



# Asia-Pacific Network for Sustainable Forest Management and Rehabilitation

APFNet/Council/ENG/2015/05

## Establishment and First Meeting of the APFNet Board of Directors

### Summary of Decisions

Wednesday, 8 April 2015

Beijing, China

#### **Present** *Voting Directors*

Mr Zhao Shucong  
Mr Grahame B. Applegate  
Dr Chea Sam Ang  
Dr Rex Victor O. Cruz  
Mr Patrick Durst  
Mr Jack Hurd  
Mr Li Qiang  
Mr Stephen Midgley  
Dr Sadanandan Nambiar  
Mdm Wan Hasmah

#### *Ex-officio Directors*

Mr Zhang Yansong, host economy representative  
Mr Qu Guilin, Executive Director of APFNet

#### **Apologies**

Dr Ganesh Raj Joshi  
Mr Pralong Dumrongthai

#### **Quorum present:** Yes

#### **Minutes takers:**

Mr Philip Antweiler, facilitator/APFNet senior advisor  
Ms Luo Xi, APFNet Secretariat  
Ms Alexandra Wu, APFNet Secretariat

#### **Observer:**

Ms Wang Hong, Director of Finance, APFNet secretariat

The first APFNet Board of Directors convened in Beijing at the APFNet Secretariat on 8 April 2015 to take up their formal appointments and conduct the first meeting of the Board.

***Part I: Establishment of the Initial Board of Directors***

Mr Qu Guilin, Executive Director of the APFNet Secretariat and Secretary of the Board, opened the meeting and temporarily chaired Part I of the meeting.

• *The Board adopted the agenda of Part I*

The provisional agenda previously provided was adopted without amendment, and each Board member briefly introduced themselves, demonstrating the impressive breadth and depth of experience found among the members.

• *The Board of Directors was officially launched*

Mr. Zhao Shucong, Minister, State Forestry Administration of China, also one of the voting members of the Board, presented each Board member with their certificate of appointment on behalf of the host economy. Following the official appointment, Mr. Qu Guilin briefly reviewed the responsibilities of Board members according to the Operational Framework, and presented an overview of the institutional development and key activities of APFNet to date. He stressed that institutional development and practical activities had unfolded in tandem, strengthening and mutually informing each other.

**Decision B.01/01** *The Board adopted the Procedure of Electing the Chair of APFNet's Initial Board of Directors [APFNet/Board/ENG/2015/01]*

Mr. Qu reviewed the Procedure and there being no amendments proposed, the Procedure was adopted by consensus.

**Decision B.01/02** *The Board elected Mr Zhao Shucong as the Chair of the Initial Board of Directors with a first term of three years.*

Mr Qu noted that Mr. Zhao Shucong from China had indicated his willingness to serve as Chair of the Board when the Procedure of Electing the Chair of APFNet's Initial Board of Directors was disseminated among the Board members. Mr Qu then opened for nominations for the Chair. Dr Chea Sam Ang (Cambodia) nominated Mr Zhao Shucong (China), which was seconded by Mdm Wan Hasmah (Malaysia) and Mr Li Qiang (ITTO), considering Mr Zhao's alignment with the required qualifications listed in the Procedure of Electing the Chair of the Board. With consensus, the Board elected Mr Zhao Shucong (China) to serve as Chair of the Board with the first term of three years. Mr Zhao made brief opening remarks upon assuming the Chair.

Mr. Zhao thanked the directors for their confidence and support, pledged to serve as Chair in accordance with relevant guidelines. He emphasized how APFNet has evolved into an active, innovative and practical mechanism to support sustainable forest management, while also achieving recognition in APEC and other international bodies. Mr Zhao stressed his commitment to making full use of his position to seek increased support from the various Chinese government departments, and urged other directors to assist with diversifying sources of financial support for the organization.

***Part II: First Meeting of the Initial Board of Directors***

Mr Zhao, newly elected Chair of the Board, presided over this Part II of the meeting.

**Organizational matters**

- The Board adopted the agenda of the First Meeting of the Initial Board of Directors without any revision.

**Agenda item 1: Update on the APFNet's Accomplishments**

- *The Board took note of the progress report of APFNet [APFNet/Board/ENG/2015/03].*
- The Board noted that APFNet has played a significant role in promoting high level policy dialogue about the forest sector; this activity is crucial to attracting the resources and broader political will for necessary policy change and modernization. APFNet has developed a comparative advantage in promoting high-level dialogue that draws the attention of top leaders to forest sector needs and issues.
- The Board pointed out that improvement in the selection, monitoring/evaluation, of projects and their completion on a realistic timeline must be a continued priority; APFNet may wish to consider the utility of proactively commissioning field projects and associated training in high priority areas. And the Board expressed interest in better understanding the guidance provided to the Project Appraisal Panel on priority topics for consideration, and on areas already undertaken in previous projects.
- The Board also noted that improving mechanisms for accessing and sharing information gained during APFNet capacity building and project implementation activities should be prioritized.

**Agenda item 2: Rules of Procedure of the Board of Directors**

Chair Zhao provided an overview of the document and invited Mr Philip Antweiler to give additional introductions. An issue was raised on the role of the Council, its relationship with the Board and how to interact with the Board. The Chair concluded

that the views and inputs of the Council should be collected before each Board meeting to ensure the effective communication between the two bodies.

**Decision B.01/03** *The Board adopted the Rules of Procedure of the Board of Directors [APFNet/Board/ENG/2015/04]*

**Agenda item 3: Governance structure of APFNet**

**Decision B.01/04** *The Board approved and made official the Governance Structure of APFNet [APFNet/Board/ ENG/2015/05]*

The Board noted that fluid and effective communication and coordination among the Board, Council, Secretariat and the Project Appraisal Panel are essential to continuing APFNet's strong record of achievement.

**Agenda item 4: Draft Framework of the Strategic Plan 2016-2020**

Document: [APFNet/Board/ENG/2015/06]

The Board discussed, made recommendations and commented on the process of further developing the draft Strategic Plan 2016-2020.

**Decision B.01/05** *The Board invited the Council to provide its input to the framework of the Strategic Plan 2016-2020; and authorized the Secretariat to develop the plan based upon the comments received, also expressing its willingness to provide additional input on specific topics, as appropriate, during the next stage of the drafting of the plan.*

***Recommendations:***

The Board also made the several recommendations on the framework:

APFNet should be cautious about the thematic priorities and geographic coverage of the strategic plan to avoid stretching it too thin. [written comment]

**Four pillars remain the implementation tools:**

There is strong support for continuation of the four APFNet pillars as the basic framework for the 2<sup>nd</sup> strategic plan. This is also a good time to assess the focus and priorities to see if further targeting and prioritization is possible and desirable. A vigorous effort should be made to identify practical and effective ways to more closely integrate and tie together the activities carried out under the respective pillars so that learning activities and best practices in implementation are mutually reinforcing, and both types of knowledge effectively shared among all APFNet

stakeholders.

### **Thematic priorities**

- **Wood product supply**

The upcoming strategic plan should attempt to identify concrete ways to increase the focus on and thematic priority given to wood product supply, demand trends, and supply chains; to engagement with private and small/medium size producers, and to the connection of vibrant forest economies with improved livelihoods, which could also be productive themes through which to strengthen linkages with APEC.

- **Forest restoration and rehabilitation**

Needs and opportunities for forest restoration and rehabilitation remain vast in the Asia-Pacific region, and APFNet's focus on this is a comparative advantage. Further efforts should be made to define concrete activities under this rubric in the 2nd strategic plan and in upcoming work plans. Consideration should be given to how plantation forestry might fit into restoration and rehabilitation.

### **Complementarity**

- Efforts should continue to identify and minimize activities which overlap with the activities of other organizations; identifying and pursuing partnership opportunities remain essential to success, and a defining characteristic of APFNet;

### **Funding arrangement**

- The Board should remain alert to opportunities to diversify funding sources;

### **Organization and Governance**

- The next strategic plan should include a program to carry out a needs and capacity assessment of future APFNet staffing composition and development.

### **Agenda item 5: Draft Framework of the Administrative and Financial Regulations of APFNet**

The Board reviewed and made recommendations on the draft framework of staff regulations [APFNet/Board/ENG/2015/07], financial management rules, and accounting policies [APFNet/Board/ENG/2015/08];

**Decision B.01/06** *The Board authorized the Secretariat to develop these into more detailed and specific documents for consideration at the next meeting of the Board.*

### **Recommendations:**

The Board noted that APFNet should continue its process of internationalization,

working steadily toward becoming an international organization; this route offers great promise to furthering APFNet's SFM objectives; Board members also took note that this was likely to be a multi-year, complex process and that more sharply defining the organization's key goals and comparative advantage was key to an attractive international "brand" and interest by international donors.

**Agenda item 6: APFNet work plan and annual budget 2015**

- *The Board took note of the work plan and annual budget of 2015 [APFNet/Board/ENG/2015/09]*

The Board also noted that greater detail and category breakdown would be very useful to see in upcoming budgets particularly in those large expenditure categories such as demonstration projects; and it can also help better assess whether adjustments would be useful in resource allocation among the four pillars and their sub-categories;

**Agenda item 7: Procedure for the Development of APFNet Membership**

Following review and discussion of the Procedures for the Development of APFNet Membership [APFNet/Board/ENG/ 2015/10], the Board made recommendations for slight revisions, while maintaining APFNet's strong commitment to open membership, cooperation, and mutual respect as a fundamental principle of APFNet. The Board also noted that careful consideration should be given to preserve these qualities as APFNet refines and extends its activities and its membership in coming years.

**Decision B.01/07** *The Board authorized the Council to consider and take final action on adoption of these Procedures.*

**Agenda item 8: appointment of the Executive Director**

**Decision B.01/08** *The Board authorized and requested the Secretariat to develop plans and procedures for selection and appointment of the Executive Director; and to circulate those documents in draft form to the Board for written comment.*

**Closing session:**

- **Venue and timing of the next Board meeting:**

Dr Chea Sam Ang proposed to host the second meeting of the Board in Cambodia, which was welcomed and commended by the rest of the Board members.

**Decision B.01/09** *The Board decided to convene the meeting Cambodia in 2016, subsequent to the Council meeting of that year.*

- **Closing remarks**

Chair Zhao closed by noting his increased confidence in assuming the heavy responsibilities of chair following the productive and thoughtful discussion of the first Board meeting. He considered himself lucky, and was certain that the Board would play a key role in directing the organization on the right track. Based on his experience, successful and dynamic organizations have a clear, attractive philosophy; effective implementing programs and tools; the needed financial and human resources support; and efficient operations coupled with effective monitoring. The Chair expressed his full confidence that APFNet already has the ingredients necessary for outstanding success.

***Meeting with Vice Premier Mr Wang Yang of the State Council, P.R. China***

The entire Board of APFNet had the honor to be received by Vice Premier Mr Wang Yang. Vice Premier Wang stressed his appreciation for the important work undertaken by APFNet on restoring and improving the environment in the region. Vice Premier Wang characterized the establishment of APFNet Board as an important event in global eco-civilization. He added that the Chinese government will continue to support APFNet's development, and via APFNet would like to strengthen regional ecological protection and forest restoration, share experience and lessons learned with regional economies, and ensured that APFNet will play an increasingly more important and active role in international society in these fields. Vice Premier Wang concluded by urging all Directors to join hands to promote strengthened development of APFNet so that it becomes one of the most influential international organizations working to protect ecosystems.

**Other events during the Board's meeting:**

The APFNet-FAO MoU signing ceremony was held during break of the meeting on 8 April. The APFNet Fund Donation Ceremony was held on the evening of 8 April to extend gratitude to the donating public and private entities for their contribution (over US \$ 1 million) to the Fund and to officially launch the Fund as a new funding mechanism of APFNet. On 9 April, the Board members paid a field visit to the Miyun reservoir watershed in the suburb of Beijing and attended the launch ceremony of an APFNet project of "Rehabilitation and Management of Degraded Forests in Beijing's Miyun Reservoir Watershed". A tree planting activity was organized afterwards.