Background
Forests in Asia play a critical role in providing a variety of services that millions of people depend upon. They provide food, building materials, medicinal plants and fuel wood. They supply timber for domestic and export markets, protect soils from erosion, play an important role in recycling and distributing freshwater, and lock up significant quantities of carbon dioxide, one of the greenhouse gases contributing to global warming. They also contain much of our regional biodiversity. Despite their intrinsic and societal values, natural forests in Asia continue to disappear at alarmingly high rates.

What is AFP?
The Asia Forest Partnership (AFP) is a multi-stakeholder alliance to promote sustainable management of forests in the Asia-Pacific region. Launched in 2002 at the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD), AFP was established at a time when processes and policies in Asia were struggling to deal with alarming rates of deforestation and forest degradation. The first phase of AFP was from 2002 to 2007, after which the mandate was renewed for a second phase, from 2008-2015.

AFP’s goal
AFP aims to promote cooperation and catalyze action among governments, civil society and business to achieve sustainable forest management in Asia and the Pacific and thereby maintain and enhance the provision of forest products and ecosystem services, and their contribution to human well-being.

Key themes
• Reducing forest loss and degradation and Improving forest cover: with a view to ensure the long-term availability of forest products and ecosystem services, including:
  - Adapting to and mitigating climate change
  - Protecting watersheds
  - Conserving biodiversity
• Combating illegal logging and associated trade.

Key considerations
• Protecting the livelihoods, rights and wellbeing of the world’s one billion poor who rely on forests.
• Improving forest-related governance.
• Strengthening local and institutional capacity for sustainable forest management.
• Securing and diversifying financial resources for the conservation and sustainable use of forest resources.
What are the benefits for partners?
AFP enables partner organizations to better pursue their own goals and interests by:
• Providing a voice in multi-stakeholder discussions about key forestry issues.
• Engaging with relevant global, national and regional processes.
• Developing synergies between projects, policies and other initiatives.
• Building forestry-based partnerships between private sector, public sector, and civil society stakeholders.

Over 40 partners are currently working together under the AFP umbrella

AFP Dialogue 2010
A series of global events, processes and decisions underscore the attention to forests and forest governance. As disappointing as the outcomes from the 15th Conference of the Parties (COP15) in 2009 ultimately were, an accord was negotiated and subsequently most UNFCCC Parties have “associated” themselves with it. The importance of REDD+ to climate change mitigation is acknowledged in Article 6 of the Accord: “We recognize the crucial role of reducing emission from deforestation and forest degradation and the need to enhance removals of greenhouse gas emission by forests and agree on the need to provide positive incentives to such actions through the immediate establishment of a mechanism including REDD-plus, to enable the mobilization of financial resources from developed countries.”

Good forest governance has the potential to promote sustainable forest management (SFM), reduce illegal logging and attract financial flows to tropical forest-rich countries through REDD+. However, opportunities and trade-offs in the areas of forest governance, SFM, law enforcement and REDD+ continue to be addressed separately. Potential synergies for achieving shared objectives are rarely identified.

Much is also happening in the Asia-Pacific region from which lessons can be extracted and there is considerable potential to identify and pursue synergies. Governments, with support from international organizations, NGOs, research institutes and others, are developing policies and creating frameworks to implement REDD+, and are undertaking REDD+ demonstration activities. Efforts to improve forest governance from local to national levels are also underway. Governance is crucial to REDD+ to ensure long-term, real emissions reductions and equitable outcomes, while many hope that REDD+ will provide new opportunities to strengthen forest governance.

AFP, in collaboration with the Governments of Japan and Indonesia, and CIFOR supported by the EU’s European Forest Institute (EFI) Forest Law Enforcement Governance & Trade Asia Regional Support Programme (FLEGT Asia), and The Nature Conservancy’s Responsible Asia Forest and Trade (RAFT) Programme, will organise a regional dialogue on ‘Forest governance challenges beyond Copenhagen: An Asia Pacific perspective’. Other potential contributors will include representatives of international organizations and other interested AFP members.
Objectives

The Dialogue aims to bring together key decision makers in government and leaders of intergovernmental organisations, NGOs, academia and the private sector to provide a broad cross-section of perspectives on the Copenhagen Accord and other COP15 outcomes, their implications for REDD+, and the nexus between REDD+ and forest governance in the Asia and Pacific region. The objectives of the Dialogue are to provide an opportunity for:

- A frank exchange of information, views and perspectives on forest governance challenges and the links between forest governance and REDD+;
- Updates of REDD+ and forest governance policies, programs and projects in the Asia Pacific region, including sharing of lessons;
- Identifying challenges and synergies;
- Partners (and non-Partners) to discuss collaboration on REDD+ and governance initiatives.