustained efforts to build the capacity of economies to address the multiple drivers of forest loss and degradation, which include poverty and limited livelihood options for communities and people living in or near forests, deficiencies in policies and institutional assets, and limitations in expertise, human resources and financing.

Recognizing the above, APFNet will continue to support multiple strategies for building the capacity of economies to undertake measures to reduce forest loss and degradation. It will support analyses of the local and transboundary drivers of forest loss and degradation, with a focus on forest fire, forest pests and diseases, and grazing, as well as policy studies and development. APFNet will also provide a platform for the exchange of experiences and knowledge on improving the sustainability of forest management, addressing policies, management techniques, emerging technologies and innovative financial mechanisms that have been shown to work in member economies. Moreover, APFNet will support activities to build the capacity of policymakers and practitioners to address the challenge of SFM in member economies.

### PRIORITY 3 ▶ Enhancing forest ecosystem functions

APFNet will support economies in the region in their efforts to reverse the decline in forest ecosystem functions and benefits due primarily to deforestation and forest degradation and to enhance those functions and benefits. APFNet will provide concerted support for multifunctional forest restoration projects involving integrated watershed management, biodiversity conservation, climate-change mitigation and adaptation, improving local livelihoods and well-being, payments for ecosystem services, and ecotourism.

## GEOGRAPHIC FOCUS

APFNet will adopt a collaborative and balanced approach in attending to the specific needs of economies in different geographical and ecological regions and subregions. For this purpose, interventions will be focused in the following seven sub-regions:

- ✔ Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS)
- ✔ Southeast Asia (except GMS)
- ✔ South Asia
- ✔ Great Central Asia (GCA)
- ✔ Pacific Islands
- ✔ North America
- ✔ Latin America.

## IMPLEMENTATION TOOLS AND APPROACHES

### Capacity building ▶

To address the need to accelerate the restoration of degraded forests in the Asia-Pacific region, APFNet will elevate its support for building the management and technical skills of forest policymakers and practitioners. APFNet will continue to support training programmes that contribute to the development of human resources with appropriate knowledge and skills in multifunctional forest restoration.

APFNet will also continue to balance enhancing and retooling mid-level forest practitioners with the provision of support to young forest practitioners in pursuing advanced degrees programmes. The capacity of member economies for climate-change mitigation and adaptation will be enhanced by increasing the number of relevant training courses and scholarships. Key elements of APFNet's capacity-building programmes are described below.

#### ✔ *Strengthening thematic training*

The Kunming Training Center (KTC) will be strengthened as a venue for thematic training programmes and the sharing of best practices, policies and success stories on SFM and forest restoration. A

training needs assessment will be carried out to identify gaps in knowledge and skills in multifunctional forest restoration at the regional, subregional and economy levels. APFNet will continue to strengthen the KTC. Opportunities for addressing key subregional capacity-building needs will be explored.

#### ✔ *Strengthening capacity building for in-service foresters*

The capacity of in-service foresters to develop and implement forest restoration policies and practices will be strengthened through regional training needs assessments, the development and updating of training methods and manuals, and practical training in the on-the-ground application of theoretical forest restoration approaches.

#### ✔ *Strengthening capacity for forest research in the Asia-Pacific region*

APFNet will continue to encourage interaction and collaboration among forest research institutions in the region to promote forest science and technology. APFNet will further contribute to the exchange of young scholars in forestry and explore opportunities to promote cooperation in forest science and technology with partners such as the International Union of Forest Research Organizations (IUFRO), the Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR) and the Asia-Pacific Association of Forestry Research Institutes (APAFRI). In particular, cooperation and interactions on forest science and technology among economies will be promoted through the Sino-ASEAN Network of Forestry Research Institutes (SANFRI).

#### ✔ *An enhanced scholarship programme and regional forestry education mechanism*

APFNet will expand its support for master's degree programmes in specializations related to forest restoration and allied fields that will help fill the specific needs of member economies. It will also seek to engage more universities in China and other economies in the region to host APFNet scholars. In addition, a PhD programme in forestry with a specialization in forest restoration will be expanded to accelerate the improvement of forest education and research. APFNet will continue to support selected short-term non-degree training programmes in specialized technologies and knowledge. Alumni initiatives will be strengthened to further support the scholars and alumni of APFNet-supported degree programmes and trainings.

APFNet will continue to strengthen the Asia-Pacific Forestry Education Coordination Mechanism (AP-FECM) as a means to enhance the quality and attractiveness of forestry and related education programmes to address the need for more policymakers, practitioners, academics and researchers with advanced education in multifunctional forest restoration. APFNet will also support the strengthening of existing and the development of new degree programmes and online courses related to forest restoration. The APFNet Center for SANFRI Young Scholar Exchange, based in Yunnan, China, will promote the exchange of young scholars as well as regional science and technology cooperation in forestry.



## Demonstration projects ▶

The focus of APFNet's project work will be on the multifunctional management and restoration of existing forests, degraded forests and deforested lands. This pillar will help develop, showcase and disseminate models, policies and technologies for forest restoration that demonstrate synergies between conservation, development, people, livelihoods, governments and industries. It will encourage the harmonization of policies across economies to address forest-related transboundary challenges.

The criteria and procedures for screening project proposals will be reviewed with the aim of increasing the impacts of projects funded by APFNet, with greater weight given to the demonstrated learning and leverage potential of proposals. In addition, attention will be given to increasing the participation of member economies in identifying projects relevant to their needs.

The following three categories of project will be supported:

- Demonstration projects that showcase best practices in cost-effective multifunctional forest restoration and management. APFNet will continue to support the establishment of models for community forestry through effective policies and institutional arrangements, thereby enhancing the relationship between environmental conservation and livelihood development and building capacity for community participation.
- Research and policy-development projects involving theoretical or technological research in the forest sector, the assessment and improvement of existing forest policies, and the development of new forest strategies.
- Capacity-building projects to enhance institutional capacity, including forest-related institutional planning, decision-making and law enforcement.

Wherever feasible, internationally recognized forestry experts from member economies and organizations and other partners will be engaged to provide technical and capacity-building assistance in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of APFNet projects.

For demonstration projects, priority will be given to the following three themes:

- The multifunctional restoration of degraded forests through assisted natural regeneration and natural regeneration.
- The multifunctional restoration of deforested lands through forest planting.
- The improved management of remaining non-degraded forests using best practices in SFM to minimize further forest loss and degradation.

## Regional policy dialogues ▶

Over the life of the third strategic plan, APFNet will seek to enhance policy exchanges and sharing among involved economies. It will promote synergies in forest policies and forest policy innovation among member economies and their contributions to achieving the forest-related goals of regional and international organizations and initiatives, including those of the UN Forum on Forests, APEC, the Belt and Road Initiative and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. Annual reports of regional forest policy dialogues will be produced as APFNet flagship publications. APFNet's policy dialogues will encompass:

- ✓ Innovations and the exchange, sharing and coordination of forest policies in the region through the Forest Planning Network.
- ✓ Collaboration on the transboundary conservation of protected areas.
- ✓ The Transboundary Wildlife Conservation Initiative (@Wild) mechanism.
- ✓ Enhancing ministerial meetings on forestry, with a focus on regional strategic forestry cooperation workshops in Greater Central Asia.
- ✓ The establishment of a policy forum on forestry for senior officials in the Asia-Pacific region through the APFNet Sustainable Forest Management Training Base at Pu'er.
- ✓ The establishment of an expert panel on forest policy to assist member economies in the Asia-Pacific region with policy innovation and reform.
- ✓ Exploration of the establishment of a regional policy-exchange mechanism on forest fire management.



## Communication and information sharing ▶

APFNet will share information on forest development plans, policies and practices in the Asia-Pacific region through various channels and for different target groups.

A communication strategy and information system will be developed and implemented to guide the development of programmes under APFNet's pillar on communication and information-sharing.

A functional, highly accessible learning hub will be established to facilitate information-sharing on forest development plans, policies and best practices in the region on forest restoration and to house a dynamic regional database on forest statistics, policies and regulations.

A social media information centre will be established, and the APFNet website will be upgraded, to increase the sharing of APFNet newsletters, other publications and audiovisual materials to foster public support for multifunctional forest restoration and APFNet.

Best practices in forest restoration will be updated and published regularly and shared through participation in major regional and global events and conferences, the convening of study tours and field visits, and staff exchanges and alumni gatherings.

## INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

### Governance ▶

APFNet will implement actions to further strengthen its governance, including of the Secretariat, to maintain a healthy working relationship with members and partner organizations in carrying out its mission and achieving its objectives.

APFNet will continue to refine its governance system to better guide its future development; review its governance documents, including the Operational Framework and Rules of Procedure for the Board and Council; and clarify and redefine, as appropriate, the roles and composition of the Board and Council to further enhance their contributions to APFNet and its programmes.

APFNet will improve its operations and effectiveness by internationalizing its staff. The staff structure of the Secretariat will be optimized, with the appointment of experienced professionals and the secondment of staff from member economies and organizations on a longer-term basis. Incentives will be offered to competitively attract and retain skilled and experienced staff. The Secretariat staff will undertake English-language proficiency and professional skills development on an ongoing basis. APFNet will explore the establishment of subregional outreach offices to enhance communication and better address common issues in partnership with members and implementation partners.

## Membership and partnership development ▶

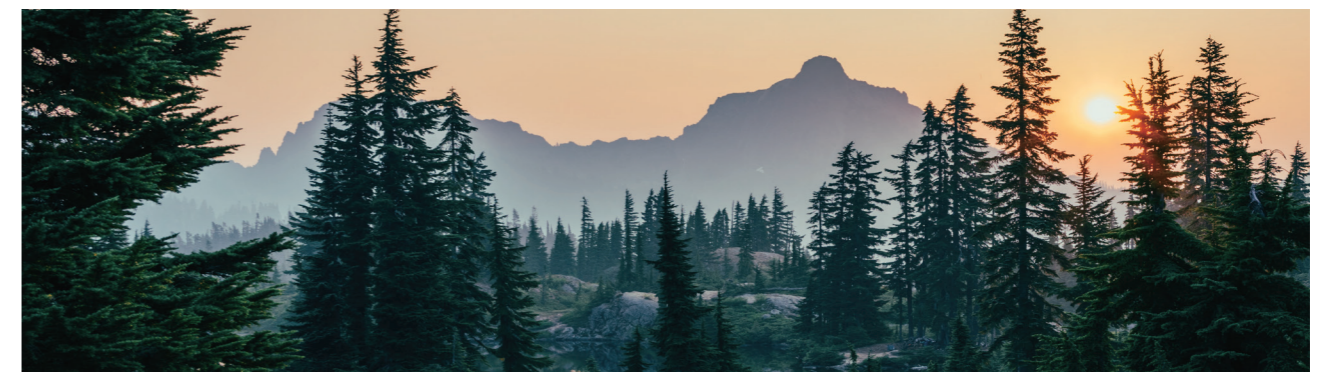
APFNet will strengthen and diversify its membership, with a focus on encouraging enterprises and social entities to join. APFNet will continue to pursue the development of strategic partnerships with a wide range of organizations with a view to avoiding duplication and encouraging synergies. APFNet will examine key forest-related organizations in the Asia-Pacific region and their strategies and priorities to identify those with which APFNet could jointly develop and implement programmes to promote multifunctional forest restoration. A review will be undertaken to identify actions to catalyse cooperative activities between APFNet and its partners under existing memoranda of understanding. Cooperation with the private sector and civil-society groups will be explored and enhanced.

## Financial arrangements ▶

APFNet will ensure stable funding, including by exploring means to diversify funding sources to sustain APFNet's long-term operations and expand its coverage and priorities. APFNet will seek the continuous support of the Government of China and explore options such as mobilizing support from the private sector, particularly forest product industries in the region; forging partnerships with other organizations in projects of common interest; and tapping into global funding facilities. Increasing the counterpart contributions of member economies and organizations implementing APFNet projects and activities will also be investigated.

## Monitoring and evaluation system ▶

APFNet's monitoring and evaluation system will be further improved, and its scope will be expanded to cover all APFNet-funded programmes and activities. Guidelines and procedures for monitoring and evaluation in APFNet will be reviewed and updated, and a team of experienced subject specialists and practitioners will be established. As a significant approach for maximizing the learning and leverage potential of APFNet activities, an effective monitoring and evaluation system will also serve to distil lessons learned and knowledge from the implementation of all APFNet-funded programmes, projects and activities.





## Strategic plan matrix 2021–2025 ▶

Table 1 presents the matrix of targets for the third strategic plan, encapsulating APFNet’s aspirations for the period 2021–2025.

**Table 1 Matrix of targets for 2021–2025**

Implementation Tool	Indicators
<b>Pillar 1 – Capacity building</b>	
<b>1.1 In-service training and capacity building</b>	<b>Strengthened thematic training in the KTC</b>
	A needs assessment on priority areas for training, conducted in partnership with the KTC
	A minimum of 5 online modules backed by hard-copy manuals and support materials developed in partnership with the KTC and others
	A minimum of 1 train-the-trainer workshop conducted for each module to facilitate training courses in relevant economies
	<b>Strengthened Trainers-in-Forestry Network</b>
	A needs assessment on priority areas for training conducted through the Trainers-in-Forestry Network (TIF)
	300 practitioners trained in the areas identified by the needs assessment
	<b>Strengthened capacity for forest research in the Asia-Pacific region</b>
	A minimum of 30 staff exchanges made through SANFRI to give young scholars from institutions in the region an opportunity to work in Chinese forest research institutions and young scholars in China the opportunity to work in the forest research institutes of member economies, organizations and partners
	A SANFRI working group established to explore opportunities to promote regional cooperation on forest science and technology with partners such as APAFRI, CIFOR and IUFRO
Establishment of at least 1 additional forest restoration laboratory in an APFNet subregion	

Implementation Tool	Indicators
<b>1.2 Scholarships for graduate degrees and specialized programmes</b>	80+ scholarships supported in at least 5 forestry universities or colleges in China on topics related to APFNet’s strategic priorities
	At least 10 scholarships supported in at least 2 forestry universities or colleges outside China on topics related to APFNet strategic priorities
<b>1.3 Strengthening regional forestry education</b>	Representatives from more regional forestry universities participating in the work of AP-FECM
	At least 1 meeting of the AP-FECM supported annually
	A follow-up work programme developed to implement AP-FECM decisions
	Evaluation study of the use and impact of AP-FECM online courses conducted and key gaps in coverage and the steps needed to increase accessibility and use of the offerings identified
<b>1.4 Strengthening the APFNet Alumni Network</b>	Graduates and trainees staying in close touch with APFNet after their graduation through online and offline interactive activities
	An alumni newsletter launched and regularly published and posted on the APFNet website and other platforms
<b>Pillar 2 – Demonstration projects</b>	
	6+ projects with high learning and leverage potential in multifunctional forest restoration implemented in degraded forests
	6+ projects with high learning and leverage potential in multifunctional forest restoration implemented in deforested areas
	2+ projects with high learning and leverage potential in SFM implemented to reduce the risk of further loss or degradation of existing forests
	1+ project with high learning and leverage potential in innovation in forest policy implemented to promote sustainable multifunctional forest restoration
	1+ project with high learning and leverage potential implemented in policy harmonization to enhance collaborative management on transboundary conservation and protection forest management
	At least 1 summary report/key report published per project



	Indicators
<b>Pillar 3 – Supporting regional policy dialogues</b>	
	<b>Enhancing the FPN</b>
	A policy expert panel on multifunctional forest restoration created to provide help-desk assistance to member economies seeking to update or reform their forest policies
	<b>High-level ministerial meetings</b>
	Support at least 1 regional and 1 subregional ministerial meeting on the potential role of multifunctional forest restoration in the context of the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration
	A forum on forestry for senior officials in the Asia-Pacific region established through the APFNet Sustainable Forest Management Training Base at Pu'er
<b>Pillar 4 – Communication and information-sharing</b>	
	A communication strategy and information system developed and well implemented
	A functional, highly accessible learning hub established to facilitate information-sharing on forest development plans, policies and best practices in the region and to house a dynamic regional forestry database on forest statistics, policies and regulations
	Regularly updated best-practice publications on multifunctional forest restoration
	APFNet participation in major international forest-related conferences and events
	International social media information centre established to promote access to APFNet newsletters, publications and audiovisual materials to raise awareness and public support for multifunctional forest restoration and APFNet
	30+ study tours or staff exchanges made to promote information-sharing on innovations in multifunctional forest restoration
	10+ alumni gatherings (at least 2 face-to-face, COVID-19 permitting) organized to share experiences and learning
	5+ study tours and/or panel discussions held for high-level policymakers to raise political commitment on forest restoration and encourage private-sector involvement in forest restoration programmes in the Asia-Pacific region

	Indicators
<b>Strengthening the institutional aspects of APFNet</b>	
	Incentives deployed to competitively attract and retain qualified and experienced staff
	At least 10% of the APFNet Secretariat staff with recognized international experience outside China by 2025
	Scholarships for graduate degree or specialized non-degree programmes in forestry or other professional settings provided to at least 10 Secretariat staff
	Funding resources ensured and diversified
	APFNet's M&E procedures reviewed, improved and extended to all programmes, projects and activities, emphasizing participatory peer-review methodologies that can maximize the exchange of information and experiences and foster network learning



## Annex 1 Forest-related objectives, goals, targets and commitments

Bonn Challenge (2011)	Restore 350 million ha of deforested and degraded land by 2030
New York Declaration on Forests (2014)	<p>End natural forest loss by 2030</p> <p>Restore 350 million ha of degraded forests and landscapes by 2030</p> <p>Support and help meet the private-sector goal of eliminating deforestation from the production of agricultural commodities such as palm oil, soy, paper and beef products</p>
Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and targets (2015)	<p>SDG 6: Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all</p> <p>6.6: By 2020, protect and restore water-related ecosystems, including mountains, forests, rivers aquifers and lakes</p> <p>SDG 15: Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss</p> <p>15.1: By 2020 ensure conservation, restoration and sustainable use of terrestrial and inland freshwater ecosystems and their services, in particular forests, wetlands, mountains and drylands, in line with obligations under international agreements</p> <p>15.2: By 2020, promote the implementation of sustainable management of all types of forests, halt deforestation, restore degraded forests, and substantially increase afforestation and reforestation globally</p> <p>15.B: Mobilize significant resources from all sources and at all levels to finance sustainable forest management and provide adequate incentives to developing economies to advance such management, including for conservation and reforestation</p>
The Paris Agreement on climate change (2015)	<p>Aims to strengthen the global response to the threat of climate change, in the context of sustainable development and efforts to eradicate poverty, including by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Holding the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2 °C above pre-industrial levels and pursuing efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5 °C above pre-industrial levels, recognizing that this would significantly reduce the risks and impacts of climate change</li> <li>• Increasing the ability to adapt to the adverse impacts of climate change and fostering climate resilience and low greenhouse gas emissions development, in a manner that does not threaten food production</li> <li>• Making finance flows consistent with a pathway towards low greenhouse gas emissions and climate-resilient development</li> </ul>

UN Strategic Plan for Forests (2017)	<p>Forest area is increased by 3% worldwide</p> <p>Forest carbon stocks are maintained or enhanced</p> <p>The implementation of sustainable forest management of all forests, halt deforestation, restore degraded forests and substantially increase afforestation and reforestation globally by 2020</p> <p>The resilience and adaptive capacity of all types of forests is significantly strengthened worldwide</p>
UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration (2021–2030)	<p>Aims to support and scale up efforts to prevent, halt and reverse the degradation of ecosystems worldwide and raise awareness of the importance of successful ecosystem restoration</p> <p>Ecosystem restoration and conservation will contribute to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, as well as other related UN outcome documents and multilateral environmental agreements, including the Paris Agreement adopted under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and the achievement of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets and the post-2020 biodiversity framework</p> <p>Key priorities in the implementation strategy for the declaration are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Empowering a global movement</li> <li>• Financing restoration on the ground</li> <li>• Setting the right incentives</li> <li>• Celebrating leadership</li> <li>• Shifting behaviours towards restoration-friendly consumption</li> <li>• Increasing research</li> <li>• Building capacity</li> <li>• Celebrating a culture of restoration</li> <li>• Building up the next generation</li> <li>• Listening and learning</li> </ul>

## Annex 2 Forest-cover trends in APFNet member economies

Economy	Forest area, 2010	Forest area, 2020	Forest area change, 2010–2020	Percent change (%)
	(1,000 ha)			
Australia	129,546	134,005	+4,459	+0.34
Bangladesh	1,888	1,883	-5	-0.03
Brunei Darussalem	380	380	---	---
Cambodia	10,589	8,068	-2,521	-2.68
Canada	347,322	346,928	-394	-0.01
China	200,610	219,978	+19,368	+0.93
Chinese Taipei	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Fiji	1,073	1,140	+67	+0.61
Hong Kong, China	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
India	69,496	72,160	+2,664	+0.38
Indonesia	99,659	92,133	-7,526	-0.78
Lao PDR	16,941	16,596	-345	-0.21
Malaysia	18,948	19,114	+166	+0.09

Economy	Forest area, 2010	Forest area, 2020	Forest area change, 2010–2020	Percent change (%)
	(1,000 ha)			
Mexico	66,943	65,692	-1,251	-0.19
Mongolia	14,184	14,173	+11	-0.01
Myanmar	31,441	28,544	-2,897	-0.96
Nepal	5,962	5,962	0	0
New Zealand	9,848	9,893	+45	+0.05
Papua New Guinea	36,179	35,856	-323	-0.09
Peru	74,050	72,330	-1,720	-0.23
The Philippines	6,840	7,189	+349	-0.50
Singapore	18	16	-2	-1.30
Sri Lanka	2,104	2,113	+9	+0.04
Thailand	20,073	19,873	+200	-0.10
United States	308,720	309,795	+1,075	+0.03
Viet Nam	13,388	14,643	+1,255	+0.90

Notes: n/a = not available; FAO did not separately report data for Hong Kong, China or Chinese Taipei.  
Source: FAO. 2020. *Global Forest Resources Assessment 2020*. Rome. Table A1, pp. 137–142.



## Annex 3 APFNet member economies and organizations, and pledges made under various international forest processes

Member economy	Bonn Challenge (million ha)	New York Declaration on Forests	UN Strategic Plan for Forests (voluntary national contributions) (million ha)	Other (million ha)
Australia			0.40*	
Bangladesh	0.75			
Brunei Darussalam				
Cambodia				
Canada		Yes	Yes	
China			Yes	19.00
Chinese Taipei				
Fiji				
Hong Kong, China				
India	21.00		0.20	
Indonesia		Yes		
Lao People's Democratic Republic				
Malaysia				
Mexico	8.47	Yes		
Mongolia	0.60	Yes		

Member economy	Bonn Challenge (million ha)	New York Declaration on Forests	UN Strategic Plan for Forests (voluntary national contributions) (million ha)	Other (million ha)
Myanmar				
Nepal				
New Zealand			0.20*	
Papua New Guinea				
Peru	3.20	Yes		
Philippines		Yes		
Singapore				
Sri Lanka	0.20			
Thailand		Yes	Yes	
United States	15.00	Yes		
Viet Nam		Yes	0.31*	
<b>Member organizations</b>				
FAO				
ITTO				
Pacific Community				
RECOFTC				
The Nature Conservancy				

Notes:\* Australia, New Zealand and Viet Nam have all announced plans to plant 1 billion trees by either 2025 or 2030. Each economy has a different mix of new plantings, replacement plantings for recently harvested trees and plantings in rural areas. No actual area equivalents were made in the economy announcements and estimates of area equivalents are made from economy descriptions of their programs.