



**Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations**

JULY-OCTOBER 2020

WEBINAR SERIES ON COVID-19 AND THE FOREST SECTOR



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Wednesday - 28 October 2020 10:00 - 11:00 CET

EXPERIENCE FROM FOREST COMMUNITIES OF COVID-19 IMPACTS



Welcome

Ewald Rametsteiner

Deputy Director, Forestry Division, FAO



Opening remarks

Daphne Hewitt

Team Leader, FAO-EU FLEGT Programme, FAO



Speakers

David Ganz

Executive Director, RECOFTC



Aurelian Mbzibain

Team Leader Climate, Forests, Agriculture and Wildlife, CIDT



Closing remarks

Sophie Grouwels

Forestry Officer, Forest and Farm Facility, FAO



Moderator

Alexia Baldascini

Programme Specialist, Forestry Division, FAO

About the session:

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought to the forefront a number of pressing global challenges. Health systems have been stretched thin and lockdown measures have taken a heavy social and economic toll, the devastating impacts of which are being felt by all – from urban residents of densely populated megacities to indigenous peoples living deep in the heart of forests.

For centuries, forests have served as safety nets for the rural poor. Forest products provide food, income, and nutritional diversity for about 20 per cent (FAO, 2018) of the global population, especially women, children and landless farmers. Forest-based communities in turn play a critical role as custodians of the forest and in monitoring resource-extraction activities by third-parties. It is anticipated that these marginalized groups will be disproportionately affected by the pandemic. In this context, the FAO-EU FLEGT Programme has partnered with RECOFTC and CIDT to carry out field surveys to document the immediate impact of the pandemic on forest communities in several countries in Asia and Africa, including their perceptions of law enforcement, as critical input towards designing suitable recovery programmes. The studies show that forest-based communities play a key role in protecting forest resources and improving the resilience of forest-dependent people in times of crisis.

This virtual session will:

- Present findings on the impact of the pandemic perceived at the “forest front” and needs for recovery
- Discuss how community forestry can contribute to strengthening and maintaining legality in forest management
- Identify concrete actions to support community-led forest monitoring to enhance legal resource extraction practices
- Demonstrate how community forestry can improve the resilience of forest-dependent communities during periods of disaster
- Emphasize that healthy forest ecosystems and resilient forest-dependent communities should be an important pillar of a green COVID-19 recovery programme.

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