

Opinions

Promoting the sustainable use of wood for the benefit of the environment, economy and society

“Harvested Wood Products Accounting” for the post Kyoto Protocol period

We have held roundtable conferences and discussed “Harvested Wood Products Accounting” in the Framework Convention on Climate Change. As the Chair, I hereby summarize our opinions and conclusions.

The default approach is being used for the first commitment period (2008 to 2012) of the Kyoto Protocol. The approach assumes that carbon dioxide absorbed by forests is emitted when the trees are harvested, but does not evaluate the effects of carbon stock in harvested wood products.

To reduce the carbon dioxide concentration in the atmosphere, the stock of sound forests should be increased worldwide, and the amount of carbon stock in wood buildings, wooden materials, and other wood products including paper should be increased by prolonging the life of produced wood and recycling wood materials. It is also effective to reduce the consumption of fossil fuels by appropriately promoting the use of wood biomass energy and wood products that require less energy to produce instead of products that require much greater energy.

Wood produced by sustainable forestry is carbon neutral and inexhaustible. However, forest resources are unevenly distributed. To increase the worldwide presence of wood resources, measures are needed to encourage all parties to increase the economic importance of forestry in countries that have forest resources by reinvesting in forests and evaluating carbon stocks in harvested wood products in wood-consuming countries.

The accounting approach should be revised for the next commitment period (from 2013) to evaluate harvested wood products and promote sustainable forestry, the independence of wood resources and the circulation of wood by giving top priority to the worldwide benefits. The majority of the member parties accepted the view that the stock change approach should be adopted to promote the use of wood that is environmentally, economically, and socially sustainable. It was also agreed that a system is needed for ensuring appropriate forest control in exporting developing countries to prevent excessive felling of trees.

We propose that this information should be announced to the public and be considered by the governmental organizations in charge of discussions at the Ad Hoc Working Group on Further Commitments for Annex I Parties under the Kyoto Protocol (AWG-KP) and on the framework of the next period.

November 26, 2008

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Chair

Roundtable conference on “Harvested Wood Products”