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**Draft Terms of Reference for  
A Meta-Evaluation of  
Previously Evaluated ITTO Projects Related to CRF**



## **DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR A META-EVALUATION OF PREVIOUSLY EVALUATED ITTO PROJECTS RELATED TO CRF**

### **I. Background**

The CRF may recall Decision 3(XXVIII) on the Ex-Post Evaluation of Projects, which specifically requests the Executive Director to synthesize and disseminate the results of the ex-post evaluations, for example through posting on the ITTO website, articles in the Tropical Forest Update and otherwise take active steps to make the lessons learned from the projects broadly available to stakeholders and the interested public; and further requests the Executive Director to convene at appropriate intervals an Expert Panel comprised of ITTO stakeholders to synthesize the lessons learned from the outcome of these evaluations and to provide recommendations to the Council and other stakeholders accordingly.

The CRF considered at its 43<sup>rd</sup> Session that ITTO has been carrying out ex-post evaluations for many years, but the results and recommendations have to date not sufficiently influenced the design and execution of new projects, nor have the recommendations and lessons learnt been sufficiently disseminated to support the development and implementation of similar projects. In addition, it considered important to assess the consistency of the methodology and results of ex-post evaluations so that useful conclusions can be drawn and the process can be improved. In this light the CRF requested the Secretariat to draft the current Terms of Reference (TOR) to assess the ex-post evaluation process of CRF related projects implemented under the Division of Reforestation and Forest Management (RFM) of the ITTO Secretariat that are relevant to the work of the CRF. The proposed draft TOR is submitted to the 44<sup>th</sup> CRF Session for its consideration.

The CRF may also wish to evoke that 2011 has been declared the International Year of Forests (IYF) and, as such, ITTO could take advantage of this initiative to further disseminate projects achievements and lessons learnt for the implementation of sustainable forest management (SFM).

### **II. Overall Objective/Purpose of the Meta-Evaluation**

The overall goal of the Meta-Evaluation is to aggregate the findings from a series of ITTO ex-post evaluations, as well as to improve the efficiency, effectiveness and relevance of the ITTO project evaluation process, by reviewing and analysing the current methodology and results achieved to date, taking into account:

- the Objectives of ITTA including the Organisation's "Objective 2000";
- the ITTO Action Plans;
- the need to have a compilation of the findings of the ex-post evaluations undertaken to date;
- the need to have a project evaluation practice that feeds a learning process to guide new projects development building from existing knowledge and avoiding duplication of efforts; and
- enhance countries' efforts in sustaining and taking follow-up actions on the completed projects.

An independent Meta-Evaluation of ex-post project evaluation process will enable:

- an assessment of the consistency of the methodology used and the results obtained, so that useful conclusions and recommendations can be drawn to improve the process and make the best possible use of existing evaluation resource; and
- an aggregation of lessons learned, good practice and recommendations from completed ex-post evaluations so they can be more effectively used to influence future project design, as well as to improve information dissemination for the benefit of ITTO member countries and to promote SFM.

In this context, the Meta-Evaluation shall: (a) identify and propose findings, conclusions and recommendations to improve the evaluation and assessment of ITTO projects of the interest of the

CRF; and (b) generate a document that compiles lessons learned, good practices and recommendations of completed ex-post evaluations of CRF related projects, for dissemination and enhancement of ITTO projects results and impacts.

### **III. Overall Scope and Methodology**

The Meta-Evaluation will review the reports of completed ex-post evaluations and project completion reports products with the view to:

- aggregating the findings including recommendations of completed ex-post evaluations and project compilation reports/products;
- assessing the applicability and use of the recommendations including lessons learned;
- recommending on how ITTO project evaluation process can be improved to ensure consistency and quality in reporting and recommendations; and
- drawing lessons learned and disseminating and promoting these together with the findings as widely as possible.

The Meta-Evaluation shall be carried out by independent consultants based on: (a) desk-study of the existing reports of completed ex-post evaluations, and completion reports, and any other relevant documents and project products; (b) interviews (using questionnaire or other means) of selected stakeholders in ITTO consumer and producer countries including donor agencies, executing agencies and ITTO focal points; (c) interviews with previous evaluators (ITTO Consultants), ITTO staff at the Secretariat, beneficiaries/users of evaluation reports, and others as necessary. A visit to project sites may be carried out if it is deemed necessary to verify the findings.

The Meta-Evaluation shall also analyse and aggregate the findings of earlier ex-post evaluations, presenting a basis for better understanding of the relevance and impacts of ITTO's project interventions and how to improve them. The Meta-Evaluation will generate two main outputs: a summary of findings and lessons learned from previous evaluations, as well as key recommendations for improved ITTO evaluation and assessment of CRF related projects.

### **IV. Approach**

The Meta-Evaluation will involve the following approach:

- review and analyse completed ex-post evaluation reports and project's related documents (including project's progress/monitoring reports) to extract and categorise the key findings in terms of conclusions, recommendations and lessons learned (possibly by themes);
- aggregate the findings and identify the Lessons Learned (possibly by themes);
- analyse the recommendations (including lessons learned) made in completed ex-post evaluation reports, and assess their consistency of quality, relevance and the extent to which they are complementary or contradictory;
- aggregate the recommendations by category and by entity (i.e. to whom they are addressed, the ITTO, Submitting Country, Executing Agency, and possibly by themes);
- evaluate the dissemination process of the lessons learned for their acceptance and follow-up their subsequent implementation/adoption;
- identify the lessons learned that have been ignored or not accepted, analyze the causes including the practicability of such recommended lessons learned;
- suggest mechanisms for making a better use of the recommendations and the lessons learned of previous evaluations of CRF projects;
- provide an overall assessment of the impact of the ex-post evaluations conducted by ITTO; and
- make recommendations for improving the ITTO project evaluation and monitoring process.

The Meta-Evaluation shall also provide an overall assessment and synthesis of:

1. the potential and actual contribution of ex-post evaluations to ITTO's project and policy work;
2. the overall role and contribution of ex-post evaluations and project progress monitoring in improving project design and delivery so as to contribute to ITTO's objectives, Yokohama Action Plan, and Objective 2000;
3. the overall attainment of the objectives and the overall effectiveness of ex-post evaluations;
4. the overall cost-effectiveness of ex-post evaluations and assessment;
5. lessons learned and recommendation for member countries to sustain the projects' impacts; and
6. make recommendations on how to continually improve the ITTO's project evaluation, monitoring and assessment.

#### **V. Composition of the Evaluation Team**

The team shall be composed of 4 independent consultants, being one team leader and three regional consultants (Africa, Asia and Latin America). Each consultant must have at least 10 years of experience in the formulation, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and assessment of forest development projects. Previous experience with ITTO project development, and fluency in English and at least one more of the ITTO languages are assets.

#### **VI. Reporting**

- Preparation of a Meta-Evaluation Report;
- preparations of a publication of the findings, lessons learnt and recommendations (probably by themes);
- preparation of an Overall Executive Summary focusing on the overall assessment of the Meta-Evaluation in particular:
  1. consistency and quality of ex-post evaluation reports projects' relative success in contributing to ITTO's Objective 2000 and Yokohama Action Plan, summarizing the key lessons learnt;
  2. summary of recommendations and lessons learned; and
  3. overall findings of the Meta-Evaluation;
- presentation of the Overall Executive Summary at a Council Session of the International Tropical Timber Council; and
- preparation of an article for possible publication in the ITTO *Tropical Forest Update* (TFU), in consultation with the editor, containing an overview of the projects and summarizing the overall results of the Meta-Evaluation.

#### **VII. Duration of the Assignment**

The total duration of the Meta-Evaluation shall be 9 months from the time of signing contracts. The Team shall produce the draft products 6 months from the date of signing a contract and the final products not later than 2 months after receiving comments to the draft products.