

Asia-Pacific Forest Invasive Species Network (APFISN): Origin, goals and achievements

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The Asia-Pacific Forest Invasive Species Network (APFISN) was established in 2004 in response to the huge costs and threats posed by invasive species to the sustainable management of forests in the Asia-Pacific region. The Network is attached to the Asia-Pacific Forestry Commission – a statutory body of the FAO of the UN. It focuses on co-operation among its 33 member countries to detect and prevent new incursions of forest invasive species (FIS) in the Asia-Pacific region and monitor and control those which have already invaded the region. The main objectives of APFISN include 1) raising awareness and exchanging information on FIS among member countries, 2) facilitating access to expertise, information and training opportunities, 3) strengthening capacity of member countries to deal with FIS and 4) developing action plans through regional collaboration to combat immediate and potential threats. The Network has an elected Executive Committee which provides strategic guidelines to its activities, a Network Coordinator who is responsible for implementing action plans and National Coordinators in each member country who coordinate activities within the country and link the network with the country.

The main action plans of APFISN are: awareness raising, database and information sharing, stocktaking of FIS in member countries, capacity building and linking the network with other networks and professional bodies. Through its activities, the network expects to achieve improved coordination and cooperation among its member countries in dealing with FIS, rapid sharing of information, enhanced capacity in tackling FIS and ultimately prevention of new incursions and mitigation of threats due to FIS in the Asia-Pacific region. The paper will focus on the main achievements of APFISN so far. APFISN website: www.apfisin.net

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