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

**Fifty-fifth Expert Panel  
Virtual review August/September 2020**

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**REPORT OF THE 55<sup>th</sup> EXPERT PANEL FOR THE  
TECHNICAL APPRAISAL OF ITTO PROJECT PROPOSALS  
(Expert Panel)  
VIRTUAL REVIEW**

## **1. EXIGENCIES OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

The 55th meeting of the Expert Panel was scheduled to be held at the ITTO Secretariat in Yokohama, 22-25 June 2020. Due to continued exigencies of the COVID-19 pandemic including immigration restrictions, quarantine requirements, disruption and cancelations of flight routes, it was not possible to physically convene the meeting or to reschedule. In order to not leave the eighteen proposals received under the Spring 2020 (Deadline 20 December 2019) and Autumn 2020 (Deadline 10 April 2020) 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-55) 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-fifth 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-fifth Expert Panel was attended by the ten members listed in Appendix IV, with two nominations from the Consumer Group still pending at the time of preparing this report. 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, introductions of each proposal prepared by the Secretariat, scoring sheets, briefing notes for new panel members or relevant ITTO guidelines.
- 4.4. The virtual process was launched on 16 August 2020 with a deadline of 14 September 2020.
- 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. Sixteen (16) projects and two (2) pre-projects (total of 18) proposals were received for appraisal by the Fifty-fifth Expert Panel. The overall list of 18 Project/Pre-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 and Pre-project Proposals in three blocks so that the Panel could deal with all proposals related to Reforestation and Forest Management (RFM) (13), then with those related to Forest Industry (I) (3), and finally with those related to Economics, Statistics and Markets (ESM) (2). 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

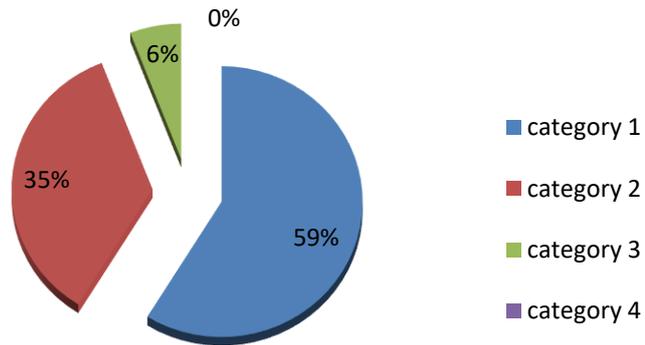
The Panel noted that:

- Ten (10) Proposals: 2 Pre-projects and 8 Project Proposals (59 percent of the total) were commended to the Committee for final appraisal with minor modifications required (category 1);
- Six (6) Project Proposals (35 percent of the total) will be sent back to proponents for essential revisions, rated as category 2;
- One (1) Project Proposal (6 percent of the total) received a category 3, indicating that the project requires a pre-project to better formulate a new proposal; and
- Zero (0) 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.
- One Proposal will be held until such time that the Expert Panel can physically meet, due to the different ranking by the reviewers.

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

## 7. PANEL DECISIONS ON PROJECT AND PRE-PROJECT PROPOSALS

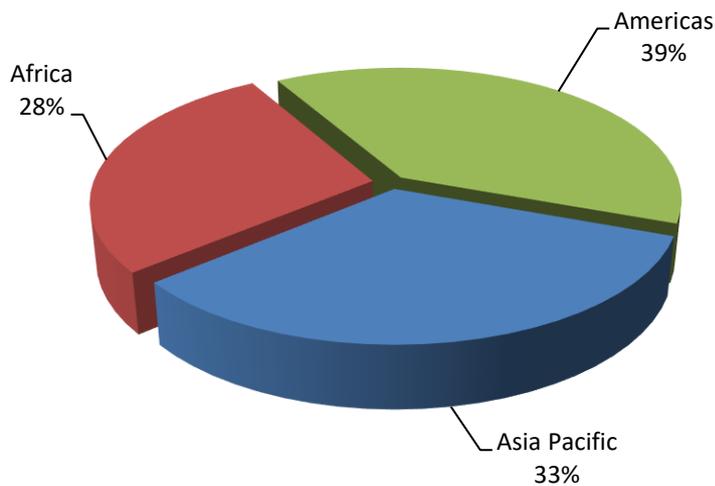
The Panel's decisions are listed in Appendix III, in accordance with established practice. Proposals classified by category, by regions, by committee areas and by submitting countries are summarised in the following tables and charts:



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

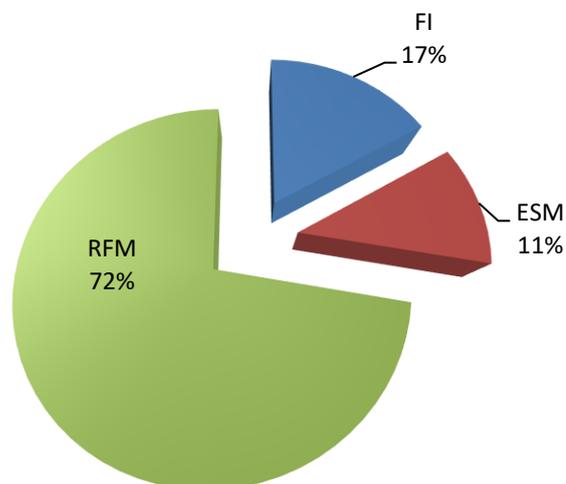
Region	Project Proposals				Pre-project Proposals				Total
	RFM	FI	ESM	Total	RFM	FI	ESM	Total	
<i>Americas</i>	3	2	1	6	1	-	-	1	7
<i>Asia Pacific</i>	6	-	-	6	-	-	-	-	6
<i>Africa</i>	3	-	1	4	-	1	-	1	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>18</b>

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



**Decisions of the 55<sup>th</sup> Expert Panel on Project and Pre-project Proposals by Committee Area**

Category	Committee			Total
	RFM	FI	ESM	
<i>Projects</i>				
1	5	1	2	<b>8</b>
2	5	1	-	<b>6</b>
3	1	-	-	<b>1</b>
4	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>15</b>
<i>Pre-projects</i>				
1	1	1	-	<b>2</b>
2	-	-	-	-
4	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2</b>



**Decisions of the 55<sup>th</sup> Expert Panel on Project and Pre-project Proposals by Submitting Country**

Country	Category				Total
	1	2	3	4	
Benin	1	1	-	-	2
Guatemala	1	1	1	-	3
Indonesia	1	-	-	-	1
Malaysia	3	-	-	-	3
Mexico	-	-	-	-	1 *
Panama	1	-	-	-	1
Peru	(1)+1	-	-	-	(1)+1
Thailand	-	2	-	-	2
Togo	(1)	2	-	-	(1)+2
<b>Total</b>	<b>(2)+8</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>18</b>

Note: Parenthesis indicates pre-project.

\* Due to the different ranking by the reviewers, this proposal will be held until such time that the Expert Panel can physically meet

## 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 with the ITTO Action Plan 2013-2018 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 the Restoration, Management and Rehabilitation of Degraded and Secondary Tropical Forests, 2002;
  - 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-fifth Expert Panel**

<b>Project No.</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Country</b>	<b>Category</b>
PPD 197/20 (F)	Development of a Project for the Revaluation, Restoration and Sustainable Development of the Quina (Cinchona spp.) Tree and Associated Native Species of the Western Montane Forests of Peru	Peru	1
PD 876/18 Rev.2 (F)	Sustainable Forest Development in Tropical Moist Pasturelands - Use of Native Tree Species through Collaboration Between Local Communities and Livestock Farmers, Mexico	Mexico	1 & 4*
PD 883/18 Rev.1 (F)	Production of Teak Clonal Varieties in Benin	Benin	2
PD 896/19 Rev.1 (F)	Protection and Restoration of Forested Water Catchment, Regulation and Recharge Areas in the Upper Salinas River Watershed, Guatemala, to Ensure Water Supply for Guatemalan Communities	Guatemala	1
PD 901/19 Rev.1 (F)	Promoting Conservation and Community Based-Management of Mangrove Ecosystems through Integrating Adaptation and Mitigation Action in Karang Gading and Langkat Timur Laut (KG-LTLWR) Reserve, North Sumatera Indonesia	Indonesia	1
PD 902/19 Rev.1 (F)	Management of Upper Baram Forest Area for Conservation and Sustainable Development with Involvement of Local Communities, Upper Baram, Sarawak, Malaysia	Malaysia	1
PD 903/19 Rev.1 (F)	Management of Sungai Menyang Conservation Area for Orangutan Protection and Uplifting Community Livelihood, Sarawak, Malaysia	Malaysia	1
PD 904/19 Rev.1 (F)	Restoring Productivity in Post-Logging Hill Forests by Enrichment Planting in Sarawak, Malaysia	Malaysia	1
PD 908/20 (F)	Good Planning, Management and Administration Practices for Forest Landscape Restoration and Management as the Basis for Rural Development in Indigenous Territories of the Uwalcox Micro-Watershed in Guatemala's Western Altiplano – A Pilot Proposal within the Framework of the National Forest Landscape Restoration Strategy 2015-2045	Guatemala	3
PD 909/20 (F)	Develop Procedures for the Estimation of Net Volume of Standing Trees to Support Sustainable Management of Thailand's Forest Plantations	Thailand	2
PD 910/20 (F)	Restoration and Sustainable Management of the Sirka Gazetted Forest in the Kara Region	Togo	2
PD 911/20 (F)	Support for Strengthening the Consultation Framework for the Participatory and Sustainable Management of the Aou-Mono Gazetted Forest	Togo	2
PD 914/20 (F)	Empowering Women (EWE) in Self-Determined Cooperatives: A Path to Monitor and Restore Biodiversity towards a Sustainable Coastal Forest Management in Southeast Asia	Thailand	2
PPD 195/19 Rev.1 (I)	Pre-Project for a Feasibility Study on Processing and Valorizing Timber in Togo	Togo	1
PD 907//20 (I)	Competitiveness and Industrial Strengthening to Generate Higher Value Adding for Timber Forest Products from the Carmelita Management Unit, San Andrés, Petén	Guatemala	2
PD 912/20 (I)	Strengthening Technical and Business Management in the Timber Forest Industry of Peru	Peru	1

PD 878/18 Rev.1 (M)	Support for the Certification of National Teak Plantations of the National Timber Board (ONAB), Benin	Benin	1
PD 913/20 (M)	Strengthening Forest Monitoring and Extending the Coverage of the Traceability System in Panama	Panama	1

\* Due to the different ranking by the reviewers, this proposal will be held until such time that the Expert Panel can physically meet

## APPENDIX IV

### MEMBERSHIP OF THE FIFTY-FIFTH MEETING OF THE EXPERT PANEL FOR TECHNICAL APPRAISAL OF PROJECT PROPOSALS Yokohama, 22 – 26 June 2020

#### PRODUCER COUNTRIES:

- 1. Mr. Arevalo, Rosven (Colombia)**  
Title Ph. D. Wood Science  
Address. Carrera 3 No. 2-03 Apto 103 Ibagué  
Colombia

Tel: (57) 8-2635385  
Mobile: (57) 3003000915  
E-mail: [rlareval@ut.edu.co](mailto:rlareval@ut.edu.co)
- 2. Mr. Dambis, Kaip (Papua New Guinea)**  
Title. Manager Policy & Aid Coordination  
Address: Papua New Guinea Forest Authority  
P. O. Box 5055, BOROKO  
National Capital District  
Papua New Guinea

Tel: (675) 3254433  
Fax: (675) 3254433  
E-mail: [DKaip@pngfa.gov.pg](mailto:DKaip@pngfa.gov.pg)
- 3. Dr. Iddrisu, Mohammed Nurudeen (Ghana)**  
Director of Operations  
Timber Industry Development Division  
Ghana Forestry Commission  
P.O Box TD 783 / 515, Takoradi  
Ghana

Tel: (233) 244 688 411  
E-mail: [nurudeen15@yahoo.com](mailto:nurudeen15@yahoo.com)
- 4. Mr. Leigh, John (Peru)**  
ITTO-Peru Projects Advisor  
Malecon Cisneros 176, Apt 1301  
Miraflores  
Lima 18  
Peru

Tel: (51) 948 992 720  
E-mail: [jjleigh2000@yahoo.com](mailto:jjleigh2000@yahoo.com)
- 5. Mr. Lokossou, Achille Orphée (Benin)**  
Chef Service des Politiques, Etudes et du Suivi  
des Accords et Conventions à la Direction  
Générale des Eaux, Forêts et Chasse  
Ministère du Cadre de Vie et du Développement Durable  
BP 393 Cotonou  
Benin

Tel: (229) 95450724  
E-mail: [lokossou@yahoo.fr](mailto:lokossou@yahoo.fr)
- 6. Dr. Sidabutar, Hiras (Indonesia)**  
ITTO-Indonesia Projects Advisor  
Jalan Abesin No.71  
Bogor 16124  
Indonesia

Tel: (62-251) 8312977  
Mobile: (62) 811813724  
E-mail: [hirassidabutar@gmail.com](mailto:hirassidabutar@gmail.com)

**CONSUMER COUNTRIES:**

- 1. Ms. Ghadiali, Aysha (U.S.A.)**  
Social Science Specialist, Policy Analysis  
U.S. Forest Service (USFS)  
International Programs  
1 Thomas Circle, 400  
Washington, D.C. 20009  
U.S.A.

Tel: (1-202-644-4625)  
Fax: (1-202-644-4603)  
E-mail: [aysha.ghadiali@usda.gov](mailto:aysha.ghadiali@usda.gov)
  
- 2. Mr. Konishi, Rikiya (Japan)**  
Deputy Director  
Wood Products Trade Office  
Forest Policy Planning Department  
Forestry Agency  
1-2-1 Kasumigaseki  
Chiyoda-ku  
Tokyo 100-8952  
Japan

Tel: (81-3) 3502-8063  
Fax: (81-3) 3502-0305  
E-mail: [rikiya\\_konishi640@maff.go.jp](mailto:rikiya_konishi640@maff.go.jp)

**Ms. Tabata, Akiko (Japan)**  
Deputy Director  
Wood Products Trade Office  
Forest Policy Planning Department  
Forestry Agency  
1-2-1 Kasumigaseki  
Chiyoda-ku  
Tokyo 100-8952  
Japan

Tel: (81-3) 3502-8063  
Fax: (81-3) 3502-0305  
E-mail: [akiko\\_tabata670@maff.go.jp](mailto:akiko_tabata670@maff.go.jp)
  
- 3. Dr. Shim, Kug-Bo (Korea)**  
Director  
Division of Timber Engineering  
National Institute of Forest Science  
57 Hoegiro, Dongdaemun-gu  
Seoul, 02455  
Republic of Korea

Tel: (82-2) 961-2721  
Fax: (82-2) 961-2739  
E-mail: [kbshim@korea.kr](mailto:kbshim@korea.kr)
  
- 4. Dr. Zhang, Zhongtian (China)**  
Assistant Executive Director, Ph.D  
APFNet  
6th Floor Baoneng Bulding A  
No.12 Futong Dong Dajie  
Wangjing Area, Chaoyang District  
Beijing  
P.R China 100102

Tel: (86-10) 84217498  
Fax: (86-10) 84216958  
E-mail: [zhangzhongtian@apfnet.cn](mailto:zhangzhongtian@apfnet.cn); [aaronzzt@163.com](mailto:aaronzzt@163.com)

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.	<b>Relevance</b>						
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.	<b>Origin (1.1)</b>				5		
1.	3.	<b>Geogr. location (1.3.1)+ Social, cultural and environ. aspects (1.3.2)</b>				5		
1.	4.	<b>Expected outcomes at project completion (1.4)</b>				5		
2.	<b>Project identification process (25)</b>							
2.	1.	<b>Institutional set up and organisational issues (4.1. + 2.1.1)</b>				5		
2.	2.	<b>Stakeholders</b>				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.) &amp; implementation (4.1.4.)</i>		5			
2.	3.	<b>Problem analysis (2.1.3)</b>				10	Y	6
2.	3.	1.	<i>Problem identification</i>		5			
2.	3.	2.	<i>Problem tree</i>		5			
3.	<b>Project design (45)</b>							
3.	1.	<b>Logical framework matrix (2.1.4)</b>				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 &amp; 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.	<b>Implementation</b>				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.	<b>Sustainability (3.5.2)</b>				5	Y	3
4.	<b>Implementation arrangements (15)</b>							
4.	1.	<b>Project's management (EA - 4.1.1, Key staff - 4.1.2, SC - 4.1.3)</b>				5	Y	3
4.	2.	<b>Reporting, review, monitoring and evaluation (4.2)</b>				5		
4.	3.	<b>Dissemination and mainstreaming of project learning (4.3)</b>				5		
<b>Entire project proposal (100)</b>					<b>100,0%</b>	<b>Y</b>	<b>75%</b>	
<b>Category</b>					<b>1</b>			

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		
<b>Entire project proposal (60)</b>					<b>100,0%</b>	<b>Y</b>	<b>75%</b>
<b>Category</b>					<b>1</b>		

Marks indicate:

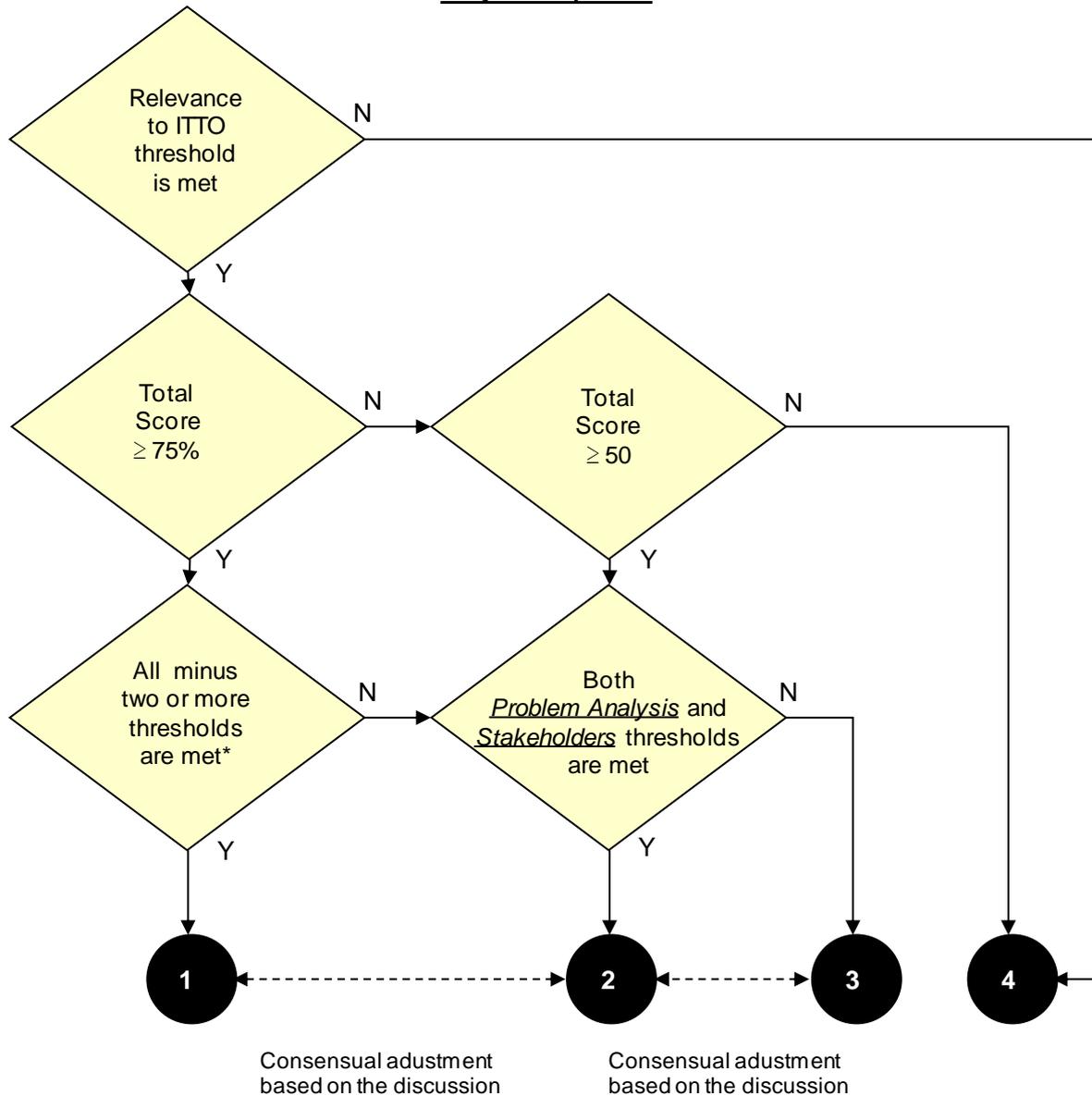
- 0 - Information is completely missing
- 1 - Very poor: some elements are there but the essential ones are missing
- 2 - Poor: essential elements are incomplete, insufficient, wrong or misunderstood
- 3 - Moderate: essential elements are available but unclear or inaccurate
- 4 - Good: clear, accurate 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**

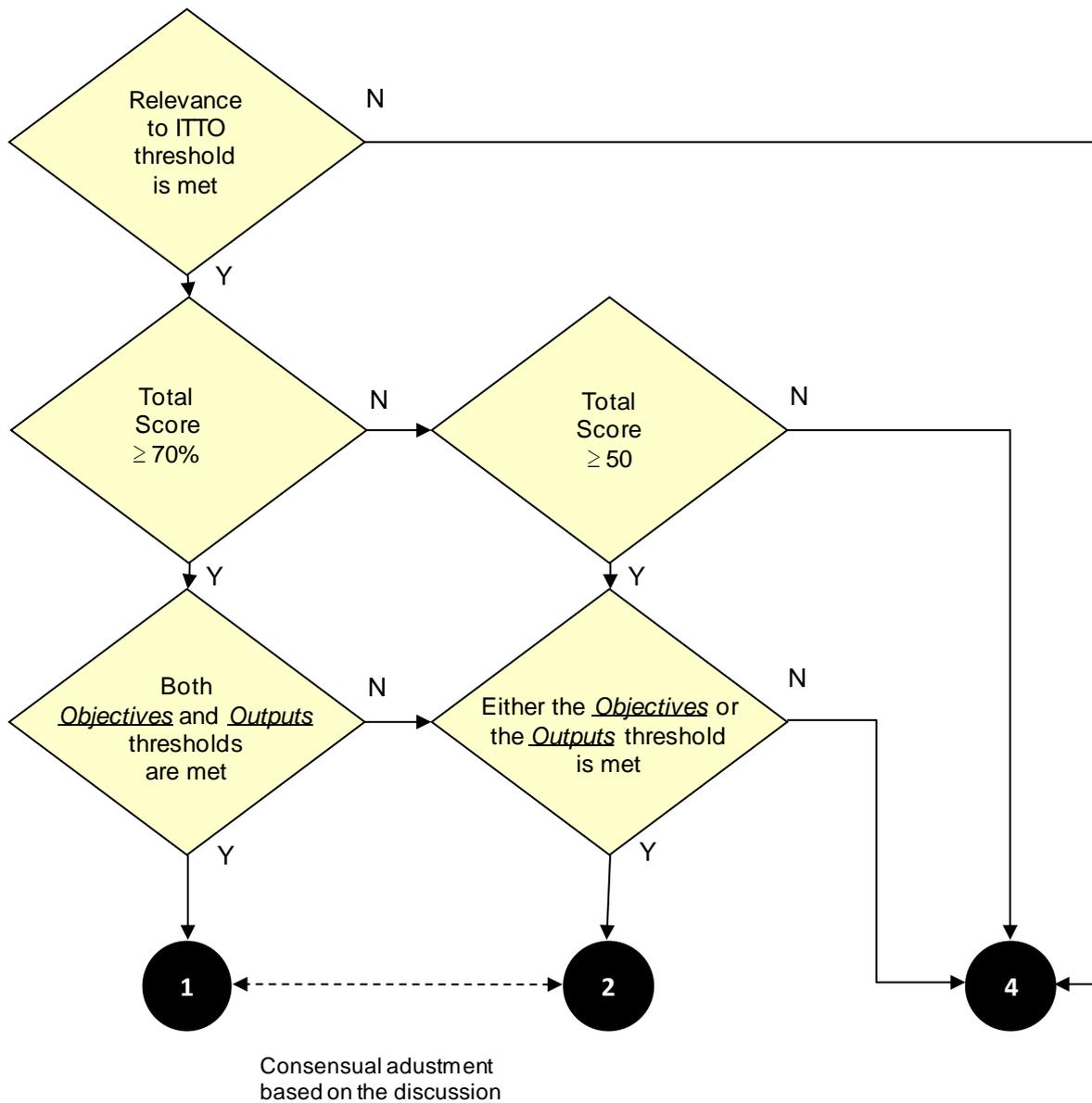


\*Thresholds failed cannot be any two among the following three:

- 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-fifth Expert Panel on  
each Project and Pre-project Proposal**

Assessment by the Fifty-fifth Panel

A) Overall Assessment

The Panel recognized that the project proposal was improved reflecting the recommendations made by the previous Expert Panel. However, the Panel noted that the proposal is still not in line with the ITTO Manual for Project Formulation (hereinafter referred to as ITTO Manual) in that it lacks: (1) Rationale, (2) Problem analysis including Problem tree and Objective tree, (3) Logical framework, (4) Assumption, risks and sustainability, and (5) Dissemination and mainstreaming of project learning in the Implementation arrangements. Moreover, the Panel noted that there was still the need to address some important weaknesses on the description of: (1) Target area, (2) Stakeholder analysis, (3) Outputs and Activities, (4) Work plan, (5) Master budget table, and (6) Annex 3.

B) Specific Recommendations

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

1. Reformulate the sections and their titles throughout the document in line with the ITTO Manual.
2. Specify targeted area including demonstration area. Description of Section 1.3.1 is too wide and general which lacks detail information of the project area.
3. Add Rationale (Section 2.1) and Institutional set-up and organizational issues (Section 2.1.1) in accordance with the ITTO Manual.
4. Improve the description of Stakeholder Analysis in accordance with ITTO manual. Concrete description of the beneficiaries of the project outcome and benefits should be added. Add stakeholder analysis table.
5. Add Problem analysis and clearly describe the condition and the results of deforestation. Add Problem tree and Objective tree. If the flaw chart on page 16 is an objective tree, rework it in line with the ITTO Manual and by including output 5, and move it to the Section of Objective tree.
6. Add Logical framework.
7. Further refine Specific Objectives and Outcome Indicators in accordance with SMART in the ITTO Manual. For instance it will be useful to consider number of species to be used in the project as an indicator. Description should be concise.
8. Reformulate Outputs and Activities so that they are consistent and correspond each other throughout the document. For example, descriptions and numbers of Outputs and Activities are not consistent among 3.1 (Outputs), 3.2 (Activities and inputs), 3.4 (Work plan) and 3.5.4 (Budget by activity and component).
9. Describe all the Outputs and Activities in the Work Plan.
10. Add Assumption, risks and sustainability as Section 3.5 in line with the ITTO Manual.
11. Add Dissemination and mainstreaming of project learning in Section 4 (Implementation Arrangements)
12. Indicate budget by activities each year in the table on page 24 as indicated in Master Budget Table of the ITTO Manual.
13. Provide detailed Terms of Reference in Annex 3. Responsibilities of key experts as wells as personnel who will be involved must be clearly stated. Duration of engagement as wells as qualification must be stated to match what is stated in the INECOL organizational structure.

C) Conclusion

Category 4: One reviewer 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.

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

Due to the different ranking by the reviewers, the proposal will be held until such time that the Expert Panel can physically meet.

**PD 883/18 Rev.1 (F)                      Production of Teak Clonal Varieties in Benin**

Assessment by the Fifty-fifth Panel

A) Overall Assessment

The importance of this project was acknowledged by the Panel for its main goal to address the need for improved forest seedlings of high quality of Teak for reforestation activities in Benin under the supervision of the National Timber Board (ONAB) of Benin. The Panel was informed that Teak seedlings are the ones most used in Benin for the implementation of reforestation activities. It was recognized that efforts had been made to address some comments in the overall assessment, as well as some specific recommendations, made by the Fifty-third Expert Panel.

However, the Panel noted that the revised project proposal still contained several weaknesses in the sections and sub-sections dealing with: (1) the section on social, cultural; economic and environmental aspects of the project target not enough elaborated and not providing enough elements in relation to the ITTO policy guidelines on gender equality and empowering women (GEEW) and the Environmental and Social Management Guidelines (ESM) which were briefly described and wrongly placed under the Section 1.2.1.; (2) expected outcomes at project completion were still inconsistent with the outcome indicators of the specific objective in the Logical Framework Matrix; (3) Logical Framework Matrix with indicators of the development objective still too ambitious for this 3-year project regarding the possibility of getting genetically improved material for the production of seedlings of high quality during the project duration, while the indicators of the specific objective were not consistent with the expected outcomes at project completion; (4) problem analysis still weak as it was not consistent with the sub-causes in the problem tree and their translation into adequately formulated activities accordingly, in accordance with the requirements of the ITTO manual for project formulation. The revision of the problem analysis and correlated problem tree and objective tree will impact others project sections and sub-sections (logical framework matrix, implementation approaches and methods, work plan, assumptions and sustainability); (5) ITTO budget with the cost of the vehicle still considered too high and mid-term evaluation costs not needed for a 3-year project.

B) Specific Recommendations

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

1. Further improve the Section 1.2.1 (conformity with ITTO's objectives and priorities) by referring to the ITTO's priorities linked to the ITTO Strategic Action Plan for the period 2013-2018, instead of the period 2008-2011, while making sure to remove the sub-sections 1.2.1.3 and 1.2.1. and place them under the Sections 1.3.2. and 1.3.3 with more additional elements facilitating the assessment;
2. Revise the social, cultural, economic and environmental aspects of the project target area by further elaborating in separate sub-sections under the Section 1.3.2 the elements taking into account the ITTO policy guidelines on gender equality and empowering women (GEEW) and the Environmental and Social Management Guidelines (ESM);
3. Improve the expected outcomes at project completion while making sure to have consistency with the outcomes indicators of the specific objective which should not be too ambitious in relation to the project duration;
4. Re-visit the problem analysis, make sure to carefully identify sub-causes of the key problem to be used to define activities accordingly, in accordance with the requirements of the manual for project formulation;
6. Re-visit the logical framework matrix in correlation with the re-visited problem analysis and related problem tree and objective tree, while complying with the requirements provided in the ITTO manual for project formulation;
7. Re-visit the problem tree and related objective tree in correlation with the re-visited problem analysis for consistency in accordance with the requirements of the ITTO manual for project formulation;
8. Adjust the work plan in correlation with the re-visited related objective tree in order to ensure the consistency among relevant project sections and sub-sections;
9. Amend the ITTO budget in line with the above overall assessment and specific recommendations and also in the following way:
  - a) Reduce the costs of the vehicle to be purchased for the project implementation (refer to previous ITTO projects implemented in Togo),

- b) Adjust the budget item 81 to the standard rate of US\$10,000.00 per year for the monitoring and review costs (US\$30,000 for 3 years) of a project implemented in Africa and the budget item 83 to the standard rate of US\$15,000 for ex-post evaluation costs, while deleting the budget item 82 dealing with mid-term evaluation costs,
  - c) Recalculate 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
10. Include an Annex that shows the overall assessment and specific recommendations of the 55<sup>th</sup> 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.

Assessment by the Fifty-fifth Panel

A) Overall Assessment

The Panel recognized the importance of this proposal intending to increase forest cover, as a priority for Guatemala, for conservation of water resources of the upper Salinas watershed areas of Guatemala, which has been making good progress in this effort in part with INAB's forest incentive programs. As access to water continues to be an issue for many in Guatemala; the project will likely have many health benefits for community members in addition to increasing forest cover.

The Panel acknowledged that efforts had been made to address most of the comments in the overall assessment, as well as most of the specific recommendations, made by the Fifty-fourth Expert Panel. However, the Panel noted that there was still a need for improvement of some sections and sub-sections of the revised project proposal. This proposal was considered as Category C because it potentially has minimal or no adverse environmental or social impacts in the relation to the ITTO Environmental and Social Management Guidelines.

The Panel noted that elements were missing in the strategic approaches and methods regarding the way the public and local communities should be educated on how to sustainably conserve watersheds and even do some timber extraction, without clearing the entire forests. It also noted that the project includes monitoring the quality of the water which is often overlooked in the region during forest restoration programs. It further noted that one of the selected project managers has a background in gender and diversity expertise which would ensure that local female stakeholders would be considered in the project implementation. Finally, the Panel noted that the counterpart contributions from WPF and INAB, are over half of the total budget of the project while there was a mistake in the calculation of the ITTO programme support costs which shall be USD16,264 instead of USD14,464.

B) Specific Recommendations

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

1. Improve the Section 3.2 (strategic approaches and methods) by adding elements on the way to educate the public and local communities on how to sustainably conserve watersheds;
2. Amend the ITTO budget in line with the above overall assessment and specific recommendations and also in the following way:
  - a) Recalculate the ITTO Programme Support Costs (budget 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
  - b) Adjust all budget tables taking into account the correct amount regarding the budget sub-item 83.
3. Include an Annex that shows the overall assessment and specific recommendations of the 55th 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.

Assessment by the Fifty-fifth Panel

A) Overall Assessment

The Panel recognized the importance of the project proposal to contribute to restoring the conservation and development of mangrove ecosystem in North Sumatera, Indonesia. The Panel also acknowledged that the proposal is a follow-up action to the findings of a series of workshops on mangrove conservation ecosystems in North Sumatera and the Bali Call to Action for Sustainable Mangrove Ecosystems recommended in ITTO international mangrove conference which was held from 18-21 April 2017 in Bali, Indonesia.

The Panel noted that the project proposal is well formulated in accordance with ITTO Manual for Project Formulation. The Panel also noted that the proposal is consistent with ITTO's objectives set out in ITTA 2006 and strategic priorities 2 and 3 of the ITTO strategic action plan 2013-2018.

The proponents have paid attention to the previous Expert Panel recommendations and therefore have made significant efforts to improving the quality of the proposal. However improvement was still needed in the following sections and sub-sections dealing with: (1) map of project area, (2) stakeholder analysis, (3) budget, and (4) profile of the Executing Agency.

B) Specific Recommendations

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

1. Provide clear and readable size of maps of project areas with better features and titles. Maps should indicate where mangrove ecosystems and project sites are. This is a major concern as it was already pointed out in previous panel review;
2. Include women's groups in Section 2.1.2 (Stakeholder analysis) and provide necessary information of them since they are included in Section 1.4 (Expected outcomes at project completion) iv as a beneficiary of the project;
3. Budget must be formulated following the ITTO Manual for Project Formulation and also state figures in English quotations; for example 10,000.00 not **10.000,00** (See Executing Agency budget figures). Revised budget is up by over \$9,000.00. On the other hand, the budget of Executive Agency remains the same. Provide justification for the budget rise and increase contribution by Executing Agency;
4. Provide an organizational chart of the Executing Agency in Annex 1 to compliment with the text provided.

C) Conclusion

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

Assessment by the Fifty-fifth Panel

A) Overall Assessment

The Panel recognized that the project aims at promoting the sustainable management of the Upper Baram Forest Area (UBFA) in northern Sarawak Malaysia with the engagement of four ethnic communities, including 18 Penan communities, for the conservation of biodiversity and socio-economic development. The Panel acknowledged that the revised proposal has properly incorporated the recommendations made by the Fifty-fourth Panel. However, the Panel noted that the revised proposal should be further enhanced in the presentation of the thematic map, the logical framework matrix and Sections 3.1, 3.2, and 3.5 as well as in the presentation of ITTO Programme Support Costs.

B) Specific Recommendations

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

1. Include separate thematic maps describing conservation areas, community lands, and deforested and degraded areas. Provide clearer legends (e.g., what does CF (Prop) mean?). A map has been included in the revised proposal, but it does not yet clearly show conservation areas and community lands, nor does it include deforested and degraded areas. An effort should be made to include separate maps for community lands and for deforested and degraded areas;
2. Further enhance the logical framework matrix by refining the indicators in a SMART (specific, measurable, appropriate, realistic and time-bound) way and including quantitative means of verification. In the revised proposal, it was properly addressed but could still include final outcomes/results in a quantitative manner;
3. Further enhance the concrete deliverables, baseline studies on communities, and gender in Section 3.1 (Outputs and Activities). It was addressed in the revised proposal but could be more specific both qualitatively and quantitatively;
4. Further describe the methodologies to be applied in Section 3.2 (Implementation Approaches and Methods) and sub-activities required in Section 3.3 (Work Plan). It was addressed in the revised proposal, but methodologies could be described in more detail;
5. Describe in detail the environmental and social impacts in the proposal. Greater details should be provided, as these impacts are not really clarified in Section 3.5.2;
6. Correctly calculate the ITTO Programme Support Costs (sub-item 83) so as to conform with the current standard rate of **12%** of the total ITTO project costs (on budget items 10 to 82), and adjust the total ITTO budget accordingly; and
7. Include an Annex that shows the overall assessment and specific recommendations of the 55th 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.

Assessment by the Fifty-fifth Panel

A) Overall Assessment

The Panel recognized that the project aims to sustainably manage the Sungai Menyang Conservation area of about 14,000 ha in south-western Sarawak, Malaysia for orangutan protection and community livelihood improvement through the conservation and sustainable use of forest and biological resources. The Panel acknowledged that the revised proposal has addressed all the specific recommendations of the Fifty-fourth Expert Panel. However, the Panel noted that there is still room for further improvement in the Sections for the work plan and budget. With regard to the budget, the Panel recommended that the contributions of the Executing Agency be increased to cover some of the costs allocated to Project Personnel such as Project Leader.

B) Specific Recommendations

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

1. Improve Section 3.3 (Work Plan) by estimating a more realistic timeline for the implementation of Activities 1.3 and 3.3. For instance, Activity 1.3 would be established within the first quarter of project implementation while Activity 3.3 needs a longer-term schedule;
2. Improve Section 3.4 (Budget) by presenting consultants related-budget items in Personnel (budget line 10) instead of Sub-contracts (budget line 20). For instance, forest botanists and biologists listed the Master Budget Table should be presented as national consultants under Personnel of the budget tables 3.4.2 (Yearly Consolidated Budget) - 3.4.4 (Executing Agency Yearly Budget);
3. Consider reducing the ITTO's budget by transferring project leader's cost to EA's counterpart contribution, reconsidering budget component 32 (travel outside Malaysia). In addition, consider including part of the costs of project consultants in EA's contribution;
4. Correctly calculate the ITTO Programme Support Costs (sub-item 83) so as to conform with the current standard rate of **12%** of the total ITTO project costs (on budget items 10 to 82), and adjust the total ITTO budget accordingly; and
5. Include an Annex that shows the overall assessment and specific recommendations of the 55th 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.

Assessment by the Fifty-fifth Panel

A) Overall Assessment

The Panel recognized that the project is aiming at improving productivity of logged-over commercial forests by enrichment planting particularly in degraded areas and conducting experiments to study the impacts of logging intensities on recovery of residual forests in Sarawak, Malaysia. It includes a study to better understand key environmental factors that affect natural recovery of residual forests after logging, too.

The Panel acknowledged that efforts had been made to address most of the comments in the overall assessment, as well as most of the specific recommendations, made by the Fifty-fourth Expert Panel. The Panel noted that the project proposal is well structured and formulated in accordance with ITTO Manual for Project Formulation which is also consistent with ITTO's objectives as set out in ITTA 2006 and strategic action plan 2013-2018. This proposal was considered as Category C because it potentially has minimal or no adverse environmental or social impacts in the relation to the ITTO Environmental and Social Management Guidelines.

However, the Panel noted that there was still a need for improvement of some sections and sub-sections of the revised project proposal dealing with the following aspects: (1) providing the organogram of EA; (2) updating how to measure outcome indicators; (3) including tertiary stakeholders; (4) Scaling down ITTO Budget (cost of the project leader, provident fund, etc.).

B) Specific Recommendations

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

1. Provide organogram of the Executing Agency in Annex 1;
2. State how some of the outcome indicators can be measured using SMART goal method (1.4);
3. Include tertiary stakeholders such as civil society, NGOs and the groups that constitute tertiary stakeholders (2.1.2);
4. Significantly scale down the ITTO budget (3.4.3), particularly the costs for the project leader, and transfer payment for employee provident fund from ITTO contribution to counterpart contribution.

C) Conclusion

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

PD 908/20 (F)

**Good Planning, Management and Administration Practices for Forest Landscape Restoration and Management as the Basis for Rural Development in Indigenous Territories of the Uwalcox Micro-Watershed in Guatemala's Western Altiplano – A Pilot Proposal within the Framework of the National Forest Landscape Restoration Strategy 2015-2045**

Assessment by the Fifty-fifth Panel

A) Overall Assessment

The Panel acknowledged that the project aims to promote forest restoration, biological conservation, sustainable forest management and agroforestry in the Uwalcox River micro-watershed area in the western highlands of Guatemala for climate change adaptation and sustainable livelihood improvement.

However, the Panel questioned the roles of INAB (National Forest Institute) and the effectiveness of the proposed Executing Agency (an association) in implementing project activities within the framework of the National Forest Landscape Restoration Strategy 2015-2045. In this regard, the Panel was not fully convinced about the effective arrangement of project implementation and was concerned about the sustainability after project completion.

Furthermore, the Panel noted that there were a number of weaknesses in the design and formulation of the proposal. These weaknesses include: insufficient elaboration in Sections 1.2.1, 1.2.2 and 1.2.3 in relation to the expected contributions of the project to the ITTO objectives and the national forest policies; unclear project map; lack of quantitative information in Section 1.4 (Expected outcomes); too broad problem analysis without the identification of a key problem to address the most urgent challenge faced at the proposed project site; poor formulation of two specific objectives, four outputs and associated activities; weak institutional arrangements; a high proportion of the ITTO budget in project personnel; and the calculation of the ITTO programme support cost not based on the current standard rate of 12% of the total ITTO project costs (on budget items 10 to 82).

In this regard, the Panel was of the view that the proposal should be reformulated as a pre-project to support the formulation of a full project proposal which will represent sound key problem and stakeholder analyses, well defined project structure (e.g., one specific objective, and associated outputs and activities as well as budget) and the effective implementation arrangement of project activities in accordance with the guidance of the ITTO Manual for Project Formulation.

C) Conclusion

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 be submitted to the Expert Panel for appraisal.

PD 909/20 (F)

**Develop Procedures for the Estimation of Net Volume of Standing Trees to Support Sustainable Management of Thailand's Forest Plantations**

Assessment by the Fifty-fifth Panel

A) Overall Assessment

The Panel noted that the project is to contribute to sustainable forest management of forest plantations by developing equations to estimate gross and net volume of standing trees of teak and rubber in the Forest Industry Organization of Thailand (FIO)'s forest plantations. The Panel acknowledged that this project support the use of the new procedures by FIO and private forest plantation owners, to improve determination of the value of standing trees (stumpage or royalty), investment planning, and planning harvesting of forest plantations.

However, the Panel noted that it is not clear why the conversion factor from gross to net volume per species is not determined at sawmills after harvest, and don't mention where the samples will be taken and if those plantations had good silvicultural practices or not. In addition, the Panel expressed that it is not clear why include age-class in the sampling and why are the number of samples different for each region. The Panel acknowledged that this proposal was considered as Category C because it potentially has minimal or no adverse environmental or social impacts in the relation to the ITTO Environmental and Social Management Guidelines.

The Panel further noted the project proposal should be improved in the sections and sub-sections dealing with: (1) map of project target sites; (2) overall problems such as basic growth and yield data and average ages of the plantations; (3) improvement of problem analysis, problem tree and objective tree; (4) proper impact indicators and redefine development and specific objective; (5) providing more details in section 3.1; (6) adjustment of high budget in the stem analysis; (7) adjusting and moving some of cost; (8) providing more realistic assumption and risks; (9) address medium and long-term sustainability in improving the estimation of standing volumes (3.5.2) .

B) Specific Recommendations

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

1. Include the map of the project area;
2. Improve overall problems and state basic growth and yield data for Teak and Rubber plantations, and the average ages of the plantations (Section 1.1);
3. Improve problem analysis, problem tree and objective tree and describe the effect of biased measurement (Section 2.1.3);
4. Provide proper SMART impact indicators and redefine development objective and specific objective in compliance with the requirements of the ITTO manual for project formulation;
5. Clearly describe the technical details the Panel requires in the PD (Section 3.1);
6. Provide more details how private sector collaborates in the execution of the project (Section 3.2);
7. Transfer a master budget in Annex 1 to the section 3.4.1.
8. Adjust the high cost of stem analysis and find the way the private sector to contribute to the project (Section 3.4.2);
9. Move some of cost such as project manager and other professor to EA budget (Section 3.4.3)
10. Provide more realistic assumptions and risks (Section 3.5.1); and
11. Address medium and long-term sustainability in improving the estimation of standing volumes (Section 3.5.2).

C) Conclusion

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.

Assessment by the Fifty-fifth Panel

A) Overall Assessment

The Panel recognized that the project aims at restoring and managing the Sirka Gazetted Forest ecosystem, Kara Region, in Togo, as a contribution to the increase of the forest cover in the area and the stabilization of the forest ecosystems while contributing to the improvement in the living conditions of communities in the project area through appropriate income generating activities. This project was initiated with the participation of the local communities to reverse the current trend. Given all the knowledge gained and available regarding inclusive forest landscape restoration approaches with previous ITTO projects in Togo, it was a missed opportunity for this project not to incorporate any of these more effective restoration practices. Like most past ITTO projects implemented in Togo, native trees species were not adequately considered by this project.

However, the Panel noted that the revised project proposal contained a number of weaknesses in the sections and sub-sections dealing with: (1) project brief missing; (2) target sites (energy wood plantations, private forest plantations, nurseries for seedlings production, etc.) not clearly indicated in map of the project area; (3) weak reference to the ITTO policy on gender equality and empowering women (GEEW), as well as on the ITTO Environmental and Social Management Guidelines (ESM); (4) expected outcomes at project completion not consistent with the outcome indicators of the project specific objective; (5) institutional set-up and organizational issues not enough elaborated in relation to the roles, responsibilities and organizational aspects of partners to be part of the project implementation; (6) stakeholder analysis and stakeholder tables not concise and focused to the most important stakeholders which were not clearly identified in each project operational category of stakeholders (which local communities, which forest logging partners, which relevant NGO might be interested in or affected by the project implementation), in correlation with the problem analysis, while there was no clear description of what is the nature of ownership and who will be the beneficiaries of the forest plantations; (7) problem analysis not appropriately elaborated as the key problem and correlated causes were not clearly described with relevant informative elements, in accordance with the requirements of the ITTO project formulation manual; (8) development objective and specific objective still needing some formulation improvement, due to the lack of consistency with the problem analysis and related problem tree; (9) logical framework matrix (LFM) prepared with elements (development objective, specific objective and outputs) not consistent with the problem analysis, while having indicators not realistic or adequately formulated; (10) Outputs too general and formulated from a problem analysis not appropriately elaborated with clear causes of the key problem; (11) project implementation approaches and methods not describing how to address the key problem in accordance with the requirements of the ITTO manual for project formulation, as well as how to operationalize some important project activities; (12) budget item 24 (production and transportation of seedlings) and budget item 25 (reforestation, maintenance and protection of 250 ha) not justified in details in the section dealing with the project implementation approaches and methods; (13) Assumptions and risks not consistent with the logical framework matrix, while the project sustainability not elaborated as required in the ITTO manual for project formulation; (14) project steering committee not placed at the top of the organizational chart.

B) Specific Recommendations

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

1. Add the project brief following the format recommended in the ITTO manual for project formulation;
2. Provide an appropriate map clearly indicating the project target sites;
3. Rewrite the whole Section 1.3.2 while making sure to take into account the ITTO policy on gender equality and empowering women (GEEW), as well as the ITTO Environmental and Social Management Guidelines (ESM);
4. Reformulate the expected outcomes (Chapter 1.4) in consistency with the outcome indicators of the specific objective. There is a need to refer to the guidance box on page 23 of the ITTO manual for project formulation (French version);
5. Further elaborate the institutional set-up and organizational issues in compliance with the requirements of the ITTO manual for project formulation;
6. Improve the stakeholder analysis and related table of stakeholders by clearly mentioning the identified stakeholders (among local communities, forest logging operators, relevant NGO, etc.) and describing who

might influence or be influenced by the identified key problem or by the potential solution to that problem;

7. Improve the problem analysis with the identified key problem clearly and concisely formulated, while appropriately describing the causes of the identified key problem and revising the problem tree and objective tree accordingly, in compliance with appropriate guidance of the ITTO manual for project formulation;
8. Improve the logical framework matrix in correlation with the improved problem tree and objective tree, and while making sure to have measurable and realistic indicators for a 3-year project and be in accordance with the requirements of the ITTO manual for project formulation;
9. Subsequent to the improvement of the problem analysis, the development objective and specific objective should be redefined accordingly in compliance with the requirements of the ITTO manual for project formulation;
10. Subsequent to the improvement of the problem analysis, revise the description of expected outputs and correlated activities in consistency with the revised objective tree and also revise the work plan accordingly;
11. Improve the implementation approaches and methods by describing how to address the key problem in accordance with the requirements of the ITTO manual for project formulation, as well as explaining how to operationalize two important and expensive project activities (dealing with the production and transportation of seedlings, and the reforestation, maintenance and protection of 250 ha) while promoting indigenous species adapted to the Sirka Gazetted Forest ecological conditions;
12. Improve the Section 3.5.1 (assumptions and risks) and Section 3.5.2 (sustainability) in consistency with the elements described in the assumptions of the logical framework matrix and in accordance with the requirements of the ITTO manual for project formulation;
13. Improve the organizational chart in compliance with the requirements of the ITTO manual for project formulation (refer to figure 13 on page 64, in French version);
14. Amend the project budget in line with the above overall assessment **and** specific recommendations and also in the following way:
  - a) Prepare a new master budget table with activities to be derived from the improved problem analysis, problem tree and objective tree and it should be the source for the readjustment of budgets by component, as required in the ITTO manual for project formulation,
  - b) Recalculate 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
15. Include an Annex that shows the overall assessment and specific recommendations of the 55<sup>th</sup> 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.

Assessment by the Fifty-fifth Panel

A) Overall Assessment

The importance of this project was acknowledged by the Panel for its main goal to sustainably manage the Aou-Mono Gazetted Forest for improving local people living conditions and environment, while contributing to poverty alleviation through the promotion of appropriate income generating activities. This project is justified by the firm will expressed by the Aou-Mono local communities during the socio-economic surveys conducted in the project area. Local communities expressed the will to be involved in the sustainable management of the Aou-Mono GF resources, which should become a shared source of income in the context of the decentralization process taking place in Togo.

However, the Panel noted that the revised project proposal still contained a number of weaknesses in the sections and sub-sections dealing with: (1) project brief missing; (2) map with non-appropriate scale for the project target sites; (3) no clear explanation on the project's compliance with the reference to the ITTO policy on gender equality and empowering women (GEEW), as well as with the ITTO Environmental and Social Management Guidelines (ESM); (4) institutional set-up and organizational issues not adequately elaborated; (5) stakeholder analysis and stakeholder tables not correlated with the problem analysis; (6) problem analysis not appropriately elaborated as the key problem and correlated causes were not clearly described with relevant informative elements, in accordance with the requirements of the ITTO project formulation manual (7) development objective, specific objective, outputs and activities considered as questionable due to a weak problem analysis as the key problem and correlated causes and effects were not clearly described with relevant informative elements; (8) logical framework matrix (LFM) based on questionable development objective, specific objective and outputs; (9) project implementation approaches and methods not describing how to address the key problem which was not clearly defined in the problem analysis; (10) work plan based on activities formulated from a questionable objective tree derived from a weak problem analysis and correlated problem tree; (11) budget not easy to assess due to questionable outputs and related activities derived from the abovementioned weak problem analysis and correlated problem tree and objective tree; (12) Assumptions and risks not consistent with the logical framework matrix, while the project sustainability not elaborated as required in the ITTO manual for project formulation; (13) project steering committee not placed at the top of the organizational chart.

B) Specific Recommendations

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

1. Add the project brief following the format recommended in the ITTO manual for project formulation;
2. Provide an appropriate map clearly indicating the project target sites;
3. Revise the whole Section 1.3.2 while making sure to take into account the ITTO policy on gender equality and empowering women (GEEW), as well as the ITTO Environmental and Social Management Guidelines (ESM);
4. Further elaborate the institutional set-up and organizational issues in compliance with the requirements of the ITTO manual for project formulation;
5. Improve the stakeholder analysis and related table of stakeholders in correlation with the improved problem analysis;
6. Improve the problem analysis with the identified key problem clearly and concisely formulated, and revise the problem tree and objective tree accordingly, in compliance with appropriate guidance of the ITTO manual for project formulation;
7. Revise the logical framework matrix in correlation with the revised problem tree and objective tree to be derived from the improved problem analysis;
8. Subsequent to the improvement of the problem analysis, reformulate the objective, specific objective and outputs with appropriate correlated activities;
9. Improve the implementation approaches and methods by describing how to address the key problem in accordance with the requirements of the ITTO manual for project formulation;

10. Revise the work plan based on activities to be formulated in relation to revised objective tree and improved implementation approaches and methods;
  11. Improve the Section 3.5.1 (assumptions and risks) and Section 3.5.2 (sustainability) in consistency with the elements described in the assumptions of the logical framework matrix to be revised and in accordance with the requirements of the ITTO manual for project formulation;
  12. Improve the organizational chart in compliance with the requirements of the ITTO manual for project formulation (refer to figure 13 on page 64, in French version);
  13. Amend the project budget in line with the above overall assessment **and** specific recommendations and also in the following way:
    - a) Prepare a new master budget table with activities to be derived from the improved problem analysis, problem tree and objective tree and it should be the source for the readjustment of budgets by component, as required in the ITTO manual for project formulation,
    - b) Recalculate 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
  14. Include an Annex that shows the overall assessment and specific recommendations of the 55<sup>th</sup> 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.

Assessment by the Fifty-fifth Panel

A) Overall Assessment

The Panel acknowledged that the proposed project aims to actively involve women in the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of mangrove forests in Southeast Asia with a focus on Thailand, Cambodia and Myanmar with Thailand as the leading proponent. The Panel also acknowledged that, overall, the project has good ideas with the participation of an international team of experts. In addition, the Panel was pleased with discussions on how restoration efforts typically use *Rhizophora* and that these often fail. It also observed that the project is mainly focused on the assessment of environmental threats and mangrove management practices with remote sensing technique to develop a decision support tool for restoration.

However, the Panel concerned about the very broad scope and associated large budget. There was a bit of confusion on the project title, which implied a focus on empowerment of women. Perhaps a more institutional and policy context of this project could be helpful – what are the direct and indirect drivers of mangrove degradation in this region? Furthermore, what are the social and economic power relations within the communities, and between communities and outside actors that may be driving degradation or perhaps facilitating conservation and restoration? In general, the Panel was the view that the proposal was developed with weak adherence to the ITTO Manual for Project Formulation as evidenced from the poor presentation of many sections of the proposal, in particular on the problem analysis, which affected directly the performance of the subsequent sections. In this regard, the Panel was of the view that the proposal should be modified and revised so as to incorporate the recommendations detailed below.

B) Specific Recommendations

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

1. Clearly show project sites on the map;
2. Clearly mention the proponent and its reasons for proposing the project;
3. Justify how the objectives and interventions of the proposed project are relevant to the achievement of the ITTO objectives and priorities as stipulated in ITTA 2006;
4. Clearly draw the target areas on the map in Section 1.3.1 (Geographic location). The current target areas were well described in the 3 countries involved but were not clearly drawn on the area map;
5. Further improve Section 1.3.2 (Social, cultural, economic and environmental aspects), taking into account the guide provided by the ITTO Manual for Project Formulation and the ITTO Guidelines for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (GEEW) and Environmental and Social Management (ESM). Sufficient information on lessons learned from Thailand and their use in Cambodia and Myanmar was furnished but is not consistent with the ITTO Manual for Project Formulation;
6. Improve Section 1.4 (expected outcomes) in adherence with the ITTO Manual for Project Formulation;
7. Improve Section 2.1.1 (Institutional set up and organizational issues). The current information was lacking on the institutions involved in coastal ecosystems management, as well as roles and capacity of each institution and level of coordination and communication among them in the 3 countries;
8. Revise Section 2.1.2 (Stakeholder analysis). The analysis generated sufficiently rich information but failed to indicate the pros and cons to the proposed project's objectives and interventions on how to overcome such an issue;
9. Improve Section 2.1.3 (Problem analysis) by developing a problem tree following the ITTO Manual for Project Formulation and only one key problem to be addressed by the project. Present a problem tree describing a core problem and its direct causes as well as indirect causes;
10. Improve Section 2.1.4 (Logistical framework matrix) by developing a LFM based on an adequate problem analysis as elaborated in the ITTO Manual for Project Formulation. The LFM presented was not worth evaluating as the elements of the intervention strategy was not defined; in addition, none of the indicators was measurable;

11. Redefine the development objective based on results of an adequate problem analysis as presented in the ITTO Manual for Project Formulation. Origin of this objective was unclear while its indicators were not measurable;
  12. Redefine the specific objective consistent with the key problem addressed and develop outcome indicators. A key problem to address was not made clear in the text; the specific objective suddenly appeared in the LFM with unclear origin, the indicators presented were not measurable;
  13. Redefine the outputs and associated activities as well as the activities in the workplan based on results of an adequate problem analysis;
  14. Briefly define strategies for implementation of individual activities listed in the workplan in addition to the identified general approaches and methods to implement the project;
  15. Revise the budget in close adherence with the ITTO Manual for Project Formulation and based on adequately defined activities. Budget of proposed project should be based on inputs to individual activities and needed general expenses;
  16. Revise Section 3.5.1 (Assumptions and risks) in close adherence with the ITTO Manual for project formulation. The assumptions presented were inconsistent with the LFM and risks were not defined in line with the assumptions made; no risk mitigating measures were proposed;
  17. Improve Section 3.5.2 (Sustainability) by identifying follow up activities to implement, implementing institutions and sources of funds. A general strategy for sustainability of the project was presented but its activities were not clear;
  18. Provide an organizational structure of the project management;
  19. Improve Section 4.2 (Reporting, review, monitoring and evaluation) by fully adhering to the ITTO Manual for Project Formulation and ITTO Manual on SOP;
  20. Correctly calculate the ITTO Programme Support Costs (sub-item 83) so as to conform with the current standard rate of **12%** of the total ITTO project costs (on budget items 10 to 82), and adjust the total ITTO budget accordingly; and
  21. Include an Annex that shows the overall assessment and specific recommendations of the 55th 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.

Assessment by the Fifty-fifth Panel

A) Overall Assessment

The Panel recognized that the aim of this pre-project is to develop a project proposal for the revaluation, restoration and sustainable development of the Quina (*Cinchona spp.*) tree and associated native species of the western montane forests of Peru and that this pre-project is especially timely under current situation of Covid-19 pandemic. The Panel recognized that the pre-project proposal was consistent with ITTO's mandate and objectives as set out in ITTA, 2006. This pre project is well drafted with concise and clear sentences

However, the Panel noted that there was still a need for improvement in the following sections and sub-sections dealing with: (1) international travels are not necessary in Activity 1.3; (2) request for project personnel budget to ITTO is too high for project activities; in particular, despite the provision of National Director by the Executing Agency, the cost of Project Coordinator is too high. The number of staff involved in the pre-project is numerous.

B) Specific Recommendations

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

1. Reconsider the necessity of international travels in Activity 1.3.
2. Reduce the budget for project personnel requested to ITTO by scaling down the cost of Project Coordinator and other staff.

C) Conclusion

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

PD 907/20 (I)

**Competitiveness and Industrial Strengthening to Generate Higher Value Adding for Timber Forest Products from the Carmelita Management Unit, San Andrés, Petén**

**Assessment by the Fifty-fifth Panel**

A) Overall Assessment

The proposed project aimed at strengthening the industrial efficiency in the Carmelita Village to generate higher value adding of over 10 forest tree species. The proponent has made efforts to develop the project proposal in accordance with the ITTO's manual for project formulation. However, some aspects of the proposal need to be further refined.

B) Specific Recommendations

1. Improve the list of abbreviations and acronyms by adding all those used in the project proposal;
2. In Section Map of Project Area, present a suitable map at an appropriate scale that clearly indicates the location of the project;
3. In Section 1.1, mention the previous related ITTO pre-project PPD117 / 05 Rev.2 (I, M) and its contribution, if any, to the current project proposal;
4. In Section 1.3.1, present a suitable map at an appropriate scale that clearly indicates the location of the project;
5. In Section 1.3.2, Improve the section by describing conformity of the project with the GEEW and ESIA guidelines;
6. In Section 1.4, improve the formulation of project's outcomes. The proposed project's outcomes should be quantitative, for instance 'added values and benefits to local communities and amount of sustainably managed forest resources increased'.
7. In Section 2.1.1, improve the title of Figure 3 and the profile of collaborating agencies;
8. In Section 2.1.2, improve the analysis of the beneficiaries/stakeholders;
9. In Section 2.1.3, streamline the elaboration of problem analysis to be more focused to the main problem;
10. In Section 2.2.1, specify the number of used forest species and add an annex for elaborating necessary information of the species, including informing their scientific names. Improve the description of the impact indicators (the impact can be the profit to the Executing Agency);
11. In Section 2.2.2, refine the outcome indicators. Quantitative outcomes are expected.
12. Section 3.1.2, present in an annex the technical specifications of the machineries and equipment to be acquired;
13. In Section 3.4.4, increase the portion of the Executing Agency budget tremendously;
14. In Section 4.1.3, include the representatives of the donor country/s in the Project Steering Committee; and
15. Include an Annex that shows the overall assessment and specific recommendations of the 55th Expert Panel and respective modifications in tabular form. Modifications should also be highlighted (**bold** and underline) in the text.

C) Conclusion

Reviewers: Mr. Rosven Libardo Arevalo Fuentes (Colombia)= Category 1  
Dr. Kug-bo Shim (Korea)= Category 4 or 2.

Notes:

The EA's status, non-profit or profit organization, need to be reviewed carefully. ITTO should support non-profit organizations to achieve the organization's objectives. Therefore, if the EA is profit body, I suggest the Category is 4. If the EA's status is acceptable, the category is 2. On 5 October 2020, the reviewers (represented by Dr. Kugbo) confirmed the project falls in Category 2.

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.

**Assessment by the Fifty-fifth Panel**

A) Overall Assessment

The propose project intend to contribute to the sustainable development of the country's timber industry through the promotion of competitive market-oriented forest enterprises. The proposal was developed with strong adherence to the ITTO Manual for project formulation. However, the proposal need to be further refined. Several of the proposed activities are worthwhile whereas some aspects of the proposal are out of the project control (exports, governance, and efficiency). The Panel considered that the proposal is too ambitious for its targets and it needs to be scaled back and focus on small and medium-sized business plan development, due diligence and efficiency in timber processing. 30 months is a short timeframe to achieve the stated large increase in exports.

B) Specific Recommendations

1. In Section 1.2.1, improve the section by citing on ITTO Action Plan 2013–2018;
2. In Section 1.3.2, Improve the section by describing conformity of the project with the GEEW and ESIA guidelines;
3. In Section 3.3.1, improve the defined activities under Output 2 to make them correspond to the Problem and Solution Trees;
4. In Section 2.1.1, improve the section by providing information on institutional communication and coordination and competence of the CNF as the EA;
5. In Section 2.1.2, improve the section by adding information on pros and cons of the stakeholders, if any, and how such issue would be resolved;
6. In Section 2.2.1, improve the section by providing time bound of the indicators. Insert "... years after project completion" wording before listing the indicators;
7. In Section 2.2.2, before listing the indicators, insert "At project completion:"
8. In Section 3.4.3, significantly reduce contribution of ITTO to payment of project personnel by increasing share of EA or scaling down rates of monthly pay or both;
9. In Section 3.4.4, increase share of EA in payment of personnel component;
10. In section 4.1.3, add in the Project Steering Committee representatives of donor country/s and at least the primary and secondary stakeholders;
11. In Section 4.3.2, explain how policy makers will have access to using developed tools and policy briefs. Also clarify on how the EA will facilitate mainstreaming of project outcomes into national policy and strategies for forest industry development; and
12. Include an Annex that shows the overall assessment and specific recommendations of the 55<sup>th</sup> Expert Panel and respective modifications in tabular form. Modifications should also be highlighted (**bold and underline**) in the text.

C) Conclusion

Reviewers: Ms. Aysha Ghadiali (USA) = Category 1 (with incorporation of amendments and overall assessment).  
Dr. Hiras Sidabutar (Indonesia) = Category 1 (with incorporation of amendments).

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

### Assessment by the Fifty-fifth Panel

#### A) Overall Assessment

The Panel recognized that the aim of this pre-project is to explore a feasibility study on processing and valorizing timber in Togo. The Panel recognized that the pre-project proposal was consistent with ITTO's mandate and objectives as set out in ITTA 2006. As Togo's forest industry is relatively small (just above \$20 million exports of timber forest products mainly composed of industrial roundwood in 2017), it is believed that Togo could greatly benefit from an increase in its timber products value chain.

This revised submission corrected some shortcomings of the first submission and the Expert Panel of the Fifty-fifth Session noted that the revision of the pre-project took into account the recommendations of the assessment by the Fifty-fourth Panel. Some minor weaknesses are still present and listed in the specific recommendations.

#### B) Specific Recommendations

1. The personnel total amount still seems too high (up to 45% of the total budget) and it could be even more reduced as well as the cost for vehicle related expenses;
2. Under the same paragraph 3.5.3, the budget component 70: National management cost was put under the Executive Agency budget contribution. Nevertheless, the ITTO total should be decreased as national management cost was shifted to the Executive Agency budget;
3. The paragraph 3.1's outputs should be reformulated as well as indicators to measure these outputs as they still seem unclear and unprecise;
4. The paragraph 3.2 should be reformulated as requested in the ITTO's Manuel of project formulation;
5. Paragraph 3.3 (approaches and methods) should be expanded per outputs so that the pre-project should highlight how surveys will be conducted and what the research methodology will be. The role of the consultants and their methodology should also be clarified;
6. The role of the co-funding partners should be clarified;
7. The alternative scenario in case of non-establishment of the timber facility should be further described and clarified;
8. The budget should be modified and clarified accordingly with the recommendations above;
9. Include an Annex that shows the overall assessment and specific recommendations of the 55th Expert Panel and respective modifications in tabular form. Modifications should also be highlighted (**bold and underline**) in the text.

#### C) Conclusion

Reviewers: Mr. Lokossou Orphee (Bénin) = Category 1 (with incorporation of amendments).  
Mr. Rikiya Konishi (Japan) = Category 1 (with incorporation of amendments).

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

**Assessment by the Fifty-third Panel**

A) Overall Assessment

The Panel recognized that the aim of this project is to support the process of certification of the national teak plantations of the National Timber Board (NTB). The Panel recognized that the project proposal was consistent with ITTO's mandate and had clearly defined outputs in line with the ITTO Strategic Action Plan.

This revised submission corrected some shortcomings of the second submission and the Expert Panel of the Fifty-fifth Session noted that the revision of the project took into account the recommendations of the assessment of the previous Panel. Some minor weaknesses are still present and listed in the specific recommendations.

B) Specific Recommendations

1. In the summary, the first sentence should include "annually" so it could be read "50,000 cubic metre **annually**";
2. The CV for each key project personnel was added in the Annex 3 and the Annex 4. However, experts to be hired in the Annex 4 do not conform to the consolidated budget by component (3.4.2) and the ITTO budget by component (3.4.3). Conformity with consultants to be hired in the Annex 4 and consultants on the budget table is needed;
3. The number of activities has been reduced. However, it seems to be still ambitious for 3-year project. Keeping in close touch with each activity is so important for efficient implementation;
4. A new output 4 has been included to cater for project management. It should be removed;
5. Include an Annex that shows the overall assessment and specific recommendations of the 55th Expert Panel and respective modifications in tabular form. Modifications should also be highlighted (**bold and underline**) in the text.

C) Conclusion

Reviewers: Ms. Akiko Tabata (Japan) = Category 1 (with incorporation of amendments).  
Mr. Dambis Kaip (Papua New Guinea) = Category 1 (with incorporation of amendments).

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

PD 913/20 (M)

## Strengthening Forest Monitoring and Extending the Coverage of the Traceability System in Panama

### Assessment by the Fifty-fifth Panel

#### A) Overall Assessment

The Panel recognized that the aim of this project proposal is to stop forest degradation from illegal logging and trade by extending the coverage of the Forest Traceability and Monitoring System to the entire national territory.

The Panel noted that the proposal was clearly structured and well formulated in conformity with ITTO's objectives and priorities.

The Panel also recognized that this proposal is to follow up the ITTO-funded project TFL-PD 044/13 Rev.2 (M), "Strengthening the management capacity of the Ministry of Environment (formerly ANAM) to reduce illegal logging and trade in the Eastern Region of Panama (Bayano and Darién) through monitoring and control mechanisms", which has been successfully implemented.

However, the Panel further noted that the project proposal could be further improved in some sections and sub-sections, such as origin and relevance, expected outcomes, specific objectives and outputs /activities, project sustainability, budget and annex, and suggested the specific recommendations mentioned below for that purpose.

#### B) Specific Recommendations

1. In origin section, further elaborate the reasoning and necessity of this project: Why the achievements of previous ITTO project cannot be extended to the whole country by Panama?
2. Reference to the relevance to the TFLET thematic Programme can be deleted;
3. Shorten the expected outcomes part and describe the main outputs at the completion;
4. Integrate three specific objectives into a single one with associated outcome indicators, and refine related outputs /activities accordingly;
5. Elaborate project sustainability: If there is no political will of the country to enforce the system set up by ITTO project, how to ensure the future sustainability of the project?
6. Reformulate the budget part by presenting 4 budget tables: 1. Master budget table by activities; 2. Consolidated yearly budget by component; 3. ITTO yearly budget by component; 4. Executing agency budget by component (yearly);
7. Shorten the titles of budget sub-items of personnel and sub-contracts and move the detailed responsibility descriptions into the annex.
8. Delete the executing agency management costs (71) and the refund of pre-project costs (90);
9. Add in the annex the detailed information and duties/responsibilities (TOR) of key staff and consultants;
10. Include an Annex that shows the overall assessment and specific recommendations of the 55th Expert Panel and respective modifications in tabular form. Modifications should also be highlighted (**bold and underline**) in the text.

#### C) Conclusion

Reviewers: Mr. John Leigh (Peru) and Dr. Zhang Zhongtian (China) = Category 1

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

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