

The power of partnership: Collaborative research that matters

Dr. Ujjwal Pradhan, Regional Coordinator for the World Agroforestry Centre's Southeast Asia Regional Program

In 2013, we celebrate 100 years of forestry research in Indonesia, even as the World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF) Southeast Asia Regional Program commemorates its 20th anniversary. In post-independence Indonesia, the Forestry Research and Development Agency (FORDA) of the Ministry of Forestry has been central to this research. Of course, the context of pre- and post-independence research and forest management has been very different and the demands of today are much more challenging than when forest research started. But we salute the foresight 100 years ago that predicted the growing importance of forest, trees and agroforestry research.



(back, from left to right) FORDA Director General Dr. Ir. Iman Santoso, ICRAF Regional Coordinator Dr. Ujjwal Pradhan, CIFOR Director General Dr. Peter Holmgren and Forestry Minister Zulfikri Hasan join in the planting of a tree at an event at the FORDA headquarters in Bogor, in April 2013, to mark 100 years of forestry research in Indonesia.

Photo by Mokhamad Edliadi/
CIFOR

In September 2011, then ICRAF Director General Dr. Dennis Garrity and then FORDA Director General Dr. Ir. Tachrir Fathoni celebrate the signing of a memorandum of understanding between their organizations. Photo by Sadewa/ICRAF



Some 20 years ago, the ICRAF Southeast Asia program was hosted within the Bogor campus of FORDA. Now the Southeast Asia program is the largest of ICRAF's regional programs, collaborating with FORDA and other international and national partners. For example, we are supporting FORDA's development of a national agroforestry research strategy, and are training national officials in the Ministry of Forestry as well as in other government agencies. We have completed joint research activities, such as in Yogyakarta on smallholders' teak plantations and in Sulawesi on livelihoods, governance and environment issues, and are about to embark on activities elsewhere in Indonesia. We have also partnered with BAPLAN, RLPS and the social forestry unit. There has been much shared learning between the organizations.

ICRAF has undertaken several important collaborative roles with FORDA, ranging through joint and participatory research, co-authored publications and presentations at key international forums, capacity building (including seconded staff from FORDA to ICRAF), and policy dialogues and formulations. Our organizations have also benefited from joint participation at each other's strategy development meetings. Over the past few years, joint discussions have taken place on ways forward, particularly regarding the activities and synergies regarding the CGIAR research programs (especially on forests, trees and agroforestry).

Based on these foundations, we see the themes of landscape ecology, food security and sustainable livelihoods, climate change, smallholders'

agency, and environmental services as being scientific priorities for joint collaborations and research. Given the changing contexts, time demands that we address the emerging opportunities and challenges with scientific rigor and in partnership together.

In the past couple of years, our collaborative activities centred on the recently established Agroforestry Research Center in Ciamis, West Java. This center was established during the tenure of former FORDA Director General, Bp. Fathoni, and the current Director General, Dr Iman Santoso, continues to guide and nurture this organization. There are few such agroforestry research centers in the world, and we are proud of our association. FORDA and the Ministry of Forestry continue to support the promotion of agroforestry, and indeed, focusing outside of forests can often relieve the pressures on them. ICRAF has a focus on trees and tree products in agricultural landscapes.

The anniversaries of our two organizations provide an opportunity to renew our commitment, reflect on our work and mission, and affirm our pledge to shared learning. As a research coalition fostering the process of knowledge to action, we can look forward and contribute to the growth, prosperity and development of Indonesia in the field of agroforestry.



ICRAF Director General Dr. Tony Simons and former FORDA Director General Dr. Ir. Tachrir Fathoni shake on an agreement at the monitoring and evaluation meeting between FORDA and ICRAF in 2011, also attended by (from left to right) Retno Utaira, then Management Services Leader of ICRAF; Ir. Adi Susmianto Pradhan, Head of the Center for Conservation of Nature and Rehabilitation; Dr. Ujjwal Pradhan, ICRAF Regional Coordinator; Dr. Harry Budisantoso, Head of BPK Ciamis; and Dr. Krisfianti Ginoga, Head of Climate Change Research and Policy.
Photo by Jose Arinto/ICRAF