

**SUPPORT COMPLIANCE OF CITES CONVENTION IN GUATEMALA AND PERU:  
*In-country Technical Assistance for the Development of the National Timber Yield Tables for  
Mahogany (Swietenia macrophylla) Standing Volume & Export Grade Sawn wood***

**BACKGROUND**

Mahogany (*Swietenia macrophylla*) is the single most valuable tropical timber species in international trade. It is also one of the most important tropical species subject to selective harvesting. Excessive commercial harvesting and illegal logging of this species led to its listing in Appendix II of the CITES Convention. Market studies show that the largest proportion of mahogany is exported to the United States, France, Canada, England, Dominican Republic and other European countries. Despite conservation efforts, supervision and control, the impact of mahogany overharvesting has contributed to the specie's rapid commercial extinction in many areas of its natural distribution. Frequently, the use of inaccurate conversion factors for calculating export grade sawn wood yields from standing timber estimates is used to "laundry" illegally harvested mahogany. The same situation also applies to Spanish cedar (*Cedrela Odorata*) also included in CITES appendix III. The resulting projection of export grade sawn wood overstates the volumes actually produced from legally harvested trees of both species. These inflated figures are then used to justify additional CITES export permits which are used to facilitate the export of timber of illegal origin.

**JUSTIFICATION**

If we are to improve the implementation of the CITES convention, it is crucial to revise procedures for establishing accurate conversion factors for standing timber and export grade sawn wood. Guatemala's CONAP, a government agency for protected area administration; INAB, a forest administration agency; and Peru's OSINFOR, a forest supervision and control government agency, have requested technical assistance from Intercooperation and the World Bank to develop their respective national yield tables and both organizations consider this support a worthwhile effort for sound implementation of the CITES Convention and good governance in the forest sector. Among the tools and instruments to be used in this technical assistance will be CITES International Action Plan guidelines and the Methodology designed with input by national CITES authorities, forest administration and customs officers from Central American countries and other experts. The aim is to contribute in applying simple and consistent parameters for estimating the standing volume of trees selected for harvest and the resulting yield of export grade sawnwood on a per tree basis. We expect that the National Tables will be useful tools for complying with the Appendix II procedures of the CITES convention. It is evident that adequate technical assistance is needed to support the development of national volume tables and guarantee adequate training for the personnel that will apply these tools.

**OBJECTIVE**

Provide technical assistance to CONAP and INAB (Guatemala) and OSINFOR (Peru) in the participatory preparation and approval of their respective National Timber Yield Tables for Mahogany (*Swietenia macrophylla*) and potentially for Spanish Cedar (*Cedrela odorata*), based on statistically reliable volume conversion factors from standing volume and export grade Sawn wood through modest funding and technical assistance from international experts.

## **ACTIVITIES**

1. Primary data and information collection, systematization and synthesis from organizations, concessionaries and other forest managers for Mahogany and Spanish cedar.
2. Field work plan design with participation of forest stakeholders and government officers.
3. In-field primary information and data collection in the forests and in the forest industry's sawn mills.
4. Information and data entry, systematization, synthesis.
5. Information and data processing
6. Development of the National Tables and Volumetric Conversion Factors (Final Versions)