Editorial

In this issue, we bring you a brief report of the Project Formation Workshop on “Sustainable Management and genetic Conservation of Teak Resources” held recently in Bangkok under the partnership of TEAKNET with FAO, IUFRO and RSPG.

The World Teak Conference is now a regular event held once in two years and it aims at encouraging global interaction by providing a platform for direct networking and sharing of ideas and information on the fast expanding world of planted teak forests. The 3rd World Teak Conference 2015 to be held in Guayaquil, Ecuador during 11-16 May, 2015 has now been announced. See the 1st announcement of Conference in this issue. The exclusive WTC 2015 website will be launched by the first week of July. Please stay tuned for the details of Registration, the programme and call for papers etc. available in the Conference Website in the coming days. We expect your wholehearted support and participation in the WTC 2015.

With the total log ban implemented in Myanmar since April this year, the country is looking for collaborative partnership with European Union for the sawn timber and finished products export. A brief news item is featured in the bulletin.

We look forward to your valuable contributions of news items of interest to teak growers/traders and researchers through our e-newsletter.

With warm regards,

P.K. Thulasidas
TEAKNET Coordinator

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First Announcement

3rd World Teak Conference 2015

Strengthening Global Teak Resources and Markets for Sustainable Development

11 - 16 May 2015
Guayaquil, Ecuador

Organised by

Asociación Ecuatoriana de Productores de Teca y Maderas Tropicales, an Association of Private Companies Growing and Exporting Teak, Ecuador

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, Rome

International Teak Information Network, India

International Union of Forest Research Organizations, Austria
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**Background**

Teak (*Tectona grandis* L.f.) is recognized as the most favoured tropical hardwood all over the world, reputed for its physical and aesthetic qualities. Natural teak forests occur in only four countries in the world: India, Laos, Myanmar and Thailand. Since the 1980s, the supplies of teak wood from natural forests have started to dwindle; instead, planted teak forests have attracted large investments from the private sector in ca. 70 countries throughout tropical Asia, Africa, Latin America and Oceania. Growing private investment in teak plantations is a clear indication of the perceived potential of the species, although deforestation and unprofessional management have substantially reduced the area of natural stands. The global teak market has been and will continue to be governed by trends in the Asian market. Asia holds more than 90% of the world’s teak resources. The major teak trade flows worldwide are directed towards India absorbing 70% to 100% of global teak exports including shipments of plantation logs and sawn timber from Africa and Latin America.

Ecuador is an important teak growing country and the largest teak exporting country in Latin America. An estimated 1242 teak plantations cover a forest area of ca. 45,648 ha. The export of round logs and sawn timber to mainly Asian countries amounts to ca. 150,000 m³ annually. The government of Ecuador has launched a national support program that provides financial incentives for reforestation with commercial species, among them teak. The goal of this program is to reforest 120,000 ha in 5 years.

**Objective and key issues**

The conference with the theme "Strengthening Global Teak Resources and Markets for Sustainable Development" will focus on economical, social, technical and environmental issues that have an impact on the production, marketing and trade of teakwood. It will facilitate the transfer of knowledge and technology among teak growing countries and strengthen the globalization of TEAKNET.

**Venue, Date and Conference Format**

The event is expected to last 5 days including field excursions. A touristic program will be offered for interested participants and spouses. The conference will convene in Guayaquil, the largest and most populous city in Ecuador and the country's main port. The expected number of participants is estimated at over 300 people from Latin American, Asian and African countries.

The event is planned to center around the following major themes:

- Economics, investments and trade
- Genetics, tree improvement, silviculture
- Management models for different value chains, including community forestry
- Teak plantation management and environmental protection

The official conference language will be English and Spanish; translation will be provided.

**Preliminary time schedule and key dates**

1st announcement: 07 May 2014
2nd announcement and call for abstracts: 15 Jun 2014
Registration opens: 01 Sep 2014
Deadline for abstract submission: 31 Oct 2014
Submission of full papers: 31 Jan 2015
Registration deadline: 11 April 2015
Final programme: 30 April 2015

**Participants**

The target audience includes researchers, teak growers, traders, teakwood-processors, and policy makers associated with teak.

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To bring a focus on this issue, a project planning workshop was jointly organised by Plant Genetic Conservation Project under the Initiative of Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn (RSPG), Thailand, International Union of Forest Research Organizations (IUFRO), Austria, Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations, Rome and International Teak Information Network (TEAKNET), India, during 26-27 May 2014 at RSPG premises, Bangkok.

A total of 20 invited delegates from 7 Asian countries participated in the two-day workshop being hosted by RSPG. The workshop was formally inaugurated by Prof. Dr. Tira Sutabutra, Former Minister of Agriculture and Cooperatives and Vice-President of RSPG Foundation, Thailand. The workshop was sponsored by IUFRO under the Special Programme for Development of Capacities (IUFRO-SPDC) and moderated by SPDC Coordinator, Dr. Michael Kleine of IUFRO Headquarters, Vienna.

A preliminary project logical framework was prepared in the Workshop with the active inputs of the participating countries, for a possible future collaboration on conservation of teak genetic resources at the regional and global scale and it is anticipated that it can be developed into a full-fledged project application document for seeking international funding. The project aims at developing capacity building for sustainable management and conservation of teak genetic resources in the participating Asian nations. FAO and IUFRO-SPDC agreed to jointly formulate the project proposal. Once realized, TEAKNET and RSPG will facilitate implementation of the project in the respective countries in the region. Later, the project will be expanded to other teak growing countries the world over.
Myanmar might export timber products to European Union

After the log export ban which entered into force in April, Myanmar is now working with the European authorities to export finished wood products to the EU, Eleven Myanmar e-newspaper informs.

To legally export wood products to the EU, the government has to become a member of the Forest Law Enforcement Governance and Trade (FLEGT) and through a voluntary partnership assessment or VPA that includes commitments and action to halt trade in illegal timber.

Myanmar’s minister for Environmental Conservation and Forestry, Win Tun, met last week with the EU representative Isabel Faria De Almeida to request technical aid and open more training courses.

The government will sell 60,000 tones of teak this fiscal year by an open tender system to local entrepreneurs to export plywood and finished wood rather than exporting logs, says Eleven Myanmar.

Myanmar’s exports of teak, hardwood and other timber reached US$ 947 million in the fiscal year 2013-2014, according to figures released by Myanmar’s Ministry of Commerce.

A recently released report from the Environmental Investigation Agency (EIA) shows that between 2001 and 2013, Myanmar’s illegal timber exports amounted 6.5 million cubic metres with a net worth of US$ 5.7 billion. This means that only 28% of Myanmar’s timber exports were done legally, while the rest of 72% was done illegally. Moreover, in the last 14 years, 8 million cubic metres of wood was traded without the permission of the Myanmar Timber Enterprise (MTE), which is the country’s only body supervising local timber extraction.

The lucrative and illegal exports of teak and other hardwood has led to increased deforestation in Myanmar, leading the government to halt timber exports on March 31.

Despite these difficulties, international firms are now eyeing to invest in local wood based furniture and industry and the government is keen on being able to expand local timber industry.

Courtesy: http://www.ihb.de/wood/news/Myanmar_loggingban_timber_products_EU_37258.html