



**INTERNATIONAL TROPICAL
TIMBER COUNCIL**

Distr.
GENERAL

ITTC/EP-59
31 October 2024

Original: ENGLISH

**REPORT OF THE EXPERT PANEL
FOR TECHNICAL APPRAISAL OF ITTO PROJECT PROPOSALS**

**Fifty-ninth Expert Panel
Virtual review August/September 2024**

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**REPORT OF THE 59th EXPERT PANEL FOR THE
TECHNICAL APPRAISAL OF ITTO PROJECT PROPOSALS
(Expert Panel)
VIRTUAL REVIEW**

1. INTRODUCTION

The 59th meeting of the Expert Panel was scheduled to be held at the ITTO Secretariat in Yokohama, on 1 - 5 July 2024. Due to the low numbers of proposals received, the 59th EP did not meet physically in Yokohama for the assessments of the proposals. In order to not leave the five proposals received under the Spring 2024 (Deadline 4 December 2023) and Autumn 2024 (Deadline 15 April 2024) cycles, the Secretariat proposed to the members of the Expert Panel a virtual review procedure (see section 4). The procedure was considered feasible and endorsed by the members of the Expert Panel.

2. TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Expert Panel (ITTC/EP-59) worked in accordance with the Terms of Reference attached, see **Appendix I**. Furthermore, it has been guided by the endorsement of the Council at its 40th Session of Document ITTC(XL)/5 and, in particular the authorization contained in paragraph 7, to apply the "Revised ITTO System for Technical Appraisal of Project and Pre-project Proposals". The Fifty-ninth Panel appraised the proposals and classified them according to categories listed in **Appendix II** applying the current consolidated version of the scoring system summarized in **Appendix V** and **Appendix VI**.

3. PANEL MEMBERSHIP

The Fifty-ninth Expert Panel was attended by the twelve members listed in Appendix IV. Due to the virtual review process agreed (see section 4), no Chairperson was elected for this Expert Panel.

4. APPRAISAL PROCEDURES AND CRITERIA

- 4.1. The procedures, aspects and guidelines applied by the Panel to appraise Project and Pre-project Proposals are laid down in the Terms of Reference of the Expert Panel for the Technical Appraisal of ITTO Project Proposals (Appendix I). The appraisal also took into account the Environmental and Social Management Guidelines (ESM) and the ITTO Policy Guidelines on Gender Equality and Empowering Women (GEEW).
- 4.2. The panel members also made use of the established ITTO scoring system for the technical appraisal for proposals which has been created as a tool to facilitate the categorization of the proposals.
- 4.3. All documentation needed by the Panel members for their appraisal was posted online (using Dropbox) including the proposals, review instructions, scoring sheets, briefing notes for new panel members or relevant ITTO guidelines.
- 4.4. The virtual process was launched on 1 August 2024 with a deadline of 16 August 2024.
- 4.5. The appraisal procedure endorsed by the members of the Expert Panel included the following steps:
 - a) In accordance with established practice, each proposal was assigned to two Panel members, one from a Producer country and one from a Consumer country;
 - b) Each Panel member would complete the common appraisal sheet (Scoring Table) for the proposals assigned to her/him;
 - c) After completion the appraisal sheets (Scoring Table) would be returned to the ITTO Secretariat;
 - d) In cases where both reviewers ranked a proposal as Category 1 (commended to the Committee with only minor modifications required), such proposal would go forward to the Committee/Council for approval;
 - e) In cases where both reviewers ranked a proposal as Category 4 (not in line with ITTO objectives or requiring complete revision), the proposal would be returned to the proponent;
 - f) In all other cases (reviewers have a divergence of views/rank differently, reviewers rank a proposal as Category 2 (requiring essentials revisions) or Category 3 (a pre-project is required), such proposals would be held until such time that the panel can physically meet.
- 4.6. In cases where revised proposals were submitted, the Panel members also referred to the overall and specific recommendations made by the earlier Panel(s) to assess if these recommendations had been adequately addressed.

5. APPRAISAL AND ASSESSMENT CARRIED OUT

- 5.1. Five (5) project proposals were received for appraisal by the Fifty-ninth Expert Panel. The overall list of 5 Project Proposals reviewed by the Expert Panel and the category of decision allocated to each proposal is presented in Appendix III. The procedures and criteria applied for the assessment have been specified above in section 4.
- 5.2. The ITTO Secretariat allocated the Project Proposals in three blocks so that the Panel could deal with all proposals related to Reforestation and Forest Management (RFM) (5), with those related to Forest Industry (I) (0), and those related to Economics, Statistics and Markets (ESM) (0). This arrangement facilitated the appraisal as well as the formulation of the overall assessment and specific recommendations for each proposal listed in the Annex of this report.
- 5.3. The ITTO Secretariat assisted the work of the Panel by providing a general introduction of each proposal, also addressing any previous deliberations.
- 5.4. In following-up the results of the appraisal and following common practice, the Secretariat provided the following information and documents to all countries who have submitted proposals:
 - The Overall Assessment and Specific Recommendations on each proposal submitted by the country (Annex);
 - General findings and final categories commended by the Panel.

6. GENERAL FINDINGS

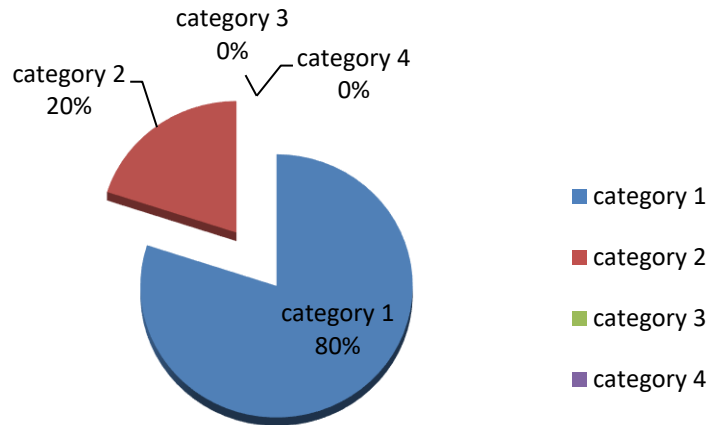
The Panel noted that:

- Four (4) Project Proposals (80 percent of the total) were commended to the Committee for final appraisal with minor modifications required (category 1);
- One (1) Project Proposal (20 percent of the total) will be sent back to proponent for essential revision, rated as category 2;
- None (0) Project Proposal (0 percent of the total) received a category 3, indicating that the project requires a pre-project to better formulate a new proposal; and
- None (0) Project Proposal (0 percent of the total) received a category 4, indicating that the Expert Panel does not commend these to the Committee for approval as they require complete reformulation.

See paragraph 7, pie chart "*proposals by category*".

7. PANEL DECISIONS ON PROJECT AND PRE-PROJECT PROPOSALS

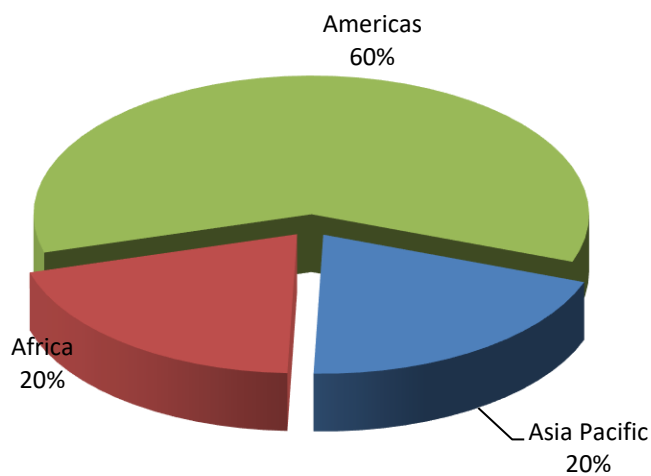
The Panel's decisions are listed in Appendix III, in accordance with established practice. Proposals classified by category, by regions, by committee areas and by submitting countries are summarised in the following tables and charts:



Summary of Project and Pre-project Proposals submitted to the Fifty-ninth Expert Panel by Region

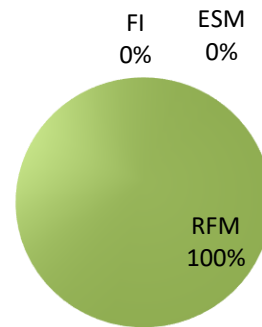
Region	Project Proposals				Pre-project Proposals				Total
	RFM	FI	ESM	Total	RFM	FI	ESM	Total	
<i>Asia Pacific</i>	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
<i>Africa</i>	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
<i>Americas</i>	3	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	3
Total	5	-	-	5	-	-	-	-	5

RFM = Reforestation and Forest Management
 FI = Forest Industry
 ESM = Economics, Statistics and Markets



Decisions of the 59th Expert Panel on Project and Pre-project Proposals by Committee Area

Category	Committee			Total
	RFM	FI	ESM	
<i>Projects</i>				
1	4	-	-	4
2	1	-	-	1
3	-	-	-	-
4	-	-	-	-
Total	5	-	-	5
<i>Pre-projects</i>				
1	-	-	-	-
2	-	-	-	-
4	-	-	-	-
Total	-	-	-	-



Decisions of the 59th Expert Panel on Project and Pre-project Proposals by Submitting Country

Country	Category				Total
	1	2	3	4	
Benin	1	-	-	-	1
Brazil	1	1	-	-	2
Guatemala	1	-	-	-	1
Indonesia	1	-	-	-	1
Total	4	1	-	-	5

Note: Parenthesis indicates pre-project.

APPENDIX I

TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE EXPERT PANEL FOR THE TECHNICAL APPRAISAL OF ITTO PROJECT PROPOSALS

The Panel shall:

- (i) Assess new Project and Pre-project Proposals submitted to the organization. The recommendations for amendments to these proposals shall be made by the Expert Panel exclusively for the purpose of ensuring their technical soundness;
- (ii) Screen the Project Proposals for their relevance to ITTO's Action Plan and Work Programs (in the areas of Economics, Statistics and Markets, Reforestation and Forest Management, and Forest Industry), and consistency with ITTO decisions and policy guidelines, but not otherwise prioritize them;
- (iii) Where reformulation involving major amendments is recommended, request to carry out a final appraisal of the revised versions of Project and Pre-project Proposals, prior to their presentation to the relevant ITTO Committees;
- (iv) Report on the results of the technical assessment of Project and Pre-project Proposals to the submitting governments and to the ITTO Council and Committees, through the ITTO Secretariat;
- (v) The Expert Panel shall take into consideration previous Expert Panels' reports.

The Expert Panel, in assessing Projects and Pre-projects, shall also take into account:

- (a) their relevance to the objectives of the ITTA, 2006 and the requirement that a Project or Pre-project should contribute to the achievement of one or more of the Agreement objectives;
- (b) their environmental and social effects;
- (c) their economic effects;
- (d) their cost effectiveness;
- (e) the need to avoid duplication of efforts;
- (f) if applicable, their relationship and integration with ITTO policy work and their consistency to the latest ITTO Strategic Action Plan including:
 - Guidelines for the Establishment and Sustainable Management of Planted Tropical Production Forests, 1993;
 - ITTO Guidelines on Fire Management in Tropical Forests, 1996;
 - ITTO Guidelines for Forest Landscape Restoration in the Tropics, 2020;
 - ITTO/IUCN Guidelines for the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biodiversity in Tropical Timber Production Forests, 2009; and
 - Voluntary Guidelines for the Sustainable Management of Natural Tropical Forests, 2015.

APPENDIX II

Rating Categories of the ITTO System for Technical Appraisal of Project and Pre-project Proposals

Rating schedule for Project Proposals

Category 1: The Panel concluded that the proposal could be commended to the Committee with incorporation of amendments.

Category 2: The Panel concluded that the proposal requires essential modifications and will be returned to the proponent. The Panel will need to assess the revised proposal before it can commend it to the Committee.

Category 3: The Panel concluded that the proposal is not accepted because a Pre-project Proposal is required. According to the indication of the Panel the Pre-project shall (a) be submitted to the Expert Panel for appraisal or (b) could be directly submitted to the Committee for appraisal.

Category 4: The Panel concluded that it could not commend the proposal to the Committee, and submits it to the Committee with the recommendation not to approve the Project Proposal. Justification should be given to the proponent and the Committee (e.g. complete reformulation is necessary; in case of rev.2 Project Proposals; Project not relevant; Project with insufficient information, etc.).

Rating schedule for Pre-project Proposals

Category 1: The Panel concluded that the proposal could be commended to the Committee with the incorporation of amendments.

Category 2: The Panel concluded that the proposal requires essential modifications and will be returned to the proponent. The Panel will need to assess the revised proposal before it can commend it to the Committee.

Category 4: The Panel concluded that the Pre-project Proposal is not commended to the Committee. The proposal is submitted with the recommendation not to approve the Pre-project Proposal.

APPENDIX III
List of Project and Pre-project Proposals reviewed by the
Fifty-ninth Expert Panel

Project No.	Title	Country	Category
PD 936/24 (F)	Protection and Restoration of Forest Lands for Water Catchment, Regulation and Recharge in the Upper Salinas River Watershed, Guatemala, as a Climate Change Adaptation Measure to Ensure Water Supply for the Guatemalan Population	Guatemala	1
PD 938/24 (F)	Sustainable Management of Production Forests Driven by Traditional Communities in the Brazilian Amazon	Brazil	1
PD 939/24 (F)	Generation of Fundamental Information for the Second Cutting Cycle in the Amazon Rainforest	Brazil	2
PD 940/24 (F)	Strengthening Effective Forest Area Designation In East Nusa Tenggara Province As Precondition Of Achieving Sustainable Forest Management	Indonesia	1
PD 941/24 (F)	Capacity Building for Private and Community Tree Farmers in Relation with the Sustainable Management of Forest Plantations in Southern Benin	Benin	1

APPENDIX IV

**MEMBERSHIP OF THE FIFTY-NINTH MEETING OF THE EXPERT PANEL
FOR TECHNICAL APPRAISAL OF PROJECT PROPOSALS
Virtual review, August/September 2024**

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APPENDIX V

Revised Scoring Table – ITTO Project Proposal (PD)

Weighted Scoring System								
1.	Project relevance, origin and expected outcomes (15)			Mark	Score	Threshold		
1.	1.	Relevance						
1.	1.	1.	<i>Conformity with ITTO's objectives and priorities (1.2.1)</i>				Y	
1.	1.	2.	<i>Relevance to the submitting country's policies (1.2.2)</i>				Y	
1.	2.	Origin (1.1)				5		
1.	3.	Geogr. location (1.3.1)+ Social, cultural and environ. aspects (1.3.2)				5		
1.	4.	Expected outcomes at project completion (1.4)				5		
2.	Project identification process (25)							
2.	1.	Institutional set up and organisational issues (4.1. + 2.1.1)				5		
2.	2.	Stakeholders				10	Y	6
2.	2.	1.	<i>Stakeholder analysis (2.1.2)</i>		5			
2.	2.	2.	<i>Stakeholders involved at inception (2.1.3.) & implementation (4.1.4.)</i>		5			
2.	3.	Problem analysis (2.1.3)				10	Y	6
2.	3.	1.	<i>Problem identification</i>		5			
2.	3.	2.	<i>Problem tree</i>		5			
3.	Project design (45)							
3.	1.	Logical framework matrix (2.1.4)				20	Y	13
3.	1.	1.	<i>Objectives (2.2)</i>		5			
3.	1.	2.	<i>Outputs (3.1.1)</i>		5			
3.	1.	3	<i>Indicators & means of verification (columns 2 and 3 of the LogFrame)</i>		5			
3.	1.	4	<i>Assumptions and risks (3.5.1)</i>		5			
3.	2.	Implementation				20	Y	13
3.	2.	1.	<i>Activities (3.1.2)</i>		5			
3.	2.	2	<i>Strategy (approaches and methods, 3.2)</i>		5			
3.	2.	3	<i>Work plan (3.3)</i>		5			
3.	2.	4	<i>Budget (3.4)</i>		5			
3.	3.	Sustainability (3.5.2)				5	Y	3
4.	Implementation arrangements (15)							
4.	1.	Project's management (EA - 4.1.1, Key staff - 4.1.2, SC - 4.1.3)				5	Y	3
4.	2.	Reporting, review, monitoring and evaluation (4.2)				5		
4.	3.	Dissemination and mainstreaming of project learning (4.3)				5		
Entire project proposal (100)					100,0%	Y	75%	
Category					1			

Marks indicate:

- 0 - Information is completely missing
- 1 - Very poor: some elements are there but the essential ones are missing
- 2 - Poor: essential elements are incomplete, insufficient, wrong or misunderstood
- 3 - Moderate: essential elements are available but unclear or inaccurate
- 4 - Good: clear, accurate and informative
- 5 - Excellent: clear, accurate, informative and comprehensive (perfectly integrated with other items)

Rating categories:

Category 1:	The Panel concluded that the proposal could be commended to the Committee with incorporation of amendments.
Category 2:	The Panel concluded that the proposal requires essential modifications and will be returned to the proponent. The Panel will need to assess the revised proposal before it can commend it to the Committee.
Category 3:	The Panel concluded that the proposal is not accepted because a Pre-project Proposal is required. According to the indication of the Panel the pre-project shall (a) be submitted to the Expert Panel for appraisal or (b) could be directly submitted to the Committee for appraisal.
Category 4:	The Panel concluded that it could not commend the proposal to the Committee, and submits it to the Committee with the recommendation not to approve the Project Proposal. Justification should be given to the proponent and the Committee.

Revised Scoring Table – ITTO PRE-PROJECT PROPOSALS (PPD)

Weighted Scoring System							
1.	PRE-PROJECT CONTEXT (5)			Mark	Score	Threshold	
1.	1.		Origin and justification		5		
1.	2.		Relevance				
1.	2.	1.	Conformity with ITTO's objectives and priorities			Y	
1.	2.	2.	Relevance to the submitting Country's policies			Y	
2.	JUSTIFICATION OF PRE-PROJECT (15)						
2.	1.		Objectives		15	Y	9
2.	1.	1.	Development objective	5			
2.	1.	2.	Specific objective	5			
2.	2.		Preliminary problem identification	5			
3.	PRE-PROJECT INTERVENTIONS (25)						
3.			Outputs and activities		10	Y	7
3.	1.		Outputs	5			
3.	2.		Activities, inputs and unit costs	5			
3.	3.		Approaches and methods		5		
3.	4.		Work plan		5		
3.	5.		Budget		5		
4.	IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS (15)						
4.	1.		Executing agency and organizational structure		5		
4.	2.		Pre-Project Management		5		
4.	3.		Monitoring and reporting		5		
Entire project proposal (60)					100,0%	Y	75%
Category					1		

Marks indicate:

- 0 - Information is completely missing
- 1 - Very poor: some elements are there but the essential ones are missing
- 2 - Poor: essential elements are incomplete, insufficient, wrong or misunderstood
- 3 - Moderate: essential elements are available but unclear or inaccurate
- 4 - Good: clear, accurate and informative
- 5 - Excellent: clear, accurate, informative and comprehensive (perfectly integrated with other items)

Rating categories:

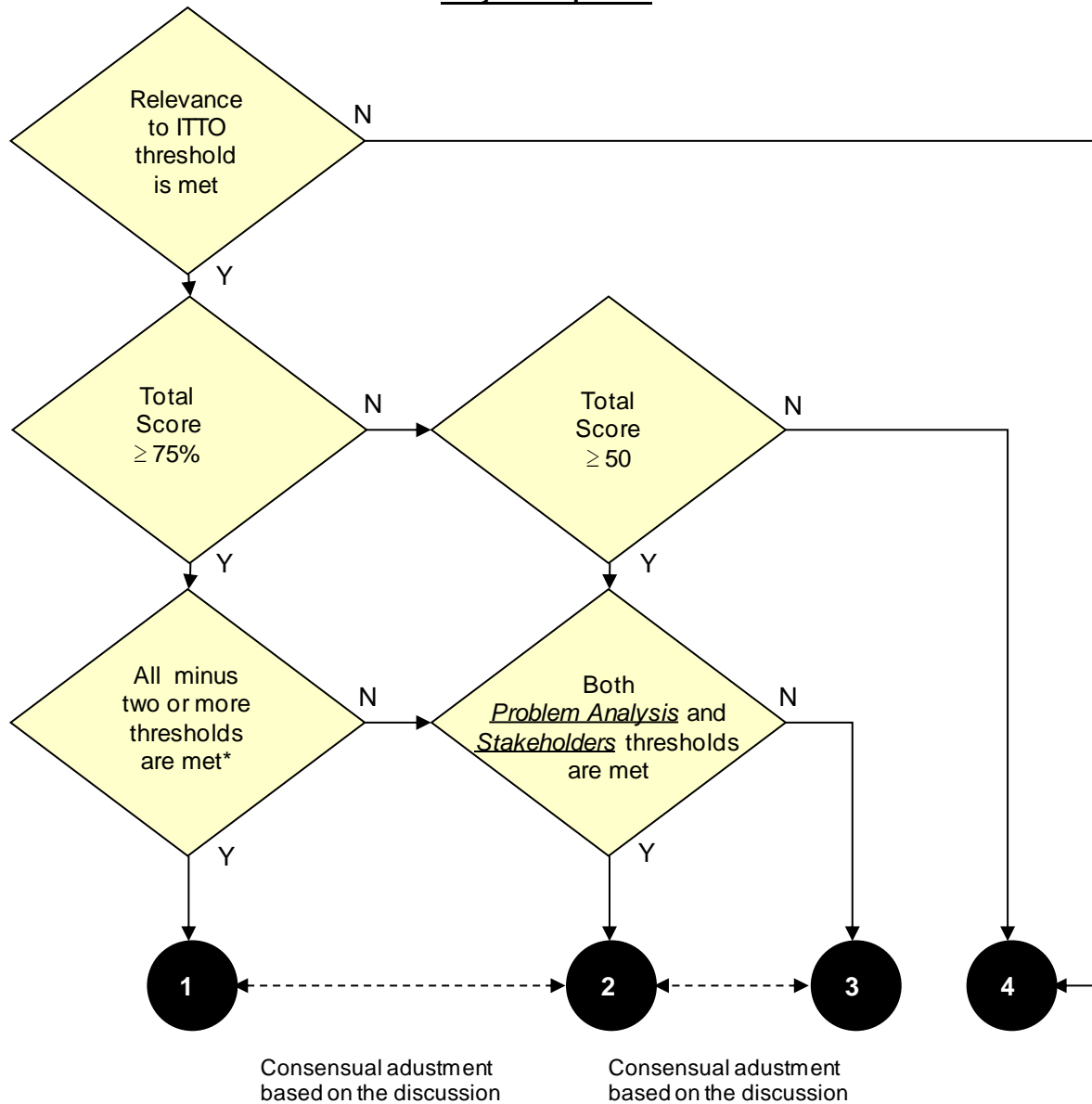
Category 1: The Panel concluded that the proposal could be commended to the Committee with incorporation of amendments.

Category 2: The Panel concluded that the proposal requires essential modifications and will be returned to the proponent. The Panel will need to assess the revised proposal before it can commend it to the Committee.

Category 4: The Panel concluded that it could not commend the proposal to the Committee, and submits it to the Committee with the recommendation not to approve the Project Proposal. Justification should be given to the proponent and the Committee

Appendix VI
Flow charts for deciding categories in the scoring system

Project Proposals

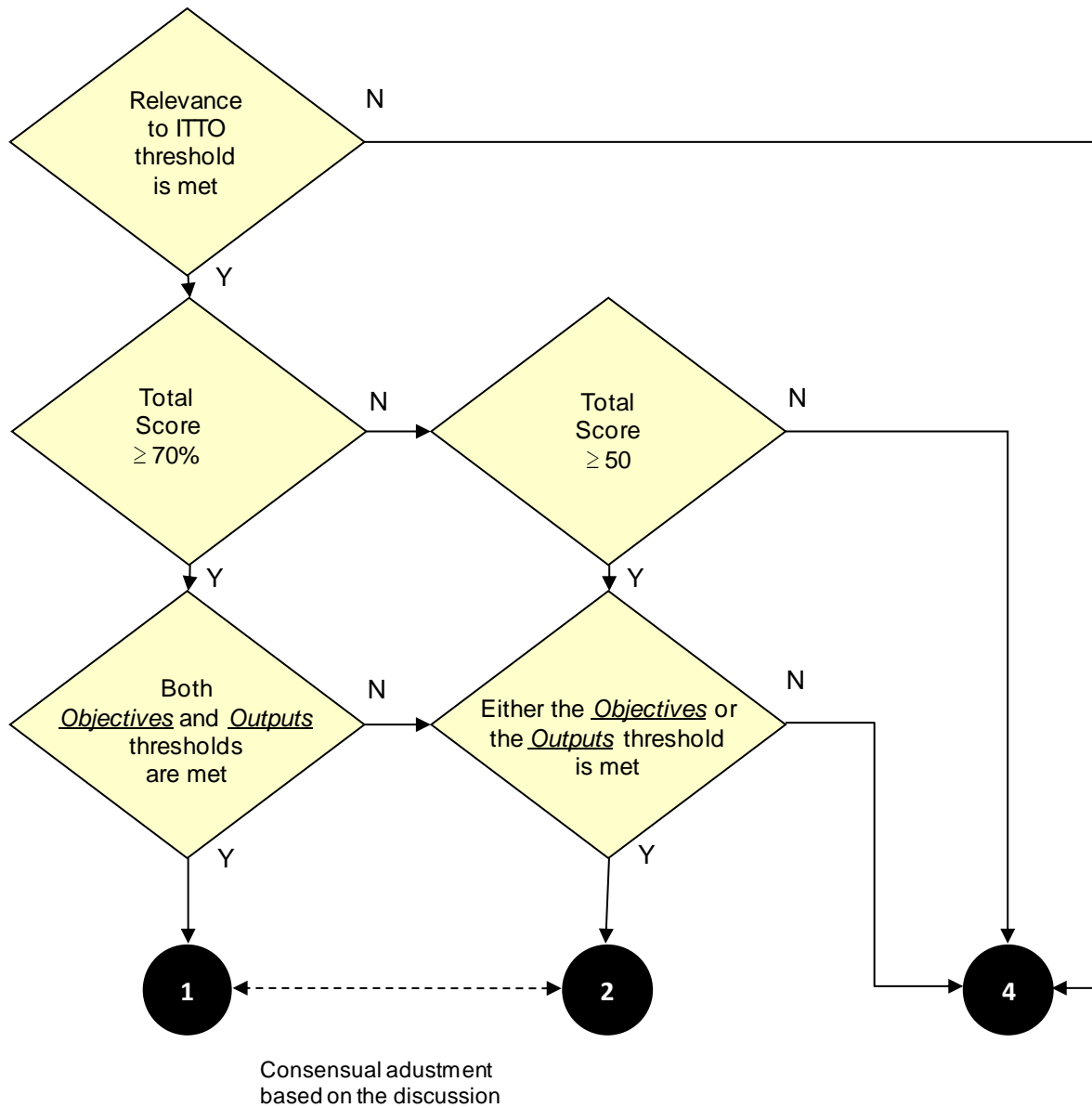


*Thresholds failed cannot be any two among the following three:

- Stakeholder
- Logical Framework
- Sustainability

- Category 1: The Panel concluded that the proposal could be commended to the Committee with incorporation of amendments. Proposal commended to the Committee with incorporation of amendments if any.
- Category 2: The Panel concluded that the proposal requires essential modifications and will be returned to the proponent. The Panel will need to assess the revised proposal before it can commend it to the Committee. Proposal requires essential modifications and will be returned to the proponent.
- Category 3: The Panel concluded that the proposal is not accepted because a pre-project proposal is required. According to the indication of the Panel the pre-project shall (a) be submitted to the Expert Panel for appraisal or (b) could be directly submitted to the Committee for appraisal. Proposal is missing fundamental information, consequently a pre-project is required and to be submitted to the EP.
- Category 4: The Panel concluded that it could not commend the proposal to the Committee, and submits it to the Committee with the recommendation not to approve the project proposal. Justification should be given to the proponent and the Committee. Proposal not recommended but submitted to the Committee with the recommendation not to approve the project proposal, (a) either because a complete reformulation is necessary, or (b) because it's not relevant to ITTO. Justification should be given to the proponent and the Committee.

Pre-Project Proposals



Category 1: The Panel concluded that the proposal could be commended to the Committee with incorporation of amendments. Proposal commended to the Committee with incorporation of amendments if any.

Category 2: The Panel concluded that the proposal requires essential modifications and will be returned to the proponent. The Panel will need to assess the revised proposal before it can commend it to the Committee. Proposal requires essential modifications and will be returned to the proponent.

Category 4: The Panel concluded that it could not commend the proposal to the Committee, and submits it to the Committee with the recommendation not to approve the project proposal. Justification should be given to the proponent and the Committee. Proposal not recommended but submitted to the Committee with the recommendation not to approve the project proposal, (a) either because a complete reformulation is necessary, or (b) because it's not relevant to ITTO. Justification should be given to the proponent and the Committee.

Annex

**Assessment, recommendation and conclusion by the Fifty-ninth Expert Panel on
each Project and Pre-project Proposal**

PD 936/24 (F)

Protection and Restoration of Forest Lands for Water Catchment, Regulation and Recharge in the Upper Salinas River Watershed, Guatemala, as a Climate Change Adaptation Measure to Ensure Water Supply for the Guatemalan Population

Assessment by the Fifty-ninth Panel

A) Overall Assessment

The Panel recognized the importance of the project proposal as a promising one with an emphasis on enhancing water supply as a vital ecosystem service for the Guatemalan population. The Panel noted that the project proposal's objective is in line with the first objective of the ITTA 2006, on promoting the sustainable management and conservation of tropical forests.

However, the Panel noted that there was still a need for improvement on some Sections and Sub-sections of the project proposal as per recommendations below.

B) Specific Recommendations

The proposal should be revised taking into account the overall assessment **and** the following recommendations:

1. Improve the project brief by updating the information on the existing situation for the last two years, providing more details on the effectiveness of past forest incentives and financial sustainability of government's support.
2. Provide maps with clear scale for the 'origin' and 'target area' sections (pages 7 and 14).
3. Under origin, provide additional information on previous ITTO support that led to the current proposal.
4. For the target area, add relevant environmental, demographic and social data, including gender.
5. Expected outputs after project completion should be precise and realistic for the two-year duration of the project. Please avoid ambiguous language, such as 'at least'.
6. Output 2 should also include a long-term strategy to anticipate water dynamics in quantity and quality. Changes are to be reflected in the logical framework matrix and other sections accordingly.
7. Under implementation approaches and methods, improve the argument on how capacity building will work to monitor water situation before and after the restoration project.
8. Under executive agency and partners, there's a need to improve the exit strategy. The government should have a leading role to play in it.
9. Include an Annex that shows the overall assessment and specific recommendations of the 59th Expert Panel and respective modifications in tabular form. Modifications should also be highlighted (**bold and underline**) in the text.

C) Conclusion

Category 1: The Panel concluded that the proposal could be commended to the Committee with incorporation of amendments.

Category C on the Environmental and Social Management Guidelines (ESM) checklist

Assessment by the Fifty-ninth Panel

A) Overall Assessment

The Panel recognized the importance of the project proposal to reinforce the capacities of local communities in the Amazon for the sustainable management of their natural resources. The Panel also noted the need for it to promote further production and trade of legal and sustainable tropical timber and recommended refining it as specified below.

B) Specific Recommendations

The proposal should be revised taking into account the overall assessment **and** the following recommendations:

1. Improve the project brief by detailing the long-term sustainability of expected outcomes and by elaborating on how these will be internalized in the budget and processes of government entities involved in the project. Provide more details on the potential mobilization of private investments towards project sustainability.
2. Under target area, include a map that clearly shows the location of the project proposal.
3. Under social, cultural, economic and environmental aspects, clarify the type of traditional communities involved (i.e., indigenous, farmers, Afro-descendants).
4. Revise the scope of the second output of the project proposal according to its time frame. A suggestion of could be “create enabling conditions for communities to invest in education, health ...” Ensure that changes are consistently done across the proposal.
5. Under the logical framework matrix, revise the scope of the indicator related to the availability of resources for infrastructure in the communities, so that these may be realistic and achievable considering the allocated time and budget. Provide specific details on the type of infrastructure to be verified.
6. Under specific objective and outcome indicators, the indicator on income for investment in water supply, education, transportation and communication seems too ambitious and ambitious. It should be revised accordingly.
7. For the work plan, activity 1.3, part of its execution should be moved to the second year of implementation with the aim of being more cross-cutting.
8. The section for sustainability lacks involvement of federal and local governments in support of the communities for building the infrastructure mentioned in other sections of the proposal.
9. Include an Annex that shows the overall assessment and specific recommendations of the 59th Expert Panel and respective modifications in tabular form. Modifications should also be highlighted (**bold and underline**) in the text.

C) Conclusion

Category 1: The Panel concluded that the proposal could be commended to the Committee with incorporation of amendments.

Category C on the Environmental and Social Management Guidelines (ESM) checklist

PD 939/24 (F)

Generation of Fundamental Information for the Second Cutting Cycle in the Amazon Rainforest (Brazil)

Assessment by the Fifty-ninth Panel

A) Overall Assessment

The Panel acknowledged that the project aims at generating and disseminating essential information on available timber stocks and production from forests undergoing the second harvest cycle. However, the Panel there was a need for improvement of the project proposal in the following sections and sub-sections: (1) Cover page with the project duration not consistent with relevant sections of the project proposal; (2) List of abbreviations not containing all of them used in the project proposal document; (3) The section on project origin is lacking information on the current status of the experimental sites and it is assumed that the second cut recycle is feasible on the project target site; (4) Reference to ITTO Strategic Action Plan 2013-2018 in Sub-section 1.2.1 (conformity with ITTO's objectives and priorities) instead of 2022-2026; (5) Map for the target project area is missing; (6) Environmental aspects are missing while more emphasis could be placed on how the project will address social and cultural challenges, particularly in engaging local communities and stakeholders with different backgrounds and economic interests; (7) No information on specific partners which could be relevant for an empirical research in specific regions in relation to the institutional arrangements because the success of the project will depend on its ability to navigate these complex institutional dynamics and foster a more supportive environment for sustainable forest management; (8) Problem analysis weakly performed with the direct and indirect causes not clearly described, and the Problem Tree (PT) and Objective Tree (OT) not following the format required in the ITTO manual for project formulation, while there is a lack of consistency between PT and OT; (9) No SMART indicators in the logical framework matrix as required in the ITTO manual for project formulation; (10) Development Objective and Specific Objective not formulated in compliance with the requirements of the ITTO manual for project formulation; (11) There is a need to have consistency between the project outputs defined in Sub-section 3.1.1 and the causes of the key problem in the Problem Tree; (12) There is a need to have consistency between the project activities defined in Sub-section 3.1.2 and both Problem Tree and Objective Tree; (13) Implementation approaches and methods not clearly described while it is unclear how to recruit participants, including women, to be involved in the project implementation; (14) Work plan developed with the timing is semesters instead of quarters as required in the ITTO manual for project formulation; (15) Contribution of the executing agency (EA) is missing in the master budget table, and the tables of budget by components for ITTO and EA are missing while the categories for funds to be retained by ITTO are missing in the table of consolidated budget; (16) Section 3.5 not clearly describing how some specific risks could impede the achievement of project outputs or objectives, while there is a lack of consistency with the key assumptions as indicated the logical framework matrix and there is no description of risk mitigation measures to be used during the project implementation; (17) The Sub-section 4.1.1 could be improved for clarity, readability, and emphasis on the specific roles and qualifications of each entity. (18) There is no clear description on how to use/disseminate the prototype of the lumber product, as well as on how the project's results will be mainstreamed into national policies and plans, while it is essential to develop an overarching monitoring and evaluation framework.

B) Specific Recommendations

The proposal should be revised taking into account the overall assessment **and** the following specific recommendations:

1. Use the right the project duration on the cover page of the project proposal document.
2. Improve the list of abbreviations and acronyms by adding all those used in the sections and sub-sections.
3. Improve the Section 1.1 (Origin) with appropriate information on the current status of the experimental sites in relation to the assumed feasibility regarding the second cut recycle.
4. Improve the Sub-section 1.2.1 (conformity with ITTO's objectives and priorities) by referring to the ITTO Strategic Action Plan 2022-2026 instead of 2013-2018.
5. Add a map of the project target area which is missing.
6. Improve the Sub-section 1.3.2 by adding the environmental aspects in compliance with the ITTO environmental and social management (ESM) guidelines, while placing more emphasis on how the project will address social and cultural challenges, particularly in engaging local communities and stakeholders with different backgrounds and economic interests.

7. Further elaborate the institutional set-up and organizational issues in compliance with the requirements of the ITTO manual for project formulation, while making sure to add appropriate information on specific partners which could be relevant for being involved in the project implementation considering the complex institutional dynamics and fostering a more supportive environment for sustainable forest management.
8. Improve the Sub-section 2.1.3 with an appropriate problem analysis associated with mutually consistent Problem Tree (PT) and Objective Tree (OT) following the format required by the ITTO manual for project formulation.
9. Improve the logical framework matrix in correlation with the improved Problem Tree and associated Objective Tree, while making sure to use SMART indicators for the Specific Objective and appropriate measurable indicators for the Development Objective and Outputs in compliance with the requirements of the ITTO manual for project formulation.
10. Subsequent to the 8th and 9th specific recommendations, here above, redefine appropriately the development objective with its associated impacts indicators and the specific objective with its outcome indicators.
11. Revise the project outputs in correlation with the revised Objective Tree and improved logical framework matrix.
12. Readjust the list of activities associated to each revised project output in consistency with the revised Objective Tree.
13. Improve the project implementation approaches and methods by clearly describing how to recruit participants, including women, to be involved in the project implementation;
14. Improve the work plan in correlation with the revised Objective Tree and readjusted list of activities associated with each project output, while using the timing for the implementation of project activities in semesters instead of quarters as required in the ITTO manual for project formulation;
15. Improve the Section 3.5 by clearly describing how some specific risks could impede the achievement of project outputs or objectives, in consistency with the key assumptions as indicated the logical framework matrix, while also describing main risk mitigation measures to be used during the project implementation;
16. Improve the Sub-section 4.1.1 (Executing Agency and Partners) could be improved for clarity, readability, and emphasis on the specific roles and qualifications of each entity;
17. Use in the Sub-section 4.1.3 Project Steering Committee instead of Project Advisory Committee as indicated in the ITTO manual for project formulation;
18. Improve the Section 4.3 by adding an appropriate description on how to use/disseminate the prototype of the lumber products, as well as on how the project's results will be mainstreamed into national policies and plans; while developing an overarching monitoring and evaluation framework.
19. Add the environmental and social management (ESM) screening check list questionnaire, as annex, for the assessment of environmental and social aspects linked to the project implementation.
20. Amend the ITTO budget in line with the above overall assessment **and** specific recommendations, and also in the following way:
 - a) Revise the master budget table (by activity) in correlation with the improved work plan and its associated activities, while complying with the requirements of the ITTO manual for project formulation,
 - b) Add the budget tables by component for ITTO and for the Executing Agency in correlation with the revised master budget,
 - c) Add the budget item 81 by using the standard rate of US\$10,000.00 per year for the monitoring and review costs (US\$30,000 for 3 years) and the budget item 82 to the standard rate of US\$15,000 for ex-post evaluation costs,
 - d) Calculate the ITTO Programme Support Costs (sub-item 83) so as to conform with standard rate of **12%** of the total ITTO project costs (on budget items 10 to 82); and
21. Include an Annex that shows the overall assessment and specific recommendations of the 59th Expert Panel and respective modifications in tabular form. Modifications should also be highlighted (**bold and underline**) in the text.

C) Conclusion

Category 2: The Panel concluded that the project proposal requires essential modifications and will be returned to the proponent. The Panel will need to assess the revised project proposal before it can commend it to the Committee for final appraisal.

Category B on the Environmental and Social Management Guidelines (ESM) checklist

PD 940/24 (F)

Strengthening Effective Forest Area Designation in East Nusa Tenggara Province as Precondition of Achieving Sustainable Forest Management (Indonesia)

Assessment by the Fifty-ninth Panel

A) Overall Assessment

The PD 940/24 (F) in East Nusa Tenggara, Indonesia, was reviewed by three Expert Panels who agreed on its necessity but identified areas for improvement. While the project aligns well with ITTO's mandate and is generally well-formulated, the proposal contains some weaknesses, including ambiguous language, insufficient analysis of risks and sustainability, an overly large budget, and a lack of detailed profiles and responsibilities for key personnel. Recommendations for addressing these issues were provided in Section B.

In informal review, this proposed project is essential due to its focus on clear and legitimate and tenure, a prerequisite for sustainable management. However, the project's top-down approach raises concerns, particularly regarding local community participation, which is crucial for long-term success, especially in matters of land tenure and customary rights. The project currently lacks substantial involvement of local communities in the decision-making process, with government authorities primarily steering the project. To improve, it's recommended that local communities be given nearly equal roles in the project, with clear responsibilities and functions, possibly including a rotating chair in the steering committee. Community representatives should be supported by the project budget to empower their contributions. The outputs of the project also need clarification, particularly regarding the legal status of project outcomes, the binding nature of land ownership maps, and how results will be scaled up. The project's intention appears to prioritize forest area designation over genuine community participation. It is suggested that the project title include "customary rights" to better reflect its scope.

B) Specific Recommendations

The proposal should be revised taking into account the overall assessment **and** the following recommendations:

1. Project brief should be included in Project Document.
2. List of Abbreviations and Acronyms needs to be organized in alphabetical order.
3. The maps of Figures 1 and 2 are not clear and readable. Please scale-up and improve the maps.
4. The project conformity with ITTO's objectives is not well precise. The five objectives are just listed. Please explain briefly how the project is related to each of the five's objectives mentioned. The project conformity to ITTO Guidelines such as ITTO policy guidelines on gender equality and empowering women should be demonstrate.
5. Please describe the main outcomes of the project that will be achieved as indicated in ITTO's manual of the project formulation.
6. Please describe the relationships and the coordination between the main partners for the project implementation. Please reformulate this paragraph by developing the role and responsibilities of different agencies involved in the project implementation.
7. The only one impact indicator provided is not sufficient. Please provide 2 or 3 more impacts indicators for the development objective.
8. The implementation approaches and methods developed here is general. Please divide this project implementation approaches and methods into phases; and develop each phase.
9. Only one person or institution should be responsible for each activity and the others are collaborators. What is the role and responsibility of the project coordinator. Please Responsible on person per activity. It could be the project Coordinator instead of the PMU.
10. The Master budget proposed is not conform the master budget in the ITTO manual for projects formulation third edition. Redraft the master budget according to ITTO manual for projects formulation 3rd edition.
11. There are some errors in the consolidate budget table by Component. The Budget component or Category 70 is reserved for National management costs/executing agency management and not for Total Project. The Category 80 is for Project monitoring & administration and not for National management cost. The Category 90 is for Refund of pre-project costs and not for Project monitoring and administration; please

reformulate the budget category 70, 80 and the correspondent budget components as required in the ITTO manual for Project formulation 3rd edition (page 47).

12. In the Executive Agency budget, the category 70 is for national Management cost; and the category 80 is for the project administration and follow up. Please redraft the Category 70 and Category 80 as required in the ITTO manual for Project formulation 3rd edition.
13. The term Partner mentioned the Figure 6. Project Management Team is vague. Please list and precise the Partners involved in the project.
14. Include profiles of the Executing and Collaborating Agencies.
15. Address the tasks and responsibilities of key experts provided by the executing agency.
16. Include the ToRs of personnel, consultants and sub-contracts funded by ITTO.
17. Working in land tenure and customary rights recognition, an eye-level approach is essential for long-term success. I recommend giving the local communities a role with (at least nearly) equal rights in the project. On page 4 the proposal mentions “associations of customary law communities”; such associations or other formal representatives need to be clearly named and assigned responsibilities and functions in the project. It might e.g. be considered to have the steering committee with a rotating chair. Community representatives need to be supported with project budget, in order to have the power to organize their contributions instead of “being facilitated”. Currently the complete budget is foreseen for the governmental Executive Agency. A “local stakeholder platform established” sounds promising but is this just to discuss or with the power of decisions. Specify how far the current system in Indonesia can go and how much power devolution there can be foreseen.
18. The formal status of the project is not clear. It mentions that „Through this project, harmonization between customary law and formal government regulations will be carried out (p.12) “. Does that mean customary rules can be incorporated in the formal law, or new legislation will be created with customary rules taken into account? Please specify this point.
19. “Local communities’ rights recognized and resolved through several coordination meetings between local stakeholders and dissemination of LTSFAD procedure (p.12) “. If rights are violated, I am not sure if you can resolve them through meetings only. Meetings are always a good start, but what tangible measures will follow?
20. “Community capacity and acceptance of securing forest and land area boundaries and management improved through the availability of qualified data on land ownership, harmonization mapping, and designation of forest area at the project sites (p.12) “. What kind of land ownership maps? Are there land titles foreseen? Do such maps have binding character?
21. “Ende will be a model for LTSFAD(p. 9)” is good. 1,620.83 ha out of 63,577.98 ha accounts for 2.5% of the forest area on Ende which will be included in the project, which is still a limited share –how is it foreseen to upscale the results and experiences? What if the local communities claim more area to be included in the process? Discuss this point in “Assumptions and risks”
22. Between the lines the project intention reads as local community participation is perceived as a precondition to enable forest area designation as a basis for (economic and “undisturbed”) forest management, and not as fundamental and *per se* necessary process. This is reflected in the title. I suggest including “customary rights” in the title.

C) Conclusion

Category 1: The Panel concluded that the proposal could be commended to the Committee with incorporation of amendments.

Category B on the Environmental and Social Management Guidelines (ESM) checklist

PD 941/24 (F)

Capacity Building for Private and Community Tree Farmers in Relation with the Sustainable Management of Forest Plantations in Southern Benin

Assessment by the Fifty-ninth Panel

A) Overall Assessment

The Panel recognized the importance of the project proposal, which is derived from the results and findings of the completed pre-project PPD 201/21 Rev.2 (F) "*Study for Capacity Building of Private and Community Tree Farmers in Benin*", to contribute to strengthening the capacities of private tree farmers in southern Benin with a view to improving their living conditions and providing them with professional skills. As general comment, there is a need to use the scientific names of the timber and fruit species to be planted during the project implementation.

However, the Panel noted that there was still a need for improvement on some Sections and Sub-sections of the project proposal dealing with: (1) Project brief missing the percentages allocated to personnel and capital items impact; (2) Many relevant abbreviations and acronyms (CBD, CITES, FAO, FLR, etc.) are not included in the list of abbreviations and acronyms; (3) Map with non-appropriate scale for showing main access roads to the project target area; (4) Need to provide in Sub-section 1.3.2 adequate social and demographic data on the resident population in the project target area; (5) Most expected outcomes at project completion are not formulated in compliance with the requirements of the ITTO manual for project formulation; (6) Activities listed under Output 1 and Output 3 are not consistent with the Objective Tree; (7) There is no clear baseline (data and/or year) to be considered for comparative analysis regarding the long-term changes/effects to be derived from the project implementation; (8) There is no description in the Section 3.2 (Implementation approaches and methods) on how possible problems related to women's participation in the project will be solved; (9) Work Plan table with activities listed under Output 1 and Output 3 which are not consistent with the Objective Tree; (10) Master Budget table with activities listed under Output 1 and Output 3 which are not consistent with the Objective Tree; (11) There is a need to readjust the Budget by Components tables because of the activities listed under Output 1 and Output 3 which are not consistent with the Objective Tree; (12) Technical-related sustainability of the project not described in the Sub-section 3.5.2; (13) There is a need to include the project coordinator, as observer and secretary of the project steering committee (PSC); (14) There is a need to move the Project Organization Chart from Annex 1 to the right Sub-section in the core part of the document; (15) There is no explanation on how the project results will be mainstreamed into national policies and plans; (16) There are no details on the project Executing Agency past experience and capabilities in correlation with this project, while the profile of the project Collaborating Agency is missing in Annex 1.

B) Specific Recommendations

The proposal should be revised taking into account the overall assessment **and** the following specific recommendations:

1. Improve the Project brief by adding a paragraph with the percentages allocated to Project personnel and capital items.
2. Improve the list of abbreviations and acronyms by adding all those used in the sections and sub-sections.
3. Improve the map by replacing the current one with a map having an appropriate scale for showing main access roads to the project target area.
4. Improve the Sub-section 1.3.2 by providing appropriate social and demographic data on the resident population in the project target area.
5. Improve the Section 1.4 by reformulating most of them in compliance with the requirements of the ITTO manual for project formulation.
6. For ensuring the consistency with the Objective Tree and Logical Framework Matrix, readjust the number of Activities listed under the Output 1 and Output 3 in the Sub-section 3.1.2.
7. Improve the indicators of the Development Objective by adding a clear baseline (data and/or year) to be considered for comparative analysis regarding the long-term changes/effects to be derived from the project implementation.
8. Improve the implementation approaches and methods by clearly describing how possible problems related to women's participation in the project will be solved during the project implementation.

9. Subsequent to the 6th specific recommendation, here above, readjust the Activities in the Work Plan table for Output 1 and Output 3 in consistency with the Objective Tree.
10. Improve the Sub-section 3.5.2 by clearly adding appropriate information on technical-related sustainability of the project.
11. Improve the Sub-section 4.1.3 by adding the project coordinator, as observer and secretary of the project steering committee as required by the ITTO manual for project implementation.
12. Improve the Sub-section 4.1.4 by moving the move the Project Organization Chart from Annex 1 to this Sub-section.
13. Improve the Sub-section 4.1.3 by adding an appropriate explanation on how the project results will be mainstreamed into national policies and plans.
14. Provide details on the project Executing Agency past experience and capabilities in correlation with this project, and add the profile of the project Collaborating Agency, in Annex 1.
15. Amend the ITTO budget in line with the above overall assessment and specific recommendations, and also in the following way:
 - a) Revise the master budget table (by activity) in correlation with the readjusted Work Plan (refer to 8th specific recommendations, here above) and its associated activities, while complying with the requirements of the ITTO manual for project formulation,
 - b) Add the budget tables by component for ITTO and for the Executing Agency in correlation with the revised master budget,
 - c) Readjust the budget item 81 by using the standard rate of US\$10,000.00 per year for the monitoring and review costs (US\$30,000 for 3 years) and the budget item 84 to the standard rate of US\$15,000 for ex-post evaluation costs, while deleting the budgeted amounts for item 82 and item 83,
 - d) Calculate the ITTO Programme Support Costs (sub-item 83) so as to conform with standard rate of **12%** of the total ITTO project costs (on budget items 10 to 82); and
16. Include an Annex that shows the overall assessment and specific recommendations of the 59th Expert Panel and respective modifications in tabular form. Modifications should also be highlighted (**bold and underline**) in the text.

C) Conclusion

Category 1: The Panel concluded that the proposal could be commended to the Committee with incorporation of amendments.

Category C on the Environmental and Social Management Guidelines (ESM) checklist

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