An annual review was held for the PNG Program on 23rd May 2016, at PNG Forest Research Institute.

Those present at the Review were Partner Institutions; PNG Forest Research Institute - Forest Products Program with special acknowledgement of Dr. Golman, A/Director, PNG UNITECH Forestry Department, Timber & Forestry Training College, Forest Industry Association, PNG Forest Authority and University of Melbourne. Those present from UOM were Assoc. Prof. Barbara Ozarska, Dr. Benoit Belleville and Dr. Bob Smith.

Others participating organisations / persons were Emily Flowers from Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade (DFAT) and Karl Menko representing ACIAR.

The purpose of the review was to update on the progress of the Project activities in the country and to where the team can put extra efforts into completing activities that are way passed the dead lines.

There were also presentations done by Objective and Activity Leaders on certain task there were assigned for them to complete during the previous Workshop with the Project Leader.

The Review was a day activity, the rest of the Team that travelled in from Port Moresby returned on the same afternoon. Barbara and Benoitte remained back to work with the team on schedules to accomplish before the next review (September), the schedule done was for Harvesting, Milling, Drying and Machining Sample Species for tests. The schedules of activities had drawn with assigned responsible persons and institutions and dead lines
Wood Sample Species Procurement Update

Project Annual Review 2016 highlighted that by mid term of the project which is in February 2017, as advised by the project Manager 12 species should be tested. A schedule was done and TFTC have been given this task to assist /lead in the harvesting and milling of these samples. An additional K15,000.00 has added to TFTC budget specifically for sample extraction.

Tree Marking
This activity was done on Tuesday 31st May and Wednesday 1st June, with the involvement of:
- Daniel Marika - Coordinator
- Kilva Lancelot—R/O FRI
- Pendis Ono - R/O Unitech DOF
- Elaine Galore - R/O TFTC
- Peter Benny—Driver
- TFTC Harvesting Crew

The team in 2 days marked 10 species (50 trees) in Oomsis Natural forest. The forest has been TFTC’s previous TA, the current regrowth is over 15+ years. The species marked were; PNG Rosewood, Albizia White, Vitex, Labula, Hopea, Kwila, PNG Boxwood, PNG Basswood, Erima & PNG Mersawa.

Update in Felling and Milling (9/8/2016)
- Due to issues beyond our control and not in our favor, there were problems with wet weather and delays in receiving the funding. Mechanical problems with harvesting machines compounded the problems.
- Trees yet to be felled PNG Mersawa X 5
  Kwila X 1
  Total = 6
- Trees felled but not skidded
  Vitex X 2
  Labula X 1
  Heavy Hopea X 5
  Kwila X 4
  PNG Basswood X 5
  Total = 17
- Logs at log landing Erima X 2
- Logs yet to be milled at TFTC
  Erima X 3
  Labula X 4
  Total = 7
- Logs already milled
  Pellita X 5
  Taun X 5
  Wau Beech X5
  White Albizia X 5
  PNG Rosewood X 5
  PNG Boxwood X 5
  PNG Vitex X 3
  Total = 33

Drying
- Albizia White, Wau Beech - 5th, 6th, 13th July
- Labula, PNG Boxwood and Vitex - 19th August (in Solar Kiln currently)
- Pencil Cedar and Taun (Solar Kiln)

On going activities
The on going activities have listed have been scheduled to be completed by the end of August 2016.

With time limitation the logs will be milled with the Conventional Sawmill or the small sawmill. This depends on where the team finds if efficient and convenient to meet the dead lines. Continuous blackouts in the city have also disrupted milling at the main sawmill and also machining of dried timbers.
The Sepik Carvers were engaged by the UNITECH Department of Forestry ACIAR team (Mr. Peter Edwin) under Activity 2.5 - Innovative approaches enabling involvement of landowners.

The carvers are a group of different aged men who originated from the Sepik Province, known in PNG to be from a province of skilled carvers. Their involvement was to show that involvement of landowner is not only directly with those who are resource owners but the involvement can also include those who are skilled to utilize wood in a different way and also to find other initiatives in involving women and younger landowners as well maybe directly or indirectly.

The carvers were stationed at Nalakumbung, a forest area of a local resource owner (Tingut Aiih) who is a selected landowner participant in the ACIAR Project. The carvers were there for two (2) weeks, they were tasked to make use of the wood from the logged/harvested tree stumpage and rejected section of the logs that was still able to be utilized. The species that was mainly used among the group of carvers was Rosewood. From Nalakumbung the group was then stationed at the Forestry Department Parking Space Garage for the remaining of the month to complete all the carvings. Some of the carved items where the most famous historical ANZAC 'Fuzzy Wuzzy' Angels, the ACIAR Project PST/2012/092 logo and different animals.

The future or long term idea for these involvement is that under this project research/survey will be done to find a market for their products and also assist their wider community in enhancing wood utilization directly and indirectly.
Progress on Central Processing Unit (CPU)

In this edition we continue to discuss the progress of the CPU. This initiative is still in the trial and error phase and there are still many discussion on the policy and the guidelines on how this activity is to be carried out.

In the recent discussion at the project’s coordination level due to some uncertainty on how the activity is to be established it has been advised that the activity has been shelved or put on hold until further discussion and decisions among the project coordinators and managers of the future of the establishment of this activity.

The team from the Lae sector on the other hand have been having discussions and working very hard on trying to put together something that will show that this particular activity is should be established. In the recent meeting the team discussed and agreed to activities listed below and the persons responsible.

- Meeting between TFTC Acting Principle and Don Yakuma on the possibility of engaging him as a consultant in producing a business plan for the CPU.
- Recent meeting held between TFTC and PNGFRI members were tasked to certain activities.
- TOR for development for the Business Plan or engagement of a consultant
- Status of rejected logs for export in log ponds around the country.

The responsible persons have been working to complete all these and provide feedback. The TOR as of date has already been in the 2nd draft. The final copy is already in the stage of completion and ready to be shared to other partner institutions for their viewing before the advert is presented for the search of consultant.

Madang Trip Report

The Madang Trip was part of the activities scheduled during the workshop that was held in May where done for the Lae and POM companies. This trip was for the different activities in Objective 2. Those who were part of this trip were Frank Asok (PNG FRI), Haron Jeremiah (UNITECH DOF), Peter Edwin (UNITECH DOF), Rauf Iru (TFTC), Daniel Marika (TFTC), Elaine Galore (TFTC) and Haydrian Morte (UNITECH DOF).

The companies visited in Madang with liaison and from the Madang National Forest Service (NFS). The trip was for three days and companies visited were; Madang NFS office, Madang Timbers Ltd, Santi Forestry and Tropical Timbers. A visit was organized to the Madang Timbers logging Area (Timber Permit area). This however was not successful as the landowners and crew were not on site. The team with the NFS Officer spoke with those who were available during the time of the visit. Every member on this trip were there to collect information on the different activities they were responsible for. On the trip back the team visited the Walium local resources owners with the Walium District Commercial Manager. The other visit done at Walium was to a local man who owns a timber business. The purpose of visit to these two places was to do survey in regards to their engagement in CPU. The overall purpose of this trip was in relation to do survey on the technology gap.

A report about the visit is in writing progress and will be submitted to Barbara, including report on machinery, technology and knowledge/training capacity of the companies visited. Another visit was done to the Southern Region (POM and Milne Bay) timber companies. Another trip has been scheduled for the NGI provinces (East New Britain and West New Britain).
General Update of PNG Partner Institutions

PNG Forest Research Institute - Forest Products Program

The 20 wood samples for the following mechanical tests has been prepared. Bending test, shear test, compression parallel to the grain, compression perpendicular to the grain and hardness test for Pellita, Tain, Wau Beech and White Albizia. The tests are yet to be carried out. Wood samples for treatment and drying research are not prepared yet. For the machining and gluing tests, these samples are also not prepared yet. The autoclave and the humidity chamber has been received but not operational. When Dr. Belleville visits Lae, then this tests can be started.

Most of the work was on wood sample preparation for mechanical tests. Frank Asok was mostly involved in Objective 2 particularly in wood processing companies inspections and data collection.

Benjamin Vali who is in charge of wood drying research has made available the methodology to Barbara and Benoit. It comprises of Quick Drying Test and Scheduled Drying test.

Benson Gusamo in charge of Activity 1.4 in timber treatment will be carrying out 3 tests; 1. Treatability tests, 2. Test against termites and 3. Decay test. The decay test, however requires agar which we hope to receive from Unitech.

PNG University of Technology - Department of Forestry

A total of 16 wood processing companies were visited. Seven reports were completed, 5 in draft and 4 not done yet. These companies were from the Momase and Southern region. Most landowner companies did not have TAs and it was deemed illegal to work with them. There were companies that buy timber from NGOs and resell and these were also considered illegal to include in the project. However, data and information collected during these visits will be databased and stored for reference.

In conducting research to identify technology gaps, most companies were using SAEPA rules for log grading. Daniel Marika and Baleng Lagep have come up with an updated Timber Grading Rules. Waste Grading rules for primary and secondary processing operations were completed for comments from the industry.

In developing public-private partnerships in this project 2 reports were completed: 1. Report on the analysis of the current partnership between PNGFA and timber industry and 2. Report on evaluation of the pilot trials. However, recommendations for a partnership strategy is still being developed.

Timber & Forestry Training College

Overall update of the last 3 months for TFTC ACIAR project activities where slow but is being gradually executed. The delay in the activities where basically in regards to finances. The funds for Payment 2 & Payment 3 has finally been deposited into the correct account after a month minor hiccups. The institution also received Aus$6,900.00, this is a special funding as discussed during the Workshop with Barbara - this will be for the procurement of sample species. Progressive of Research Activities are highlighted in the sections of this newsletter.

Generally the project team is providing its best efforts to have the project activities done despite their busy academic schedules.

Mr. Tsiri has resumed duties on 1st August 2016 as the Deputy Principal and has also been given back the task by the Acting Principle as the Coordinator of the ACIAR Project with the Acting Principal be an overseer of the activities done under the project. Acknowledgement to Mr. Daniel Marika to look after the project in the meantime.
Activity Leaders - Objective 2

Team Leader for OBJECTIVE 2: Dr. Mex Peki. Senior Lecturer, Forestry Department, PMG University of Technology

Activity 2.1 Selection of companies and landowner groups willing to participate in the Project
   Activity Leader: Frank Asok, PNG Forest Research Institute, Lae

Activity 2.2 Identifying what improvements in the current processing and manufacturing practices are required
   Activity Leader: Haron Jeremiah, Lecturer, PNG University of Technology—Forestry Department

Activity 2.3 Conduct research to address identified practice and technology gaps
   Activity Leader: Haron Jeremiah, PNG University of Technology - Department of Forestry

Activity 2.4 Support trial implementation of improved value adding processes.
   Activity Leader: Haron Jeremiah, PNG University of Technology - Department of Forestry

Activity 2.5 Pilot innovative approaches to enable greater landowner involvement
   Activity Leader: Peter Edwin, PNG University of Technology—Department of Forestry
   Peter is presently studying at the UoM doing his doctorate degree.

Activity 2.6 Work with PNGFA to operationalize the Central Processing Unit in Lae
   Activity Leader: Daniel Marika, Principal Trade Instructor—TFTC

Activity 2.7 Developing public-private partnerships to support enhanced value-added wood processing in PNG
   Activity Leader: Dr. Mex Peki—Senior Lecturer, Forestry Department—UNITECH

NOTE: Charles Feriwok is the latest addition to the ACIAR project at the Forestry Dept—UNITECH. He will be carrying out activities under 2.5, replacing Peter Edwin
Research Officers Trainings

There have been a couple of trainings or knowledge sharing activities for Research Officers, both the young officers engaged and the other staff that are part of the project. A training was done by Peter Edwin on the use of the Solar Kiln, those present for the training was Baleng Lagep (TFTC - Wood Tech Instructor/HOD), Pendi Ono, Kliva Lancelot and Elaine Galore UNITECH DOF, PNG FRI, was showed on the from timber stacking to boards and data collection on using the electronic monitors used.

Other knowledge sharing sessions included Research officers been explained the use of the Instron Machine and the other machines or equipment in FRI labs. There was also a brief explaining conducted by Benjamin Vali on the use of certain equipment at the Kiln Dryer at TFTC.

Other trainings will be reportrespectively.

Barbara stressed that all ACIAR Research Officers must be done in respective institutions and learning involved in all research their training and learning.

DISCLAIMER

ACIAR Project FST/2012/092 newsletter is a collaborative publication between PNG Forest Authority and ACIAR. Other collaborating institutions are UNITECH Forestry Dept., TFTC, PNG FRI, PNGFIA and University Of Melbourne. Any views expressed are views of the Newsletter Committee including Research Officers from representing collaborating institutions. Any newspaper or journal interested in articles published here should contact the Country Project Coordinator or Director Forest Policy and Planning for fair and accurate reporting to avoid misinterpretation.

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