The Livelihoods and Landscapes Strategy (LLS) is a global initiative which examines the rights and access of the rural poor to forest products in the context of the entire landscape in which people and forests interact.

Can forests really help to reduce rural poverty and if so, how can they be more effectively used to balance human and conservation needs? These are the pressing questions that “Livelihoods and Landscapes” seeks to answer.

Livelihoods and Landscapes aims to dig deeper into these questions so that local lessons and optimal scenarios for the future can be ultimately fed into national policy efforts to tackle poverty. The value of forests is being assessed at the local and national level so that the sustainable use of forests can be shown to simply make economic sense. Workshops are held in selected landscapes to talk with, listen to and learn from stakeholders, especially the rural poor so that negotiated outcomes can be reached. Visualization and modelling techniques, along with the “Poverty-Forests” toolkit (http://www.profor.info/content/livelihood_poverty.html) are being used to develop baseline indicators that paint the picture for us now, and that over time will show us how forests can be better harnessed to improve livelihoods.

Livelihoods and Landscapes builds on the Forest Conservation Programme’s expertise in examining the rights and access of the rural poor to forests products and markets for those products. It also looks at this in the context of the entire landscape in which people and forests interact, to ensure that the landscapes can also support the livelihoods of the rural poor in a way that supports the balance between people and nature. With over 85% of the world’s forests lying outside of protected areas, we need to thoroughly understand the role that forests play in the lives of the rural poor to ensure a healthy and sustainable existence between both.

In China, LLS will demonstrate approaches to optimize the biodiversity and productivity of forest landscapes, including Forest Landscape Restoration (FLR) measures, and deliver livelihood benefits to the rural poor. Successful FLR contributes to greater transparency and accountability and better governance practices. Our growing experience is showing that FLR can help promote forest governance arrangements that improve livelihoods and promote sustainable forest management.

Forest Landscape Restoration (FLR) is a key element of IUCN’s Forest Conservation Programme work. FLR brings people together to identify, negotiate and put in place practices that optimise the environmental, social and economic benefits of forests and trees within a broader pattern of land uses.
Illegal logging is estimated to cost the world more than US$10 billion annually – more than six times the total amount of development assistance directed towards sustainable forest management.

Illegal logging is both a symptom and a result of weak forest governance, and is a significant problem for timber producing countries as well as consumer countries. In addition to environmental damage, illegal logging and other forest crime, predatory practices result in significant revenue losses for governments, companies and communities.

IUCN sees the real issue in addressing illegal logging and trade as being one of effectiveness - in terms of better governance leading to sustainable forest management. Given that our underlying conviction is that the management and conservation of a country’s forest resources is a matter of informed societal choice in a particular country or district, our ultimate aim is to ensure that the outcomes of forest governance reform processes enjoy considerable support from the different local stakeholder groups and that these groups are seen, and see themselves, as partners in the implementation of ongoing and subsequent forest governance actions. This is a prerequisite to the successful implementation of specific agreed reforms and actions.

IUCN China is partnering with Chatham House and Forest Trends to present a series of Illegal Logging Dialogues. The second meeting in the series, “China and the Global Forest Products Trade: Trade of Legal and Sustainable Wood in China,” was held November 1-2, 2007 in Beijing, and attracted about 60 participants from government, the private sector, NGOs and research institutes.

The third Chatham House Dialogue is scheduled for April 2008 and will focus even more on how the private sector can address illegal logging and associated trade, and importantly, can promote sustainable forest management in China and overseas. The Chatham House Dialogues are based on consultation, so please contact IUCN China with any suggestions or comments for the next meeting – your ideas are welcome!

For more information, please contact Dong Ke at dongke@iucn.org.cn or Sun Xiufang at xsun@forest-trends.org.

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China’s role in Africa’s timber trade is an important one. Although imports from Africa make up a small proportion of China’s total timber imports, China is the main destination of up to 90% of timber for some producer countries on the continent.

As part of its work on Forest Law Enforcement and Governance (FLEG), IUCN is building multi-stakeholder coalitions linking China and West and Central Africa in support of improved forest governance. This project will work at the local and national levels in six African producer countries: Ghana, Liberia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Republic of Congo, Cameroon and Gabon. Through this project, China as a key consumer of Central and West African forest products will be engaged in discussions about forest governance in Africa.

A first step in working with stakeholders on this issue was a meeting organised by the IUCN China Office on 10 January in Beijing. The meeting brought together representatives of NGOs, research institutes and the private sector concerned with the role of China in promoting sustainable forest management in Africa.

Participants discussed the flows and implications of China’s growing trade in African timber, as well as a range of strategies for working with the government, research institutes, NGOs and the private sector to encourage sustainable forestry and trade practices. Ideas included:

- Conducting research on the species, particularly endangered species, involved in the timber trade.
- Increase consumer awareness and publicise information on responsible purchasing and sustainable timber products.
- Setting up information sources for companies on legally sourced timber, as well as relevant policies and regulations in producer countries.
- Working with customs authorities to curb illegal logging and associated trade.

It is hoped that such meetings will become a regular opportunity for organizations working in this field to exchange information and coordinate their efforts to promote sustainable forestry practices among Chinese operators in Africa.

For more information on this meeting and IUCN China’s work on FLEG, please contact Charlotte Hicks at charlottehicks@iucn.org.cn or +86-10-85322699 ext 103.

**News**

**New publication from Forest Trends, Washington D.C.**


This paper aims to document existing trade patterns of forest products between China and Africa. It will help to set a benchmark by which future analysis on the impacts of Chinese demand and investment can be compared.

This paper will help government, industry and civil society better understand the role of China in the trade of African forest products. Through this understanding, Forest Trends hopes to strengthen the African forest sector’s focus on sustainable forestry and conservation while at the same time encouraging satisfactory livelihood opportunities for forest-dependent communities and promoting sustainable economic development for all nations. The full text is available on the Forest Trends website: [http://www.forest-trends.org/](http://www.forest-trends.org/)

Early in 2008, industrial logging will restart in Liberia. Though progress that has been by the Liberian Forest Development Agency (FDA) to reform the country’s forestry operations, to ensure that they no longer contributes to conflict in Liberia, investors in the newly reopened industry must honor the new laws and regulations that have been developed. FDA’s mandate is to manage Liberia’s forests for the benefit of the “three Cs” (communities, conservation and commercial forestry), and give this industry a positive role in the redevelopment of a country that has suffered too long from war. This briefing is designed to explain the context of these reforms and provide a straightforward guide for conducting logging legally and responsibly.

With the bidding process for timberland sales already begun (please see: http://www.fda.gov.lr/press.php?news_id=116), Forest Trends hopes this timely document will help businesses work with the FDA and other stakeholders in Liberia to create a healthy and vibrant forest sector which contributes to the sustainable development of the country. This document should be available soon on Forest Trends website: http://www.forest-trends.org/

Upcoming events

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<td>IUCN China LLS Experts Meeting, Beijing</td>
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<td>2-3 April 2008</td>
<td>Developing Certified Forests, Forest Products and Markets, Beijing</td>
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Feature Event: Developing Certified Forests, Forest Products and Markets

Conservation experts and forest products business leaders from around the world will gather for the first major conference on certified forestry and forest product markets in China (www.rainforest-alliance.org/news/china_certified.cfm). Participants will explore the potential of sustainable forestry to green the supply chains in China’s booming paper, print, packaging, indoor and outdoor furniture, and construction materials industries. Industry leaders in each of these sectors from China, Russia, Europe and North America will present and participate in discussions on legality, sourcing and other topics. Journalists are invited to cover the conference, which is organized by the Rainforest Alliance, World Wildlife Fund for Nature - China, the International Forestry Cooperation Center of the State Forestry Administration of China, the Chinese Academy of Forestry and The Nature Conservancy.

WHEN + WHERE
2-3 April 2008
Fragrant Hills Hotel
Beijing, China

China’s explosive economic growth over the last decade has made it one of the world’s largest users of wood and wood products. Growing demand in the US, Europe and elsewhere for low-cost wood products manufactured in China has also contributed to the growth in Chinese demand for imported timber from locations such as Russia, Indonesia, Papua New Guinea and the Congo. China has emerged as the world’s largest furniture exporter and plywood producer and has the largest market for hardwood lumber. China’s pulp and paper industry is the second largest (after the US), producing 15 percent of the world’s paper and paperboard.
“Depending on these imports is risky without better control of provenance,” said Richard Donovan, the Rainforest Alliance’s chief of forestry. “Chinese demand can have a huge influence on suppliers around the globe. What exactly can Chinese companies do to control illegal logging abroad? How will they respond to the demands of environmental groups and investors for a more reliable, sustainable, accountable supply chain? What will be the role of forest certification in changing this market? How will legality concerns in the European Union and North American markets affect China and its suppliers? All of these are topics will be addressed at the conference.”

The Beijing conference comes at a time when China is seeking reliable, sustainable sources to supply its burgeoning demand for forest products and is also seeking a meaningful response to criticisms that Chinese demand fuels illegal logging and environmental damage. The conference is sponsored by the International Forestry Cooperation Center of the State Forestry Administration of China. For more information, contact Michael Thiemann at mthiemann@ra.org in the US or Xu Bin at xubin@caf.ac.cn in China.

The Rainforest Alliance works to conserve biodiversity and ensure sustainable livelihoods by transforming land-use practices, business practices and consumer behavior. For more information, visit www.rainforest-alliance.org.

Do you have an event that should be listed here?
Contact Charlotte Hicks at charlottehicks@iucn.org.cn to have news, events and announcements included in the IUCN China Forest Programme newsletter.