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META-EVALUATION OF PREVIOUSLY EVALUATED ITTO PROJECTS

Draft report

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO) has financed about 1,000 projects since its establishment. About 14 percent of them have been subject to ex-post evaluation as a tool for continual improvement and assessment of the Organization's impacts, efficiency and accountability. The accumulated cost of ex-post evaluations amounts to USD 3.67 million since 1997 but a comprehensive assessment of this investment as a whole has never been made. The meta-evaluation was carried out to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the ITTO monitoring and evaluation function to enhance countries' efforts in the design and implementation of projects. The key tasks were: (a) to identify and propose findings, conclusions and recommendations to improve evaluation practice, and (b) to compile and synthesize lessons learned, good practices and recommendations of completed ex-post evaluations of ITTO's projects. This main report contains the results of the task (a) while the results of the task (b) will be provided separately later.

Methodology and approach

Meta-evaluation is here understood as a systematic review of evaluations to determine the quality of their processes and findings. The approach is based on triangulation, mainly drawing on information on projects, ex-post evaluations, and stakeholder views. For the evaluation of the quality of ex-post evaluation and the quality of projects, an evaluation matrix with 100 quality indicators was developed. To collect evidence the meta-evaluation team analyzed and rated 92 of the total 140 ex-post evaluated projects. An analysis of thematic lessons learned was carried out for 13 themes. In addition, surveys among six stakeholder groups were consulted using structured questionnaires. The work was carried out in March-September 2011 and will be completed by the end of the year.

Portfolio analysis of ex-post evaluated projects

The ex-post evaluated projects represent about 22% of the total funding by ITTO, of which two thirds are in Reforestation and Forest Management (RFM), one quarter in Forest Industry (FI), and the rest in Economic Information and Market Intelligence (EIMI). More than three quarters of the ex-post evaluated projects were executed by a government agency. NGOs and private sector organizations executed six per cent. The balance (16%) was mixed projects with a government body and either an NGO or a private sector organization, or both, as Executing Agencies.

About 20% of the ITTO projects in Asia have been evaluated, while the share is only 15% in Latin America and 11% in Africa. The evaluated projects have been carried out in 23 countries and there are another 13 producing member countries with ITTO projects, but none of their projects has been subject to ex-post evaluation. Only few projects submitted by consuming member countries and none of the about 100 projects implemented by ITTO have been subject to ex-post evaluation. Due to these caveats and the fact that ex-post evaluations have been carried out only for larger projects, the sample of the meta-evaluation does not reflect the total portfolio of the Organization's projects.

Quality of ex-post evaluation

The quality of ex-post evaluations has been by and large satisfactory but there is variation between evaluators and, to a lesser extent, between ITTO Divisions. As a whole, unsatisfactory evaluations are few. While the outputs of ITTO projects can be generally identified without difficulty, the evaluation of impacts and sustainability is typically constrained by lack of baseline information and quantifiable indicators of measurement. Due to these factors, compounded by limited time and resources available and sometimes over-ambitious Terms-of-Reference (TOR), the quality of the ex-post evaluation process of the ITTO projects is often inherently imperfect.

The quality of project design has an impact on the performance of evaluation. Logical framework matrix (LFM) should be an important basis for evaluation but it has often weaknesses. Absence of baseline information is a particular problem in field projects involving communities and smallholders, or which are targeted at restoration and rehabilitation of degraded forests. For this reason, pre-project (baseline) and post-project situations are often described only qualitatively. Another related issue is

that contributions to ITTO objectives are usually covered by only identifying the existence of the (intended) linkage but qualitative or quantitative analysis of the significance of such contributions is lacking.

Other areas with weaknesses in the ex-post evaluation reports include assessment of (i) replicability of the project, (ii) exit strategy, (iii) impact of external risks on performance, and (iv) monitoring and follow-up activities after the project completion.

Evaluation of efficiency has focused on looking into expenditure against the budget, which is not sufficient. Only few evaluators have dealt with the question whether the project was the least-cost approach in delivering its outputs and outcomes.

With regard to accountability, evaluations commonly focus on verification of the activities carried out and the outputs generated as well as review of the financial audit reports. Other aspects of accountability, including the role of actors, adoption of recommendations, sharing of lessons, etc., have not always received due attention.

Above all, the evaluation quality depends on evaluators. Of the 26 evaluators assessed, the majority produced satisfactory quality and a few proved to be excellent. Few evaluators were rated as moderately unsatisfactory and only one case was considered a failure. There is apparently a shortage of available high-quality consultants for this kind of demanding work. The result also emphasizes the importance of a good selection process of evaluators.

A significant improvement has taken place in the last 10 years in reporting, judgment and assessment of the key success determinants but there is still scope for improvement and the analysis revealed a number of ways for how to do it.

Project quality

It is well known that forestry projects need to address a uniquely complex set of issues and field projects are often implemented in challenging environments that are largely outside the control of those who fund, implement and benefit from the intervention. Environmental degradation of the forest resources, extreme poverty, deficient infrastructure, limitations in market access, weak governance, and social conflicts are prevalent in many situations. Field projects can also be affected by external factors such as weather risks. ITTO's projects are fully country-driven and they focus on putting the policies into action, which adds to their value. However, implementation is subject to changes in the political and institutional environment, which has sometimes been challenging.

In general, the average quality of the ex-post evaluated projects has been satisfactory. Effectiveness, efficiency and relevance have received higher quality ratings than impacts and sustainability. The differences between Divisions are not significant. Regionally, the projects in Africa have had the highest overall quality ratings in the sample, followed by Asia and Latin America. The international-level projects have suffered from a somewhat lower quality in relevance, effectiveness and sustainability, in spite of their relatively good impacts and efficiency.

Relevance
As regards relevance in the national or local context, strengths in the project design included alignment with beneficiary/target group needs, implementation arrangements, policy compatibility, economic impact, participation and provision of local opportunities, and partner interest alignment. Somewhat weaker areas have been realism and internal logic in project design but there is significant scope for improvement also with regard to participation and innovation.

Effectiveness
A large majority of the sampled ex-post evaluated projects were rated as satisfactory in terms of effectiveness and a few even as excellent, which indicates that the specific objectives were generally well achieved.

Impacts
Impacts have been sought through projects that have been (a) closely targeted at specific substantive, often technically oriented themes to deliver verifiable impacts; and (b) focused on problems in which

simultaneous interventions in more than one impact area were necessary; such problems are typical in the producing member countries.

In general, the projects have had satisfactory impacts in strengthening of capacity and institutions as well as information and knowledge but lower ratings were found in gender, building up of social capital and empowerment, and economic impact. Most of the projects have had impacts up to a national level even in cases in which the actual interventions took place on a local level. Local level projects have been particularly common in Africa and the RFM division.

The main intended target groups of ITTO projects have been forest administrations, the private sector and forest communities. Training and research institutes as well as NGOs have been targeted to a considerably lesser extent. Successful identification of beneficiary needs has contributed to impacts, particularly in strengthening of social capital and in generation of economic benefits. Weaknesses in gender aspects are partly due to lack of proper identification of beneficiary needs but – perhaps mainly – because gender is not relevant in many technically oriented ITTO projects.

Thematically, the main impact areas have been SFM (particularly restoration, rehabilitation, reforestation and plantations, demonstration of new practices, forest inventory, and management planning) which is the "core business" of ITTO. Another key impact area has been development of community forest management and enterprise. There has been less evaluation on further processing and industry development, reduced impact logging (RIL), information systems, governance, marketing and trade promotion, non-timber forest products, Criteria & Indicators for SFM, and certification and timber tracking and market information. This may not be considered compatible with ITTO's strategic objectives.

Among the cross-cutting themes, human resource development has been the focal impact area addressed by most projects. R&D has also been well covered, but there have been fewer projects with impacts in innovation, technology transfer, and hardly anything specifically targeted at investment promotion.

Direct project impacts could be considerably enhanced through effective sharing of knowledge. Most project products, lessons learned and recommendations identified are applicable nationally and in more than 20% of the evaluated cases also regionally/internationally. In addition, many projects could be replicated in similar conditions beyond project sites and host countries. This emphasizes the role of ITTO projects as valuable global public goods.

Sustainability

In most ITTO projects sustainability has been either satisfactory or moderately satisfactory but a third has had problems in this respect. While technical viability and environmental sustainability were generally rated satisfactory, institutional, economic and particularly social sustainability have been more problematic. The latter has not been even assessed at all in a quarter of ex-post evaluations, but this can be partly explained by the technical orientation of many projects having no direct social link.

ITTO projects are different and cannot contribute to all the sustainability pillars in the same way. Economic and social sustainability appear to have a strong positive linkage demonstrating the potential for win-win interventions. Positive linkages between economic and environmental sustainability and between social and environmental sustainability were also identified although they appear to be weaker and there are cases with negative trade-offs as well.

Projects have usually a high degree of national policy compatibility and their sustainability has been aided by the fact that a third of the projects have led to policy adjustment. However, feasible exit strategies beyond identifying a need for follow-up external financial support appear to be few. More than a half of all the sampled projects led to design/implementation of a follow-up project or other post-project activities, suggesting that the interventions opened up a new opportunity for future support, or (perhaps more likely) there was a need to continue to support the started activities to ensure sustainability.

With regard to sustainability, ITTO's projects may be classified into three main categories: (i) One-off projects have clearly defined end products after which no further action is needed; impacts and sustainability will depend on how stakeholders pursue post-project utilization of these products. (ii)

Phased projects (should) have a clearly defined milestone against which outputs and immediate impacts can be evaluated to enable an informed decision on possible support to the next phase. Evaluation of sustainability is relevant only after all the phases have been completed. (iii) Projects with no clear end point or exit strategy do not allow proper evaluation of sustainability due to lack of suitable indicators. In this group, the started activities often tend to collapse after project completion.

Several sampled ex-post evaluated projects belong to the first group (e.g., forest inventory and management planning, training on RIL and industrial processing, market studies, etc.). A large number of sizeable (and thereby often ex-post evaluated) projects belong to the second group but phasing has often been designed according to the availability of limited funds rather than based on a clearly defined logical milestone.

Projects with no clearly defined end point possibly represent a significant share of ITTO projects. It is the lack of post-project financial support which often endangers the valuable results in forest protection, community forestry, strengthening of governance, demonstration areas, and many other interventions. This emphasizes the importance of developing adequate exit strategies starting from the project design phase.

Efficiency

The efficiency of ITTO projects has on average been satisfactory as a result of appropriate resource allocation, cost-efficiency, effective monitoring, and keeping the expenditure within the budget limits. However, no sampled evaluation report had explicit information on the financial or economic rates of return of the productive activities promoted. This is a major lacuna to be addressed both in project design and evaluation, and it is directly linked with the regular lack of baseline information and inadequate data on benefits and costs.

About 10% of the projects have been implemented within the planned schedule and three quarters within less than 12 months. However, there have also been longer delays, sometimes up to several years. It can be questioned whether it is a good practice to allow long implementation delays and whether (dis)incentives should be introduced to improve the situation.

Actor performance is part of efficiency and, on average, it was found as satisfactory, with the highest rating obtained by the ITTO Secretariat followed by Executing Agencies, Project Steering Committees and implementation partners.

Many project types funded by ITTO tend to suffer from inherent risks which should be duly considered in project design and implementation. External factors have had a significant negative influence on the implementation of 15% of the evaluated projects. Bureaucratic delays in fund transfer, changes in government policy and institutional responsibilities, and exceptional weather conditions have been quoted as typical examples. However, these have also sometimes been used as an excuse for the delays caused by Executing Agencies not being able to comply with the obligations of project agreements and implementation rules, or with the agreed work plans.

Contribution to ITTO Objectives

Multiple targets are common as most ITTO projects have contributed to the achievement of more than one ITTO objective. Sustainable development (including poverty reduction), improvement of national policies, SFM, and capacity building are typical examples of such multiple objectives. More than 60% of the projects have contributed to consultation for policy development, information sharing, R&D, and access to, and transfer of, technology. Projects which deal with forest land-use and tenure, reforestation, rehabilitation and plantations, industry, markets, and marketing tend to be more focused than in other areas.

Targeting contributions to several ITTO objectives in a single project should not be an important decision-making criterion for funding. While multiple objectives are a positive feature in their own right, they easily increase complexity of the project and can divert attention from the project's strategic focus. In spite of apparent win-win opportunities between ITTO's objectives, these trade-offs need careful consideration in project design on a case-by-case basis.

Change in project quality and impact of preparatory action

Project quality has been improving in all respects, particularly during the last ten years. In spite of several training courses, there is still obviously a lot of scope for improvement, especially in enhancing impacts and sustainability. More capacity building in the strategic aspects of project design is needed than in meeting the formal requirements of proposals.

Investment in preparatory support has usually resulted in improvement of the project quality. Pre-projects have particularly contributed to actor performance but the impact appears marginal in the other aspect of project quality. On the other hand, a previous project (often a previous phase of the same project) has usually significantly improved overall project performance.

Thematic summative evaluation

Thematic summative evaluation was carried out for 13 thematic areas:

1.	Demonstration areas, permanent sample plots and model forests for sustainable forest management
2.	Forest inventory, monitoring, mapping and zoning
3.	Protected areas/biodiversity
4.	Forest restoration, rehabilitation, reforestation and plantations
5.	Community forest management and enterprise
6.	Illegal logging, governance and forest certification
7.	Criteria & Indicators for sustainable forest management
8.	Forest information systems
9.	Reduced impact logging
10.	Further processing and industry efficiency
11.	Non-Timber Forest Products
12.	Markets, marketing and trade promotion
13.	Project design and implementation

The themes were identified based on (a) a review of ex-post evaluated projects portfolio, (b) linkage with ITTO Division mandates, and (c) relevance to the ITTO's five Thematic Programmes (TP). The approach was deemed to make the results directly relevant to the Organization's future work areas. The summative evaluations were based on the review of the ex-post evaluation reports and project completion reports. Under each theme, the following elements were analyzed and synthesized: (i) key issues, (ii) lessons learned, (iii) good practices, and (iv) recommendations for target groups. The thematic summative reports will be provided in a separate annex to the report in due course.

Monitoring and evaluation function

Monitoring and evaluation are well-established practices in ITTO with clearly defined procedures and responsibilities. Most stakeholders perceived that these activities are appropriately conducted and they produce valuable information on accountability and lessons for learning. However, information is not always easily accessible and the feedback loop to project design and implementation is not adequate. The meta-evaluation found that ex-post evaluation in the past may have often been more a formal requirement than a strategic diagnostic tool for learning.

Choice of projects for evaluation

The current criteria of project selection on benefits to be derived for lessons learned and their wider application of lessons learned are appropriate. The criterion on the minimum size of the project (e.g. USD 400,000) needs revision as sometimes small projects have generated important impacts and useful lessons, but these cannot be detected and systematized because such projects have not been eligible for ex-post evaluation.

Thematic evaluation reports on a group of projects have been a valuable tool for synthesizing information and therefore appreciated for dissemination. Evaluation of a group of projects in a country could also be potentially useful, if at the same time the impacts of ITTO's project and non-project work could be considered, with a broader strategic view on making progress towards SFM. In such evaluations ITTO's competitive advantage should be looked into within the framework of other external support.

There is a need for a more strategic approach to identify lessons learned, successful practices and pitfalls to be avoided in project design and implementation. Ex-post evaluations can be fewer but well chosen among apparent successes and failures covering all the main thematic areas and different country situations. In general, preference should be given to group projects to be evaluated by substantive themes.

Mid-term evaluation

Mid-term evaluation is a good value for money tool in many situations. However, it has rarely been practised in ITTO projects and, even then, usually as a "punitive measure" for Executing Agencies which have not been successful in implementing their project. This undermines mid-term evaluation as a proactive management instrument to improve project performance. In phased projects, a mid-term evaluation should invariably be carried out, before the completion of each on-going phase for ensuring smooth continuation of the activities, as unnecessary disruption tends to negatively affect project impacts, sustainability and cost-efficiency.

Guidance for ex-post evaluations

With the three existing manuals on (i) project formulation, (ii) project monitoring, reporting, review and evaluation, and (iii) standard operating procedures, an adequate general framework for the ex-post evaluation activity exists in ITTO. Guidance on evaluation is generic but rather detailed, which has sometimes diverted evaluators' attention from examination of key issues. In addition, there have been weak systemic links between evaluation and strategy design, project formulation and sharing of lessons learned. Careful drafting of the TOR is critical to guide evaluators for appropriate focusing of their work. There are a number of minor inconsistencies in the ITTO manuals concerning evaluation which should be addressed when these are revised next time.

Evaluation teams and evaluators
Most of the evaluations have been carried out by two consultants (one from consuming and the other from producing country), due to formal requirements for the team size and origin of members. However, the size of the team should be established based on the nature, complexity and size of the project(s) to be evaluated as well as the competence of evaluators. The professional qualifications of consultants are more important than their countries of origin but it is also crucial for the team to have good knowledge on local/country conditions. In addition, evaluation teams should have adequate expertise on social aspects and the private sector when the project scope calls for such expertise.

Timing of ex-post evaluations
One third of evaluations have been carried out two years after the project completion but lapses of several years have also been common. The longer the time lapse, the more difficult to assess efficiency and effectiveness, but the more information can be obtained on long-term impacts and sustainability. A fixed (minimum or maximum) period for the lapse between the completion and ex-post evaluation is not useful as timing should depend on the nature and size of the project, and the specific focus of evaluation. Too long lags (beyond four years) should, however, be avoided.

Evaluation missions
Ex-post evaluation assignments are usually one-month contracts, of which one week is spent for the fieldwork in the country. In view of the tasks identified in the TOR as well as the need for site visits and stakeholder consultations, this is not always sufficient. The scope of work and the nature of the project(s) should be duly considered in resource allocation. Combining project evaluations thematically is a good practice allowing relevant analysis of differences for learning.

Management response
It is vital to have a timely formal management response (positive or negative) by the Executing Agency to evaluation results, particularly in projects implemented by a partnership of different organizations. The present debriefing meetings at the end of missions are important but cannot be considered an adequate practice. In addition, ITTO has presently no mechanism to pursue implementation of the recommendations of ex-post evaluations, which undermines their usefulness.

Dissemination
Effectiveness of the learning function of ex-post evaluation depends on dissemination and other knowledge management. It is necessary to capitalize the significant investment made by ITTO in ex-post evaluations so that there is an operational feedback loop through various institutionalized ways for learning. The current dissemination mechanisms are all useful and highly appreciated but need strengthening in some areas. Dissemination strategy should be based on diverse needs of various target groups.

Committee presentations on ex-post evaluation results have been appreciated by participating members but if the time constraints continue to limit their future usefulness and cost-efficiency. While thematic summaries of ex-post evaluation results are highly valued by all target groups, there is a need for synthesizing the results so that they become easily accessible for practitioners, policy makers and donors. There is a need to integrate the lessons learned in relevant technical meetings and other events. Special thematic workshops on carefully selected strategically important topics would be useful.

Few producing member countries have established mechanisms for sharing knowledge of ex-post evaluation reports. This is obviously a cause of concern, as most of the contents of ex-post evaluation reports are country specific, with potentially valuable lessons learned and recommendations for other national stakeholders.

Feedback to project design and appraisal
One of the purposes of ex-post evaluation is to improve the quality of project proposals submitted to the ITTO but the feedback loop has not been strong enough; increased ex-post evaluation activity has had no apparent correlation with the quality of project formulation. There is no requirement for project formulators to look into the lessons learned from the previous projects. The Expert Panel on Project Appraisal has considered the results of ex-post evaluation reports on an ad hoc basis. The ITTO Manual on project formulation does not contain specific guidance for benefiting from earlier lessons learned. The programmes of training courses on project formulation organized during the last 10 years have not included consideration of lessons learned from evaluations. There is a need to establish stronger systemic links between evaluation and the other elements of the project cycle.

Monitoring and continual improvement
Effective proactive monitoring reduces the need for ex-post evaluations, particularly for accountability. The present system is considered mostly robust and the quality of monitoring has generally been satisfactory. The new On-line Monitoring System will improve communication between the Secretariat and Executing Agencies. However, there is scope for simplification of reporting formats to avoid unnecessary repetition.

The format of summary reports on completed projects prepared by the Secretariat to the Committees varies. The reports do not include any assessment on the project's overall performance. The meta-evaluation deems it useful to standardize the format of these reports and to include Secretariat's own assessment on project performance in terms of relevance, effectiveness, impacts, expected sustainability, performance of actors, as well as contribution to the ITTO objectives. Such an addition to the existing system would enable the Organization to periodically monitor the continual improvement of its project work as the information could be annually/biennially analyzed for reporting to the Council and the Committees. The results would also guide the Committees in the selection of projects to be ex-post evaluated towards a more strategic and cost-effective approach.

Organization of the monitoring and evaluation function
The recent establishment of a new post of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Officer (PMEO), directly under the Executive Director, with a responsibility for development of the monitoring and evaluation system, is a positive development, which is in line with the principles of good governance in international organizations. Project Managers should not be responsible for organization of ex-post evaluations, as this may create a conflict of interest. The tasks listed in the PMEO job description are straddling and there is a need for clarification in some areas. It is apparent that the identified tasks cannot presently be properly implemented by one person alone.

Future of ex-post evaluation in ITTO
The meta-evaluation has revealed that ex-post evaluation is an important tool for ITTO's accountability and learning. It has generally been practised in a satisfactory manner but its potential is not fully utilized. Ex-post evaluation has often been perceived more as a formal requirement than a management tool for continual improvement. There are major possibilities to enhance the contribution of evaluations to accountability and learning by targeting project selection more strategically, strengthening the systemic links of ex-post evaluation in the project cycle, enhancing dissemination, broadening the pool of expertise, and exploiting various possibilities to improve impacts, sustainability and cost-efficiency.

Recommendations

Based on its findings and conclusions, the meta-evaluation recommends ITTO to continue with ex-post evaluation of projects and makes the following recommendations to strengthen the current monitoring and evaluation practice as a strategic tool for learning and accountability:

ITTC

The Council should consider a new Decision to update Decision 3(XXVIII) in order to improve guidance on monitoring and evaluation in the Organization. The following elements are proposed to be part of the operative section of the Decision:

Evaluation

1. The selection criteria of projects for ex-post evaluations should be

   (a) To assess if a project requires ex-post evaluation, the Committee(s) should take into account the nature of the project, its strategic importance to the achievement of the objectives of the Organization, its potential for learning, replication, innovation and impacts, as well as wider application of its outputs and lessons learned;
   (b) Other factors as considered appropriate by the Committees.

2. Grouping of projects for ex-post evaluation as a cost-effective measure to enhance the value of learning can include the following approaches:

   (a) Group evaluation by substantive themes to identify common problems and opportunities associated with implementation of projects related to a defined theme, and to produce lessons learned to assist in the formulation and implementation of future projects in the same field.
   (b) Other group evaluation. (i) Grouping of multiple projects by country to identify common lessons learned applicable to projects and their broader impacts on policy development and capacity building as well as the impacts and sustainability of ITTO activities to improve the methods employed in formulation and implementation of future projects in that country. (ii) Other group evaluation can be carried out based on specific relevant criteria.

3. Timing of ex-post evaluation should be decided by taking into account the nature of the project and the specific objectives of evaluation, and it should normally be at least one year after the completion of project activities.

4. Mid-term evaluation as a tool to assess the achievements of the project towards attaining its objectives should be applied (i) in phased projects before the end of the on-going phase to facilitate formulation of, and decision-making on, the subsequent phase, and (ii) in large projects. Respective costs should be included in project budgets. In addition, (iii) mid-term evaluation can be selectively used in specific situations in which it can proactively improve project performance or a need for revision of the project design or improvement of performance has been identified.

5. The selection of consultants should be based on their specific competence relevant to the project(s) and the region/country to be evaluated according to the Guidelines for selection and employment of consultants, procurements and payments of goods and services. The number of evaluation team members should be decided based on the extent and nature of the project(s) to be evaluated, and the competence of evaluators. In team composition, a balance between producing and consuming countries can be considered, as appropriate.

6. The ITTO Secretariat should provide a management response to ex-post evaluation reports, including on their recommendations for ITTO.

7. Project evaluation reports should be prepared in the official communication language of the country in question and executive summaries in all the three languages of the Organization.

8. In project agreements with Executing Agencies, a specific clause should be included to establish an obligation for

   (a) Reporting on the follow-up activities taken after the project completion upon request by the Secretariat within a defined time limit
   (b) Submitting a written management response to evaluation reports

Knowledge management

9. Secretariat reports on completed projects should be presented in a standardized format including a summary of lessons learned and Secretariat assessment on relevance, effectiveness, impacts, sustainability, efficiency and contribution to the achievement of SFM and

the ITTO's objectives (to be presented in a condensed manner by means of rating of project quality and implementation performance).

10. In order to strengthen the utilization of lessons learned from evaluation and monitoring, project proponents should be required to consider lessons learned as an input into formulation of new projects, and to demonstrate this in their project proposals.

11. Provide adequate resources for the implementation of improved dissemination of lessons learned from monitoring and evaluation for the preparation of communication products and organization of training events.

ITTO Secretariat

The Secretariat should

1. Ensure that TOR of ex-post evaluations explicitly address the specific characteristics of the project and key strategic issues on which lessons are needed, including those which have been weakly addressed in the past (such as gender, social capital and empowerment). The TOR should also include a provision to submit, together with the ex-post evaluation report, a short PowerPoint Presentation on the key findings, lessons learned and recommendations.
2. Elaborate additional guidance to evaluate impacts and sustainability of ITTO projects and for cost-efficient collection of data through stakeholder surveys, when appropriate
3. Expand the roster of consultants including specialists with multidisciplinary skills and in-depth knowledge on local conditions in ITTO member countries
4. Periodically monitor and report on the performance of the Organization's project work through analytical summaries based on, inter alia, Secretariat quality assessments of completed projects
5. Expand and strengthen dissemination mechanisms including
   (a) Posting on the website of all the ex-post evaluation reports and selected technical reports produced by the projects and providing of an appropriate search engine to facilitate access to them
   (b) Posting of PowerPoint presentations on the results of ex-post evaluations on the ITTO website
   (c) Producing brief summaries on lessons learned by thematic subject areas in three languages, targeted at practitioners and stakeholders for wide distribution electronically and in hard copies
   (d) Including in the website a special section on highly successful projects that can serve as examples for other countries
   (e) Integrating lessons learned from monitoring and evaluation in the programmes of the relevant ITTO technical meetings and workshops, including training courses on project formulation
   (f) Organize regional workshops for dissemination of lessons learned from ex-post evaluations
   (g) Rationalize presentations in the Committees on evaluation reports prioritizing group evaluations, lessons learned and good practices, and project evaluations which have strategic value for the Organization
   (h) Develop new communication products to inform potential donors and the international community at large on the outcomes of the Organization's project and other work to fill the existing gaps in the available information
6. Routinely provide information on lessons learned and recommendations to EP/TPAC members that is relevant for the projects to be appraised
7. Routinely request from Executing Agencies to report on post-project follow-up action (6-12 months after the project completion) and post-evaluation action after the submission of the final ex-post evaluation report
8. Establish a Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Unit with specific responsibilities related to monitoring and evaluation for

(a) Continuous development of the monitoring and evaluation system of the Organization, including strengthening of staff capacity in proactive monitoring

(b) Organization and supervision of mid-term and ex-post evaluations

(c) Updating the guidance for monitoring and evaluation in the Organization

(d) Analysis and systematization of monitoring and evaluation results for lessons learned in cooperation with the Divisions

(e) Ensuring that the Expert Panels and TPACs are informed on the relevant lessons learned related to the project proposals subject to their appraisal

(f) Compiling periodic analytical reports on the performance of completed and on-going projects in cooperation with the Divisions

(g) Ensuring effective dissemination of lessons learned from monitoring and evaluation in cooperation with the Communication Unit

Expert Panel on Project Appraisal and Thematic Programme Advisory Groups

The Expert Panel and the TPACs should

1. Strengthen the appraisal of the substantive aspects of project design to minimize the risk for unsatisfactory project performance

2. Verify that the lessons from past ex-post evaluations have been considered in the formulation of project proposals in the same thematic area

3. In appraisal, pay special attention to (a) exit strategies to ensure sustainability, (b) baseline information to allow evaluation of impacts, and (c) the assessed track record of the performance of Executing Agencies in project implementation

Producing member countries

1. Executing Agencies should disseminate ex-post evaluation reports of ITTO-funded projects, including e.g. by posting them on their own websites or establishing a link with the respective webpage of the ITTO website.

2. Executing Agencies should strengthen their capacity in (i) project formulation and implementation by observing the lessons learned from monitoring and evaluation, and (ii) setting up an internal monitoring system to ensure efficient and successful implementation of ITTO-funded projects.

3. Executing Agencies should engage relevant stakeholders in the Project Steering Committees to strengthen ownership of project outputs and to improve impacts and sustainability of project activities. The Committees should assume a proactive role to strengthen performance of project implementation.

4. Focal Points in producing member countries should evaluate the performance of Executing Agencies in previous project implementation and consider their track record in the appraisal of their new project proposals.

5. Focal Points in producing member countries should (a) inform stakeholders through their own in-country distribution lists on the availability of new evaluation and other reports in the ITTO website, and (b) encourage stakeholders to consider lessons learned in formulation of new projects.

Consuming member countries

1. Donor agencies and other potential sources of financing should take full advantage of ITTO as an efficient, low transaction cost multilateral agency implementing country-driven projects, offering a unique service in promoting sustainable management of tropical forests and trade from sustainably managed sources, in channeling aid and other support in meeting their international commitments related to forests.

2. Focal Points in consuming countries should inform stakeholders through their own in-country distribution lists on the availability of new evaluation and other relevant ITTO reports which can add value to various efforts towards promotion of sustainable management of tropical forests and timber trade from sustainably managed sources.

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ABBREVIATIONS ANS ACRONYMS

AfDB	African Development Bank
CFE	Community Forest Enterprise
CFI	Committee on Forest Industry
CEM	Committee on Economic Information and Market Intelligence
CFM	Community Forest Management
CFME	Community Forest Management and Enterprise
C&I	Criteria and Indicators
CITES	The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species
CRF	Committee on Reforestation and Forest Management
CSAG	Civil Society Advisory Group
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DFID-UKAID	Department for International Development (UK)
EA	Executing Agency
EIMI	Economic Information and Market Intelligence
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FFT	Fundação Floresta Tropical
FI	Forest Industry
FMU	Forest Management Unit
GIS	Geographical Information System
HDR	Human resource development
IDE	Industry Development and Efficiency
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
ITTA	International Tropical Timber Agreement
ITTC	International Tropical Timber Council
ITTO	International Tropical Timber Organization
IUCN	The World Conservation Union
LFM	Logical Framework Matrix
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
NFTP	Non-timber forest product
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NIFCI	Norwegian International Forest Climate Initiative
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
OLMS	On-line Monitoring System
PA	Protected area
PCR	Project Completion Report
PMEO	Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Officer
PSC	Project Steering Committee
REDD	Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation
REDDES	Reducing Deforestation and Forest Degradation, and Enhancement of Environmental Services
R&D	Research & Development
RFM	Reforestation and Forest Management
RIL	Reduced Impact Logging
SFM	Sustainable Forest Management
SPA	Seed Production Area
TAG	Trade Advisory Group
TBC	Trans-boundary Conservation
TFLET	Tropical Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade
TFU	Tropical Forest Update
TMT	Trade and Market Transparency
TOR	Terms-of-Reference
TP	Thematic Programme
USD	United States dollar

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PART I. CONTEXT, METHODS AND OBJECT OF META-EVALUATION

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO) has financed about 1,000 projects since its establishment. About 14 percent of them have been subject to ex-post evaluation as a tool for continual improvement and assessment of the Organization's impacts and efficiency. A large amount of lessons learned has been generated through evaluation work that has been disseminated to member countries and their stakeholders. The accumulated cost of ex-post evaluations amounts to USD 3.67 million since 1997 but a comprehensive assessment of this investment as a whole has never been made.

The Decision 3(XXVIII) of the International Tropical Timber Council (ITTC) in 2000 has provided guidance on the ex-post evaluation of projects. It has set the rules for selection of projects to be evaluated. It also called for improvement of dissemination and requested the Executive Director to synthesize and disseminate the results of the ex-post evaluations through various means.[1] Guidance for carrying out ex-post evaluations has been given in respective ITTO manuals that have been revised twice.[2] ITTC and its three Committees have invested considerable amount of time to examine lessons learned from ex-post evaluations and efforts have been taken for their dissemination.

The Committee on Reforestation and Forest Management (CRF) considered at its 43rd Session in 2009 that ITTO has been carrying out ex-post evaluations for many years, and concluded that the results and recommendations have to date not sufficiently influenced the design and execution of new projects, nor have the recommendations and lessons learned been sufficiently disseminated to support the development and implementation of similar projects. In addition, CRF considered it important to assess the consistency of the methodology and results of ex-post evaluations so that useful conclusions can be drawn to improve the process. As it was recognized that the issues are cross-cutting concerning the Organization's entire project work, the ITTC in its 44th Session approved the Terms-of-Reference (TOR) to assess the ex-post evaluation process of all ITTO projects. This report contains the results of the meta-evaluation, which was carried out from March to September 2011.

1.2 Objectives

By means of the analysis, synthesis and careful evaluation of the findings, lessons learned and recommendations from ITTO ex-post evaluations, the overall goal of the meta-evaluation is to assess the impact of the projects implemented on the field during the 25 years of existence of ITTO on the achievement of the ITTO´s 2000 objective, as well as to improve the efficiency, effectiveness and relevance of the future ITTO project evaluation process, by reviewing and analyzing the current methodology and results achieved to date (Appendix 1.1).

The meta-evaluation of ex-post project evaluation process was to 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.

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[1] For example through posting on the ITTO website, articles in the Tropical Forest Update (TFU) 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.

[2] ITTO (1999; 2009a; 2009b; 2009c).

In this context, the key tasks of the meta-evaluation were to: (a) compile and synthesize lessons learned, good practices and recommendations of completed ex-post evaluations of ITTO's projects, for dissemination and enhancement of projects results and impacts, and (b) identify and propose findings, conclusions and recommendations to improve the evaluation and assessment of ITTO projects. In order to accomplish these tasks, it was deemed necessary to examine in detail (i) the quality of ex-post evaluations and (ii) the quality of ex-post evaluated projects.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 Definitions and scope

The ITTO definition of ex-post evaluation is given in Box 2.1. Various definitions have been suggested for meta-evaluation in the literature. It is here understood as *a systematic review of evaluations to determine the quality of their processes and findings* (Scriven 1969). In this case, the scope of meta-evaluation has two dimensions:

1. Quality of the ITTO ex-post evaluations
2. Synthesis of the findings of evaluations which includes
   (a) a meta-analysis of substantive results of ex-post evaluated projects and
   (b) a thematic review

The meta-evaluation does not include evaluation of those projects that have not been evaluated or are on-going. Neither does this meta-evaluation cover policy development and other non-project work of ITTO. However, we also consider what has not been evaluated in the overall analysis and recommendations for future action. While the meta-evaluation focuses on the previous ex-post evaluations of ITTO's project work, it also investigates the monitoring process, as the two functions are closely interlinked.

2.2 Criteria and principles applied in ITTO meta-evaluation

The meta-evaluation of ITTO projects applied the OECD/DAC Criteria for Evaluating Development Assistance,[3] including relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability. These general criteria were interpreted for the objectives of the meta-evaluation with regard to ITTO projects. The interpretation resulted in a set of evaluation questions. The DAC Quality Standards for Development Evaluation were applied, as relevant for this meta-evaluation (OECD 2010).

2.3 Meta-evaluation approach

Based on a review of the current state of the art of meta-evaluation and relevant earlier work carried out in international organizations[4], the framework of the meta-evaluation was identified building on five integrated and overlapping approaches in investigating evaluation as a service function in ITTO, including

a) An **integrated approach** to planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation within the context of the ITTO project cycle (Figure 2.1). Evaluation is considered as a tool for generating and disseminating lessons learned and good practices in efforts to achieve ITTO's objectives in the international, national and local contexts.
b) A **thematic approach** to generate summative lessons learned by aggregating the findings and recommendations of evaluations with the purpose of identifying lessons learned, good practices and general recommendations applicable in different thematic or geographical contexts.

[3] www.oecd.org/
[4] Milne (2009) and Stuffelbaum (2001) have developed meta-evaluation theory and practice, and Brooks et al. (2002) explored stakeholder research in the evaluation of organizational performance. For the review of current practice the following "meta-evaluations" were considered: IUCN (2000; 2003), AfDB/IFAD (2008), Contreras Hermosilla & Simula (2008), and Hardcastle (2008).

c) A **process approach** to improve monitoring and evaluation (M&E) as effective and efficient management tools for accountability and learning focusing on how the activities are implemented within the context of adaptive management.

d) A **knowledge management approach** to improve the impact through dissemination and other means for sharing knowledge to improve new project design and other work of the Organization and its partners.

e) A **stakeholder participation approach** to ensure demand orientation in the development of evaluation as well as devolution of lessons learned.

Box 2.1 Evaluation definitions

Evaluation is the systematic and objective collection of information, on the spot assessment, and analysis of the validity, design, appropriateness, performance and the impact of the project. The *purpose* of an evaluation is to guide or advice on the further implementation of the evaluated project and/or on the formulation and implementation of future projects. The merit and added value of external evaluations lie in its *neutral/objective judgment.* Ex-post Evaluation is the systematic and objective collection of information, on the spot assessment, and analysis of the validity, design, appropriateness, performance and the impact of the Project after its completion, with the intent to establish the extent to which it achieved its objective, its degree of effectiveness and efficiency, as well as its sustainability. Mid-term Evaluation is the systematic and objective collection of information, on the spot assessment, and analysis of the validity, design, appropriateness, performance and the impact of the project during its implementation stage.

Source: ITTO (2009b)

The first three elements of the approach were largely covered through examination of the ex-post evaluation reports and other relevant documentation on project design and implementation. Knowledge management and stakeholder participation in the meta-evaluation were covered through collection of evidence in a structured way from selected stakeholder groups and examination of relevant documentation.

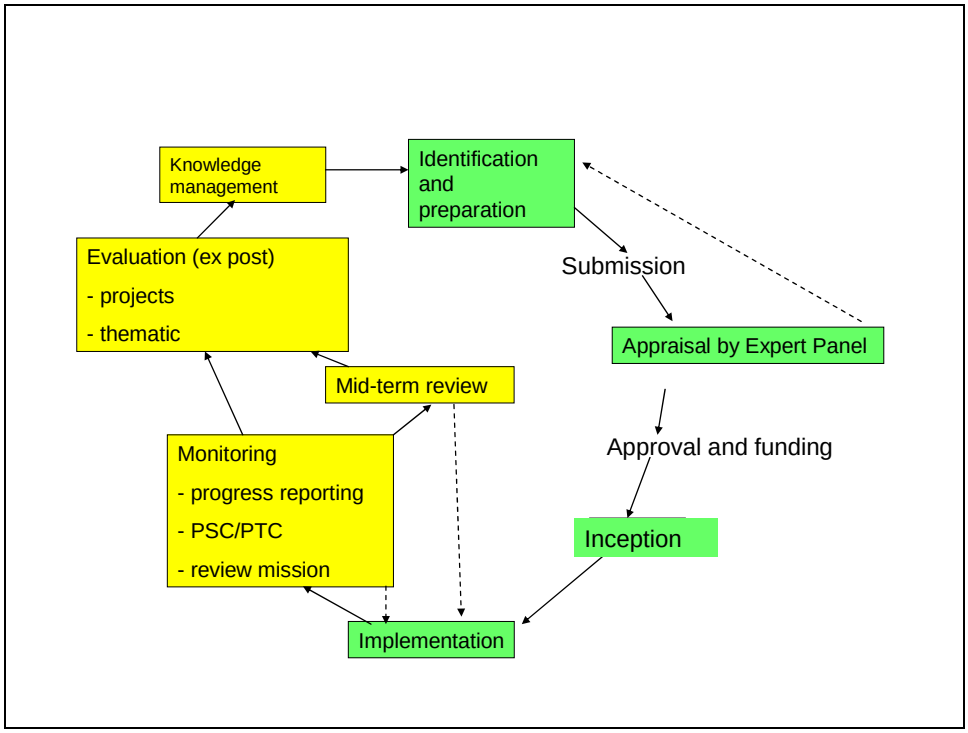
Combination of these five approaches enabled triangulation in the analysis of data which could draw on both quantitative and qualitative methods of information analysis.[5] In this case, quantitative information on perceptions of stakeholder groups was combined with qualitative analysis of ITTO's ex-post evaluations. Triangulation is understood here as a process of using multiple observers and methods for assuring multiple viewpoints of reality.[6]

In an ideal case, the stakeholder surveys should have been carried out after examination of the qualitative data. This was only partially achieved through assessment of five pilot ex-post evaluations, which, however, cannot be considered representative for the population of all ex-post evaluations. The allocated time period for the meta-evaluation did not permit a proper sequence of the two approaches and therefore survey questions were derived from assumptions identified during the preliminary review of information and questionnaire testing.

[5] E.g., Denzin (1989). The three traditions of triangulation research are constructionism, empiricism and realism. See Olsen (2004) for description of triangulation in social science.

[6] Denzin & Lincoln (1994).

Figure 2.1 Evaluation in the ITTO project cycle



Note: Dotted lines indicate information feedback loops.

2.4 Evaluation matrix

Based on the Terms-of-Reference, a set of evaluation questions were identified (Box 2.2). The questions represented the determinants of meta-evaluation and they were further elaborated in the evaluation matrix by individual indicators. The indicators of the evaluation matrix with separate sections for the quality of evaluation and the quality of projects is provided in Appendix 2.1.

Each individual indicator of the evaluation matrix was assessed by the meta-evaluation team using a rating scale (mostly from 1 to 5). The matrix also contained a number of indicators on which rating was based on the existence/absence of an element (see Appendix 2.1 for details of the rating guide).

The evaluation matrix also contained basic information on the project (country, title, ITTO committee, duration, evaluation date, level of project intervention, ex-post evaluator(s), type of executing agency, thematic areas covered by the projects, etc.) to allow grouping of observations for analytical purposes.

The overall contribution of the (evaluated) project work to the Organization's objectives was assessed based on areas identified in the International Tropical Timber Agreement (1994) and in the goals of the Yokohama Action Plan (2002-2008)[7]. The assessment was constrained by the fact that the ex-post evaluation reports did not generally provide more information than identifying the link between projects and specific elements of the ITTA and Action Plans.[8] The meta-evaluation team therefore added assessment on whether this link in each case existed at local, national, and/or regional/international level(s). The levels were considered incrementally, i.e. if for instance, in addition to local impacts on the ground, a field project had also contributed to ITTO objectives at a national level, the contribution was classified as "national". This approach was justified by the experience gained from pilot evaluations that showed that the available evidence in ex-post evaluation reports did not generally provide information on the significance of the project's contribution to ITTO's objectives and the goals of Action Plans.

[7] The Libreville Action Plan (1999-2002) was also considered as appropriate.
[8] This is the approach adopted in the project proposals as well.

Box 2.2 Evaluation questions

Quality of ex-post evaluations

1. What has been the quality of ex-post evaluations carried out? This was evaluated based on the report format and contents, data collection and methods, evaluation of the performance of implementation, quality of judgment, and quality of evaluation of the DAC Criteria, as well as that of contribution to ITTO objectives.

Quality of projects

2. How relevant have ITTO projects been?
3. How effective have the ITTO projects been in achieving their objectives?
4. To what extent and in which thematic areas have impacts (intended and unintended) been created, and who have been the beneficiaries?
5. How applicable have the products, lessons and recommendations of ITTO projects been and to what extent the projects can be considered replicable?
6. How sustainable have ITTO projects been in terms technical viability as well as economic, institutional, social and environmental sustainability?[9]
7. To what extent have the identified follow-up activities been undertaken after project completion?
8. How efficient have ITTO projects been in terms of resource allocation and use of available resources
9. What has been the actor performance in project implementation?

Contribution to ITTO objectives

10. At what level have the projects provided contribution to the ITTO Objective 200 and the objectives of the International Tropical Timber Agreement (ITTA 1994)

2.5 Collection of evidence: Evaluation of ex-post evaluations

A total of 92 ex-post evaluation reports were evaluated by the meta-evaluation team members (Appendix 2.2). This represents 66% of the total number of ex-post evaluations (140) carried out by ITTO. On projects, which had several phases, only the last ex-post evaluation was included in the meta-evaluation sample. In a few earlier projects not all the necessary documents (project document, project completion report, Project Steering Committee (PSC) reports, the TOR for ex-post evaluations, ex-post evaluation report) were readily available in digital form and these projects were therefore excluded. In some other early evaluation reports, the format and coverage did not follow the ITTO guidance and these evaluations were excluded, as they would not have been relevant for the assessment of the current evaluation practice of the Organization. The sample of ex-post evaluations may be considered representative even though some of the earlier evaluations are not included (Table 2.1).

In addition, a small sample of projects (15) was taken to support the evaluation of project monitoring, as this was not often explicitly commented in ex-post evaluation reports. On these projects, monitoring reports were reviewed.

The work of evaluating ex-post evaluations was divided among the three team members considering an appropriate mix of thematic areas, regions, ex-post evaluators, languages, and possible conflict of interest. In order to harmonize the assessment between individual members of the team, the following action was taken: (i) five pilot projects were first assessed by all the members of the team; (ii) the differences were compared and analyzed; (iii) differences were discussed in the initial meeting of the team to clarify interpretation of the indicators of the evaluation matrix; (iv) the rating guide was subsequently revised to reduce interpretational differences among team members; (v) comparative analysis between team members was carried out to identify possible systematic differences; (vi) double assessment of a sample of projects evaluated by the two team members was carried out by the team leader to ensure a consistent approach among all the members of the team; and (vii) re-assessment of those ex-post evaluations in which large differences between members were identified.

[9] Technical viability is concerned about whether the techniques developed and applied in the project were sustained and/or mainstreamed. Economic sustainability is concerned with the longer run economic viability of project interventions or activities resulted from the project, Social sustainability is concerned with sustaining the social capital developed during the project to ensure continued implementation of activities induced by the project. Institutional sustainability is concerned with robustness of the participating institutions for supporting the continuation of project-induced activities. Environmental sustainability is concerned with whether the changes induced by the project are environmentally benign or not over the long run. (cf. AfDB/IFAD 2009).

Table 2.1 Number of the sampled ex-post evaluated projects by region and division

Region/division	EIMI	FI	RFM	TOTAL	%
Africa	3	1	11	15	16.3
Asia	7	21	21	49	53.3
Latin America	4	5	17	26	28.3
Other	0	1	1	2	2.2
TOTAL	14	28	50	92	100.0
%	15.2	30.4	54.4	100.0	

Source: Appendix 2.2

Two members of the meta-evaluation team[10] had carried out five ex-post evaluations in the past. In order to eliminate any conflict of interest, three of these evaluations were not included in the sample and the team leader evaluated the other two. One member[11] had also participated in the implementation of six ITTO projects. Those that had been subject to ex-post evaluation and were included in the meta-evaluation sample were evaluated by the other members of the team.

Despite these efforts, there may be some element of systematic error in the assessment of ex-post evaluations, which could not be eliminated. Its possible impact is, however, likely to be limited as the sample was large and the work was evenly divided between team members in terms of regions, ITTO committees and thematic areas.

It needs to be noted that the meta-evaluation was carried out using the present standards (as perceived by the meta-evaluation team) for a sample of projects, which were designed and implemented over a period of about 20 years.

2.6 Collection of evidence: Stakeholder surveys

Data on stakeholder perceptions of ITTO's project evaluation work was collected from the following groups: (i) producing country Focal Points, (ii) Executing Agencies (EA), (iii) evaluators, (iv) consuming country Focal Points, and (v) the ITTO professional staff.[12] In addition, (vi) a number of specialists were personally interviewed and (vii) the members of the Civil Society Advisory Group (CSAG) and the Trade Advisory Group (TAG) were consulted.

The survey data was collected by e-mail correspondence and in the case of the Secretariat staff through personal interviews. The questionnaires to country Focal Points, EAs and evaluators (Appendix 2.3) were provided by two means: (i) an attached word file for preliminary review and (ii) an on-line questionnaire. Respondents could send their replies through either the on-line questionnaire or a word.doc attachment to an e-mail reply. One reminder was sent to non-respondents and a new deadline was given. The response rates are reported in Table 2.2.

The response rate was lowest among EAs (24%) and producing country Focal Points (27%). In the case of EAs this was partly expected as the study period was long (1997-2011). Several agencies implementing projects in the 1990s had changed their name or address, or the responsible project staff were no more employed by the organization, or the agency did not exist any more. The team took specific efforts to overcome these obstacles by trying to locate the right people but with limited success.

In order to improve the response rate among country Focal Points and EAs, their questionnaires were translated into French and Spanish. This clearly improved the response rate of producing country Focal Points in both language groups and there was some positive impact among Spanish-speaking

[10] El-Lakany and Tomaselli.
[11] Tomaselli
[12] Appendix 2.3 contains summary versions of the questionnaires used.

EAs. However, there was only a marginal impact on the response rate among French-speaking EAs as only one reply was received from them. The low response rates among EAs and particularly among Focal Points is a cause of concern even though the most important producing countries have contributed to data collection.

All the respondents to the stakeholder surveys and the interviewed persons are listed in Appendix 2.4.

Table 2.2 Response rate of stakeholder surveys

Stakeholder group	Number of group members	Number of group members with e-mail addresses	Number of responses	Response rate	
	N	N´	n	n/N %	n/ N´ %
Producing country focal points	33	33	9	27.3	27.3
Executing agencies	103[1)]	71	17	16.5	23.9
Consuming country focal points	27	27	9	33.3	33.3
Evaluators	63	48	26	41.3	54.2
ITTO staff	13	13	13[2)]	100.0	100.0
Specialists	8	8	5[3)]	62.5	62.5
Total	**247**	**200**	**79**	**..**	**..**

1) Includes all the executing agencies of the sampled ex-post evaluated projects; some projects had more than one executing agency; several executing agencies had implemented more than one project.
2) Interviewed professionals
3) Three personal interviews, two e-mail replies

Source: Stakeholder survey records

Only one third of consuming country focal points contributed to the study, which is another cause of concern. However, this included all the active donor countries so that additional replies would probably have had a limited contribution to the results.

The response rate among evaluators was high as more than a half of those whose contact data was valid replied. As evaluators were asked to report separately on each of their evaluations, 47 replies were received as many of consultants had participated in more than one ex-post evaluation. Most of the replies were from team leaders, which improved the value of the information provided.

In conclusion, stakeholder surveys can be largely considered representative apart from producing country focal points and executing agencies. The 104 persons who have provided a contribution to the meta-evaluation are listed in Appendix 2.4.

2.7 Summative evaluation

Thematic summative evaluation was carried out for 13 thematic areas (Table 2.3). The themes were identified based on the review of the portfolio of ex-post evaluated projects (cf. chapter 3), linkage with ITTO Division mandates[13], and relevance to the subject areas of ITTO's five Thematic Programmes (TP)[14]. This was considered appropriate with the present trend of project proposal submissions (and voluntary contributions) shifting towards the TPs from the regular project cycle.[15] The approach was

[13] Reforestation and Forest Management (RFM), Economic Information and Market Intelligence (EIMI) and Forest Industry (FI)
[14] Reducing Deforestation and Forest Degradation and Enhancement of Environmental Services (REDDES), Community Forest Management and Enterprise (CFME), Tropical Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (TFLET), Industry Development and Efficiency (IDE), and Trade and Market Transparency (TMT).
[15] See section 6.9.9.

deemed to make the results of the thematic summative evaluations directly relevant to the Organization's future work areas.[16]

Table 2.3 Thematic summative reports of the meta-evaluation

Meta-evaluation thematic summaries	ITTO Divisions	Linked with Thematic Programme
1. Forest inventory, monitoring, mapping and zoning	RFM	REDDES
2. Demonstration areas, permanent sample plots and model forests for sustainable forest management	RFM	REDDES
3. Protected areas/biodiversity	RFM	REDDES
4. Forest restoration, rehabilitation, reforestation and plantations	RFM	REDDES
5. Community forest management and enterprise	RFM	CFME
6. Illegal logging, governance and forest certification	EIMI	TFLET
7. Criteria & Indicators for sustainable forest management	EIMI	TFLET
8. Forest information systems	EIMI	TFLET
9. Reduced impact logging	FI	IDE
10. Further processing and industry efficiency	FI	IDE
11. Non-Timber Forest Products	FI	IDE
12. Markets, marketing and trade promotion	EIMI	TMT
13. Project design and implementation	All	All

The summative evaluations by thematic area were based on the review of the ex-post evaluation reports and project completion reports. Under each theme, the following elements were analyzed and synthesized: (i) key issues, (ii) lessons learned, (iii) good practices, and (iv) recommendations for target groups. The thematic summative evaluation reports (Annex II) also includes a summary of generic lessons learned which are cross-cutting for all the themes.[17]

2.8 Analysis of the evidence

The meta-evaluation followed the common practice of rating the quality of ex-post evaluations as well as the quality of projects. The five-point scale used in rating of indicators allowed separation of quality between excellent/highly satisfactory (score 5), satisfactory (4), moderately satisfactory (3), moderately unsatisfactory (2), and unsatisfactory performance or failure (1) (see Appendix 2.1)[18]. As rating was done simultaneously, there are no independent variables in the meta-evaluation, which represents a constraint for analytical methods that can be applied.

Being based on discreet observations, ratings cannot be considered continuous variables. The analysis is therefore limited to the use of frequencies and calculated average ratings for individual indicators. However, the use of regression analysis or any other multivariate methods or formal measures of dispersion (standard deviation, coefficients of variation) around the mean is ruled out. [19] However, some bi-variate cross-tabulations could be used in the analysis but the data did not allow formal analysis of causal relationships between indicators and therefore the discussion in this respect remains speculative by nature.

As regards grouping of observations, the analysis focused on the following dimensions: geographic regions, ITTO Committees, project type, thematic areas, and type of executing agency.

The results of the data generated through the six stakeholder surveys carried out (see Annex I) were aggregated and analyzed by stakeholder group using quantitative measures as appropriate. In

[16] Several respondents of the consuming country Focal Points survey emphasized the importance of linking the meta-evaluation with the scope of Thematic Programmes.
[17] Annex II is not included in this draft report.
[18] If there was missing information on indicator, score 0 was applied.
[19] The same limitations have been observed in some other meta-evaluations which have used similar approaches in the documentary review of ex-post evaluations (e.g. AfDB/IFAD 2009).

applying triangulation, the perceptions of various stakeholders on selected common aspects related to ex-post evaluation were compared between groups.

2.9 Organization of work

The meta-evaluation process is summarized in Appendix 2.5. The work started with an inception mission to ITTO headquarters by the Team Leader (1-7 March 2011). Guidance was received from the members of the Expert Panel on Project Appraisal in their 41st meeting (March 7, 2011). After the inception mission, pilot evaluation of five project ex-post evaluations was launched which was carried out by all the team members.

The whole meta-evaluation team[20] had their initial face-to-face meeting at the headquarters to discuss the methodology and to review the results of pilot assessment of five ex-post evaluations (18 to 22 April 2011). Staff interviews were carried out at the same time. Stakeholder surveys were launched successively in April-May and the last responses were received in mid-June. Ex-post evaluation documentation of projects was examined in parallel followed by the elaboration of draft summative thematic evaluations.

The work was carried out in close cooperation with the ITTO Secretariat, especially the Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Officer. The Secretariat staff made major efforts to provide all the necessary documentation in a virtual meta-evaluation workspace that was readily accessible by all the team members during the entire process. This was critical, as the amount of documentation reviewed was large (about 500 reports and other documents).

A preliminary draft report of the meta-evaluation was discussed with the Secretariat in Yokohama 11 15 September 2011 before this draft report was finalized.

2.10 Reporting

This draft report contains the principal results and findings of the meta-evaluation. It will be finalized based on the comments of the Joint Committee of ITTC in November 2011.

Chapter 3 contains a portfolio analysis of the ex-post evaluated projects. Part II reports the findings of the meta-evaluation and Part III contains conclusions and recommendations. The detailed results of the stakeholder consultations are reported in Annex I and the results of summative thematic evaluations of lessons learned, good practices and recommendations in Annex II (not included in this draft report).

3. OBJECT OF META-EVALUATION – PORTFOLIO ANALYSIS

3.1 Representativeness of ex-post evaluated projects

Since its establishment, ITTO has financed about 1,000 projects[21] through its regular project cycle. The figure does not in include pre-projects and projects under the recently launched Thematic Programmes. ITTO's CITES Programme is neither included. More than a half of the projects (57%) were implemented under the Reforestation and Forest Management (RFM) Division, a quarter (26%) under the Forest Industry (FI) Division and the balance (17%) under the Economic Information and Market Intelligence Division (EIMI). Latin America and Asia accounted for about 30% of the total number of projects each and 22% were implemented in Africa. The others (17%) were international projects covering more than one region.[22]

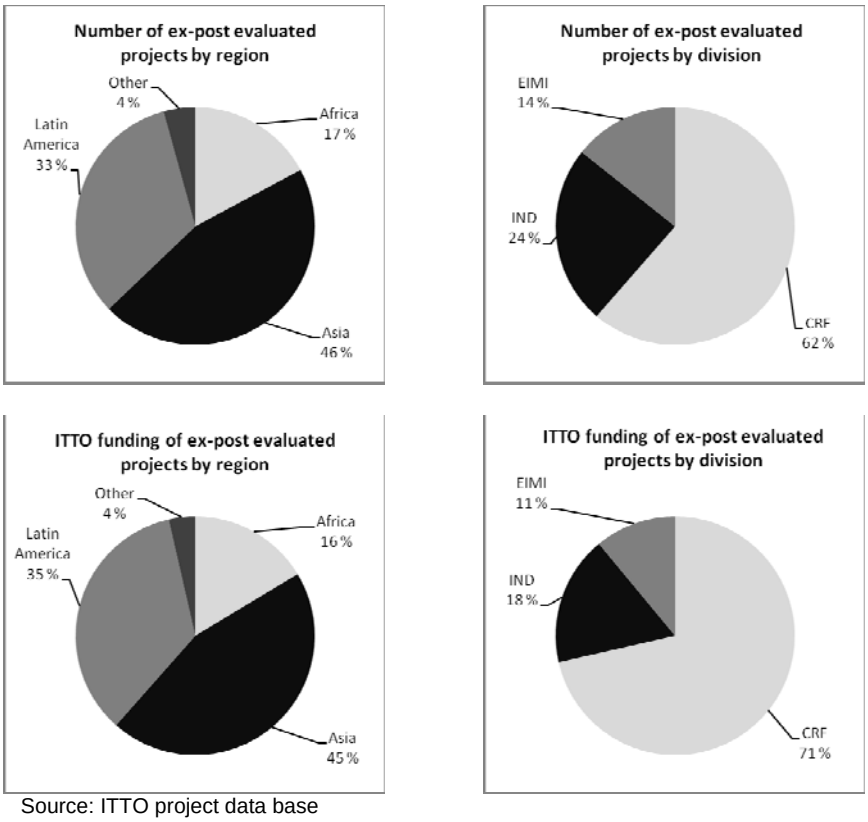
[20] The team consisted of Markku Simula as Team Leader and Hosny El-Lakany and Ivan Tomaselli as Lead Evaluators.
[21] ITTO (2011)
[22] The statistical tables of the figures in this chapter are given in Appendix 3.1

In terms of funding the CRF projects have absorbed 67% of the total funding (USD 446 million) while the rest was shared between FI (21%) and EIMI (12%) projects.[23] The average size of all the ITTO-funded projects has been USD 584,000 of which ITTO has contributed 75%.

About 14% of all the projects have been ex-post evaluated. The distribution of these 140 projects by ITTO Committees resembles that of all the projects. Almost a half of ex-post evaluated projects (46%) were found in Asia followed by Latin America (33%) and Africa (17%). Only 4% of the ex-post evaluated projects were international (Figure 3.1).

In terms of funding, the ex-post evaluated projects had received from ITTO a total of USD 99 million or 22% of the total. Ex-post evaluated projects have been clearly larger than projects on average. Their average total funding level was USD 1.03 million of which ITTO support represented 68%. The RFM projects have absorbed 71% of the total for ex-post evaluated projects followed by FI (18%) and EIMI (11%). Funding flows by region closely correspond to the distribution of the number of projects.

Figure 3.1 Distribution of ex-post evaluated projects by region and division



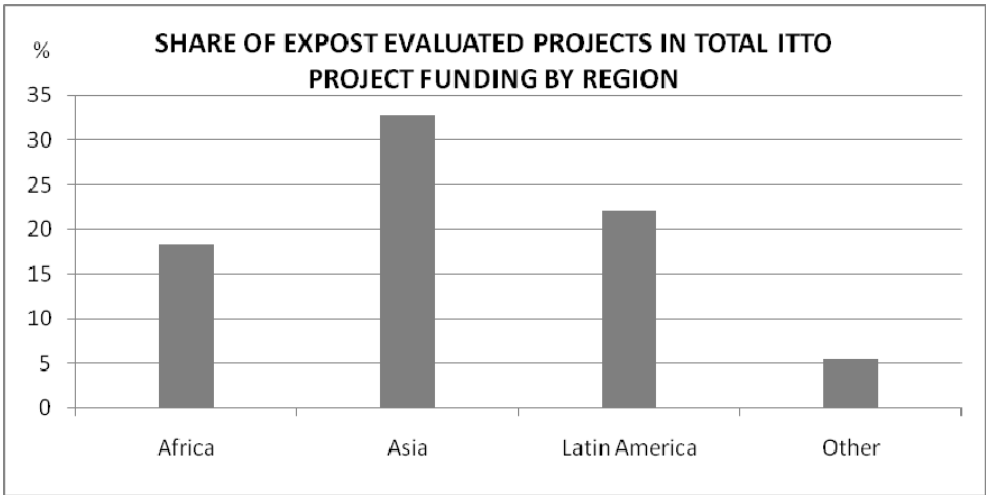
Source: ITTO project data base

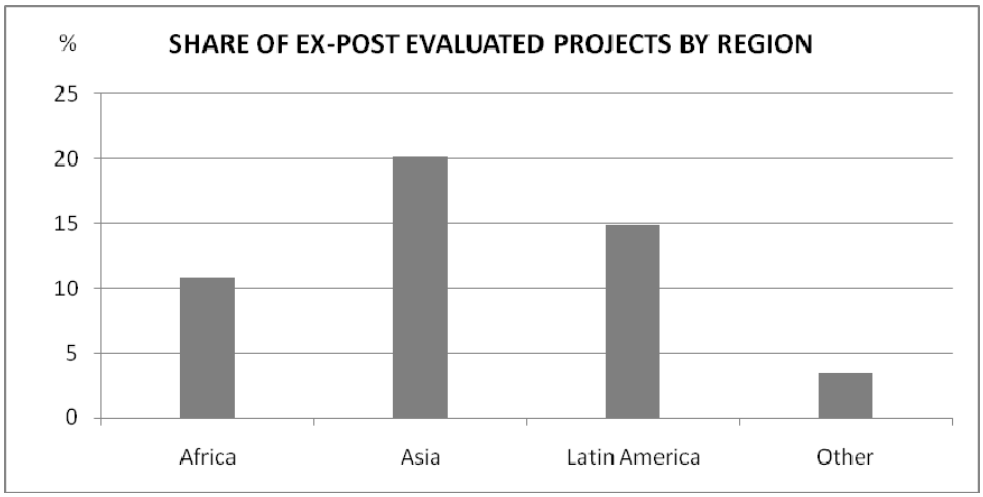
The share of ex-post evaluated projects in all the projects varies among Divisions and regions. About 20% of Asian projects have been evaluated and the share in Latin America is 15% (Figure 3.2). However, in Africa only 11% of all the projects have been subject to ex-post evaluation. In terms of funding, the situation is quite different and the ex-post evaluated projects in Asia accounted for about a third of the region's all projects. In Latin America, the share was about 22% and in Africa about 18%.

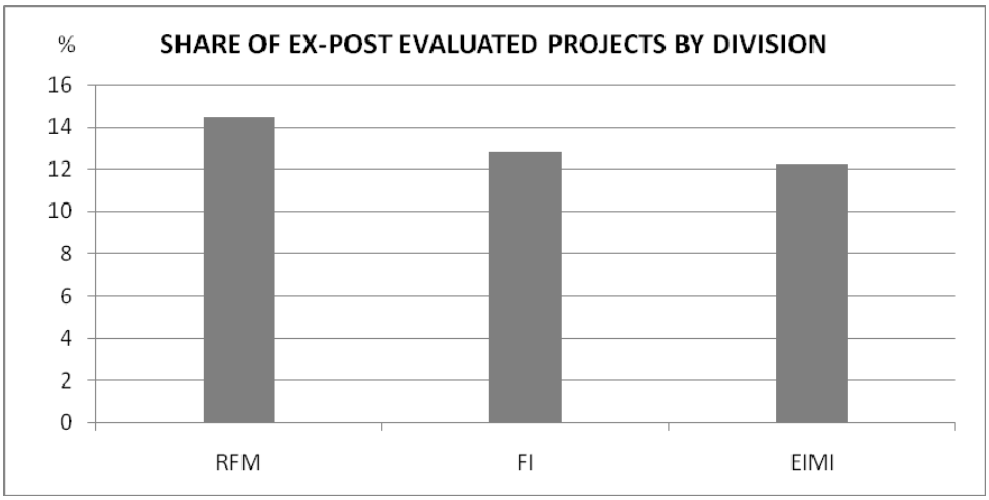
The RFM has been a little more active than the other two Divisions as more than 14% of its projects have been subject to ex-post evaluation. The respective share in Forest Industry was less than 13% and in EIMI about 12%. The differences may be also explained by the average size of projects; in general, the RFM projects have been larger than in the other Divisions.

[23] Source: ITTO project data base consulted in May 2011. This includes funding from ITTO, the counterparts and other sources of funding.

Figure 3.2 Representativeness of ex-post evaluated projects in the ITTO total portfolio





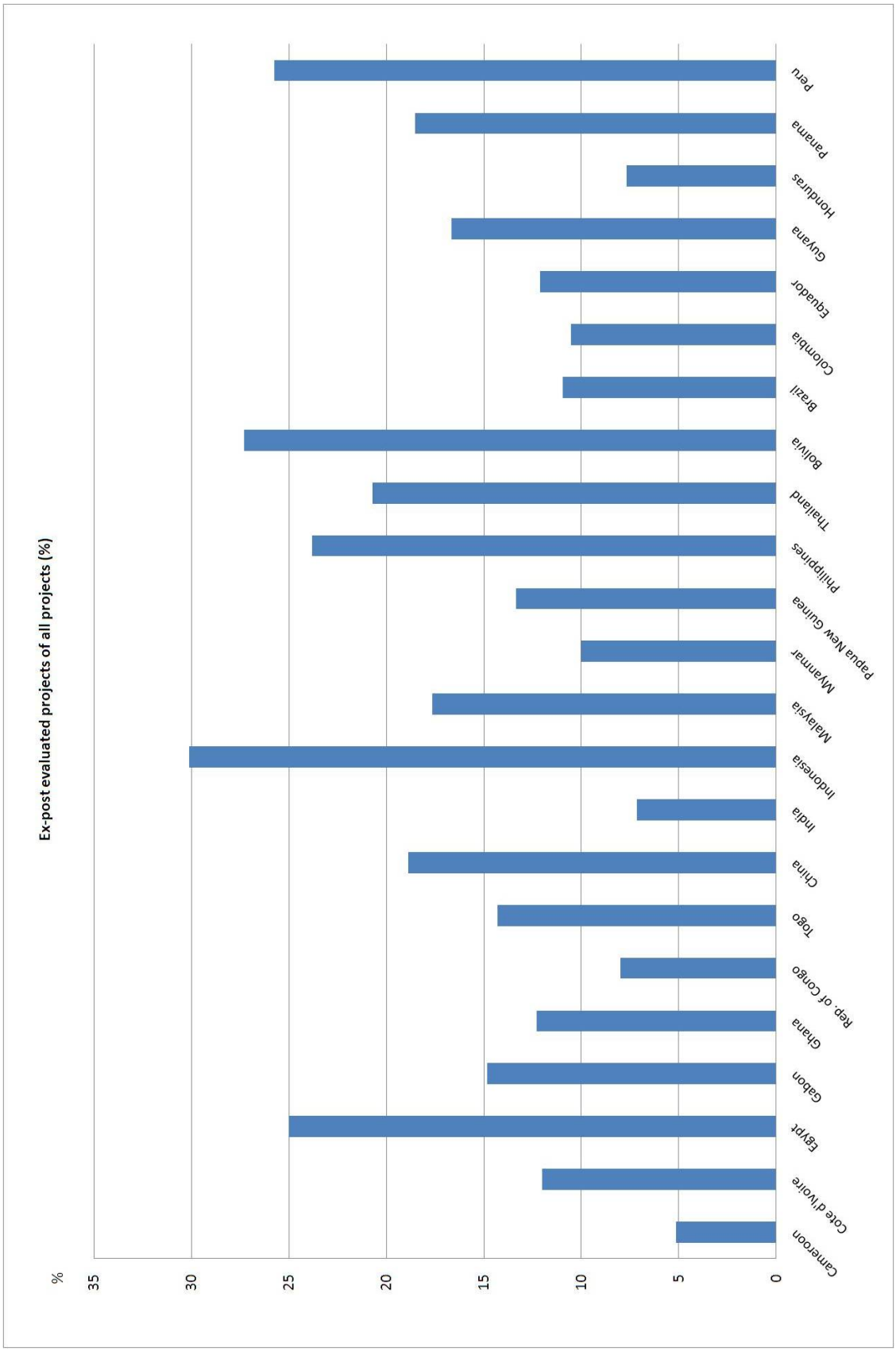


Ex-post evaluated projects have been submitted by 23 ITTO's developing member countries[24] (Figure 3.3). More than 20% of producing country ITTO projects have been evaluated in Indonesia (30%),

[24] In addition to producing member countries, China, Egypt and Nepal are included.

Bolivia (27%), Egypt (25%), Philippines (24%) and Peru (24%). Less than 10% of the country's ITTO-funded projects were evaluated in Republic of Congo (8%), Honduras (8%), India (7%), and Cameroon (5%). In the other 14 countries, the share has varied from 10 to 20%.

Figure 3.3 Representativeness of ex-post evaluated projects by country

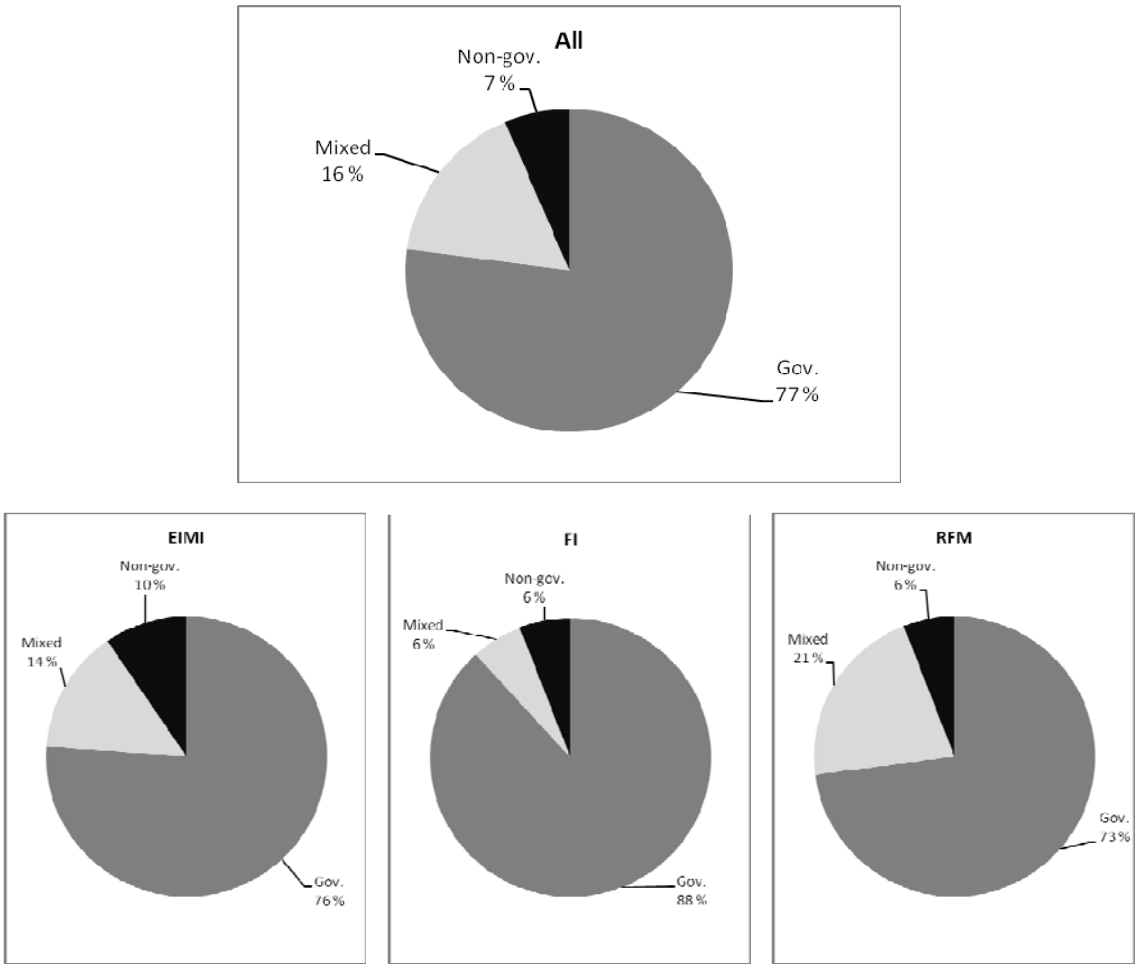

Ex-post evaluated projects of all projects (%)
%
35
30
25
20
15
10
5
0
Cameroon
Cote d'Ivoire
Egypt
Gabon
Ghana
Rep. of Congo
Togo
China
India
Indonesia
Malaysia
Myanmar
Papua New Guinea
Philippines
Thailand
Bolivia
Brazil
Colombia
Equador
Guyana
Honduras
Panama
Peru

Three consuming countries have also submitted projects which have been subject to ex-post evaluation. Most of them have been from Japan, of which 7% have been evaluated. Of the three Finnish projects, two have been evaluated like one of the two German projects.

3.2 Executing agencies of ex-post evaluated projects

Of the total of 140 ex-post evaluated projects 77% were executed by a government agency. NGOs or private sector organizations executed seven per cent (Figure 3.4). The balance (16%) was mixed projects with government and either an NGO or a private sector organization, or both, as partners in implementation.

Figure 3.4 Ex-post evaluated projects by type of executing agency



Most of the 32 projects that were executed with the participation of NGOs or private sector organizations in partnership with a government agency were under the CRF. There were only five such projects in the EIMI and four in the Forest Industry. A detailed assessment of the whole ITTO project portfolio by type of executing agency could not be made.

Government executed projects represented 83-84% of the total in Africa and Asia while in Latin America the share was 67%. This was due to higher participation of other types of executing agencies in that region. In Africa, no project was executed alone by the non-government sector but there were five mixed projects. In Asia, four percent of the region's ex-post evaluated projects were implemented by NGOs or the private sector alone (three projects in total).

It can be concluded that ITTO's ex-post evaluated have been mainly executed by government agencies (forest administrations, research and training institutes, etc.) in its developing member

countries. However, as small projects have not been subject to ex-post evaluation, the evidence of this report is likely to be biased towards large government-executed projects.

3.3 What has not been ex-post evaluated

There are another 13 producing member countries, which have implemented ITTO projects, but none of these has been subject to ex-post evaluation. These countries include Cambodia (12 projects), Central African Republic (3), the Democratic Republic of Congo (6), Fiji (3), Guatemala (17), Liberia (4), Mexico (7), Nepal (3), Nigeria (1), Suriname (1), Trinidad & Tobago (2), Vanuatu (1), and Venezuela (6). This raises the question of how ex-post evaluated projects have been selected. In countries with more than five projects, relevant lessons for future implementation could probably have been obtained for sharing among other members of the Organization. Information on the accountability of project work in the listed countries (representing about a third of producing member countries) is presently limited to Project Completion Reports, financial audits and monitoring reports, which may not be considered adequate.

According to the ITTO project data base, 101 projects were implemented by the Secretariat. None of these projects has been subject to ex-post evaluations.[25]

Ten consuming countries have submitted 71 projects (mostly by Japan) that were financed by ITTO. Only 8% of these projects have been subject to ex-post evaluation, including those funded by Finland (2), Germany (1) and Japan (3).

It appears that there is scope for reconsideration on how ex-post evaluation should be targeted at in the future in order to maximize its effectiveness for learning and accountability.

[25] However, the ITTO/CITES programme has been subject to mid-term evaluations.

PART II. FINDINGS

4. QUALITY OF EX-POST EVALUATIONS

The results of this chapter are based on the assessment of ex-post evaluation reports of 92 projects as well as a review of the evaluation TORs, project documents and project completion reports. The quality of ex-post evaluation was analyzed using the meta-evaluation matrix (section 2.4; Appendix 2.1) and applying a rating score.[26] The following aspects of the quality of ex-post evaluation were evaluated: (i) data collection and methods, (ii) report format and contents, (iii) identification of beneficiaries, (iv) impact of external risks on performance, (v) judgment, (vi) applicability and replicability of the project and its results, (vi) relevance, (vii) impacts and effectiveness, (viii) sustainability, (ix) efficiency, (x) contribution to the ITTO objectives, (xi) follow-up activities, and (xii) monitoring of the project. For the evaluation of the quality of report contents and judgment of ex-post evaluation, a sub-set of determinants was applied but the results are not reported here, as they would not add value to the analysis.[27] The frequency distributions of the meta-evaluation ratings of ex-post evaluation quality are reported in Appendix 4.1. The Terms-of Reference given to evaluators were also evaluated and the results are presented in section 6.4.2.

4.1 Data collection and methods

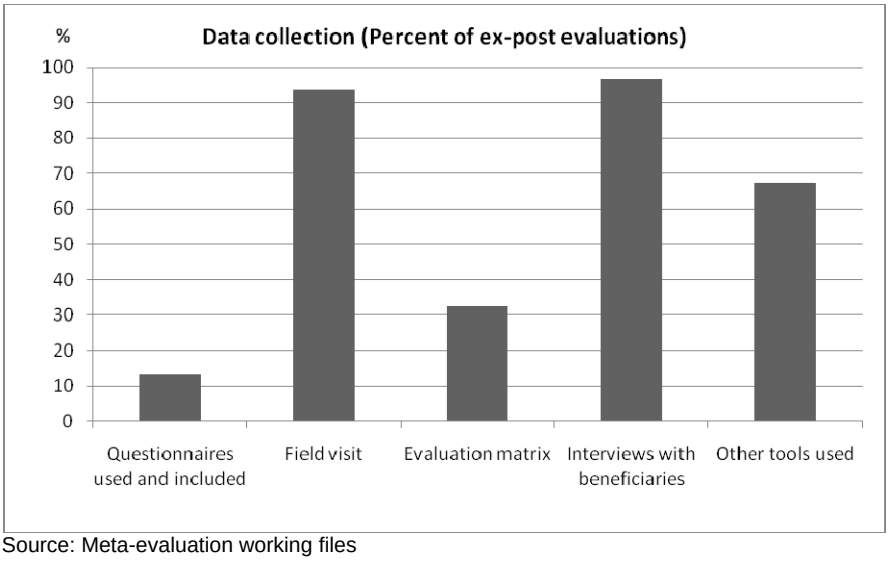
In about 96% of ex-post evaluations, data collection methods were considered satisfactory (Appendix 4.1). In addition to documentation review, data collection methods typically included field visits and interviews with beneficiaries (Figure 4.1).[28] Only 13% of evaluations had used questionnaires in collecting information from parties that could not be interviewed. Evaluation matrix was used in a third of cases, but often implicitly rather than linking it with the indicators of the logical framework matrix (LFM). This was partly due to lack of feasible indicators for measurement in LFM. A number of other analytical tools (e.g. statistical analysis, external expert opinions) were used by a majority of evaluators in analyzing the data collected.

[26] 1 = unsatisfactory, 2 = moderately unsatisfactory, 3 = moderately satisfactory, 4 = satisfactory, 5 = excellent; in addition zero was applied when an indicator was not covered in the evaluation report.

[27] Report contents: context and rationale, description of project goals and objectives, project activities and outputs, description of dissemination, assessment of logical framework and assessment of exit strategy. Judgment: rigor and soundness of evaluation, clarity of findings, identification of indicators of impact, linkage of impact indicators with the logical framework, explanation of analysis, lessons learned section, and recommendations.

[28] However, there were a number of projects which had no field activities and therefore field visits were not applicable.

Figure 4.1 Data collection and methods used in the sampled ex-post evaluations



Source: Meta-evaluation working files

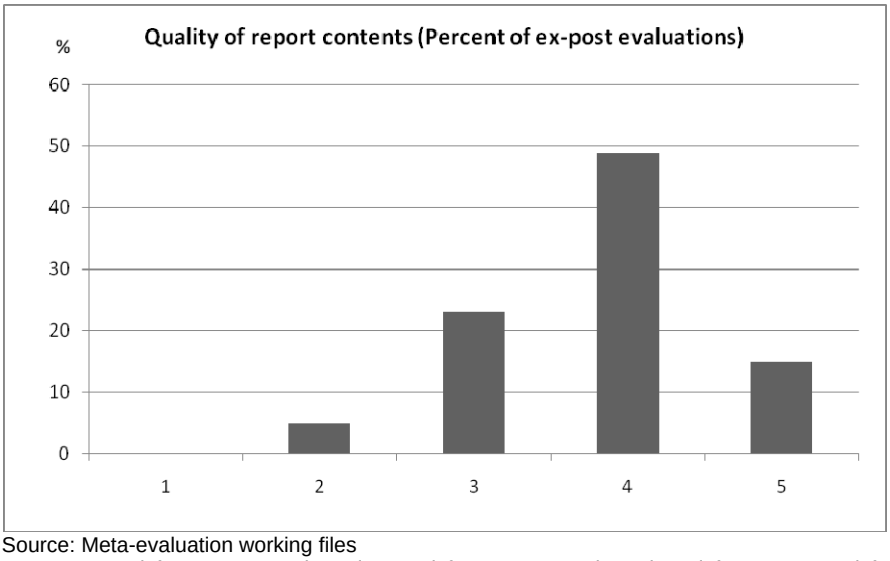
4.2 Report format and contents

In 78% of the sampled ex-post evaluation reports, the contents were considered satisfactory and 16% were outstanding (Figure 4.2). In general, the context and rationale were well explained but in 11% of the reports this part was minimal, probably assuming that there was no reason to repeat the contents of the project document and the Project Completion Report (PCR) (Appendix 4.1). This is not, however, a desirable practice as ex-post evaluation reports are supposed to be self-standing documents.

Project goals, objectives, activities, outputs and dissemination were generally well explained and served as the basis for verification of accomplishments.

The logical framework was assessed as outstanding in 10% of evaluation reports that also often included guidance for how a good LFM should have been elaborated for the project. The assessment of the LFM was satisfactory in 62% of the reports but in 9%, the LFM was only mentioned in passing, while in a quarter of cases, there was no discussion or reference of the LFM (Appendix 4.1). This weakness is also reflected in the quality of evaluation of project impacts.

Figure 4.2 Quality of report contents of the sampled ex-post evaluations



Source: Meta-evaluation working files
Key: 1 = unsatisfactory, 2 = moderately unsatisfactory, 3 = moderately satisfactory, 4 = satisfactory, 5 = excellent.

4.3 Judgment, beneficiaries, risks, exit strategy, applicability, replicability and project performance

In 11% of the evaluation reports judgment was found to be outstanding and in 85% it was satisfactory (Appendix 4.1). On individual sub-elements of this aspect, ex-post evaluations performed well with regard to soundness of evaluation, and clarity of findings and recommendations. Somewhat less strong aspects were rigor of evaluation, explanation of analysis and identification of the lessons learned. The weakest aspect in judgment was lack of identifying linkage of indicators with the LFM (absent in 36% of the reports).

With a few exceptions, beneficiaries were satisfactorily identified in almost all the reports and in 3% their roles were discussed in an outstanding manner.

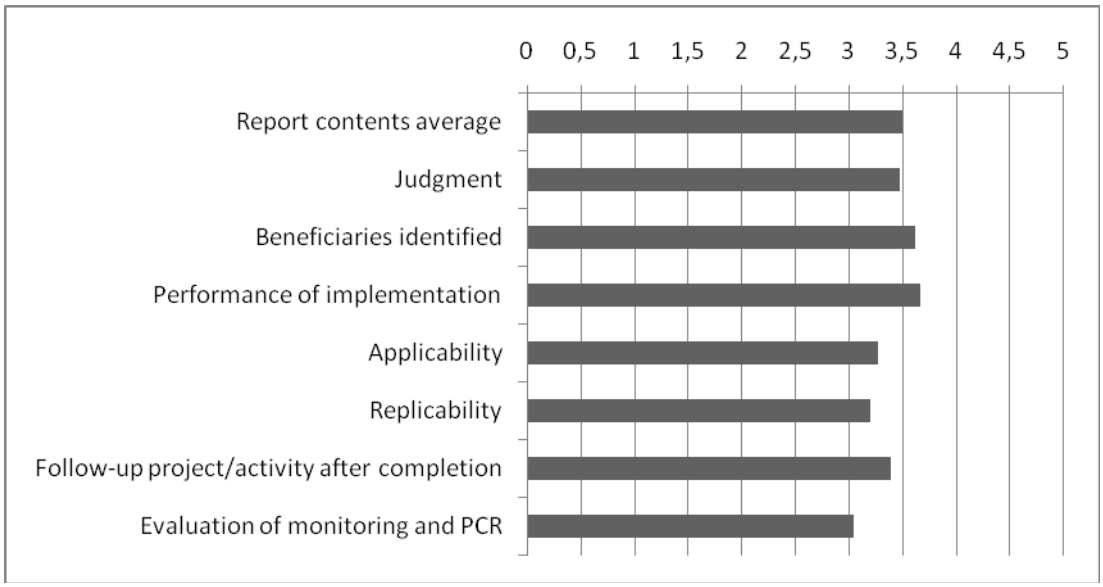
About 85% of evaluation reports covered satisfactorily performance of project implementation and in another 10% the assessment was outstanding.

The quality of evaluation of applicability of project products, lessons learned and recommendations was also in general satisfactory but there were also some unsatisfactory evaluations in this respect (16%). The quality of evaluation of replicability of the project was in general satisfactory (82%).
The quality of assessment of external risks on project performance was generally satisfactory (79%). In 21% of the reports this item was superficially covered and 8% had no mention of it. This may have been due to the fact that evaluators did not probably consider worthwhile commenting on external risks if.projects that were not influenced by them.

Evaluators had assessed the exit strategy in a satisfactory manner in 76% of the cases and in 9% their work had been outstanding. However, exit strategy was dealt with unsatisfactorily in about 16% of the evaluation reports. This area is closely linked with sustainability and therefore needs attention in future evaluations.

The average ratings for the determinants of evaluation quality are given in Figure 4.3. The meta-evaluation assessed all the above mentioned aspects in all the sampled reports independently from whether they were explicitly mentioned in the TOR of ex-post evaluations. As explained in section 6.4.2, the contents of the TOR have evolved over time and in the earlier cases, many presently standard aspects like sustainability were not mentioned. This can partly explain absence of discussion or superficial treatment of some of these aspects in the early ex-post evaluation reports.

Figure 4.3 Average ratings for selected indicators of evaluation quality



Source: Meta-evaluation working files

4.4 Evaluation quality of relevance, impacts, efficiency and sustainability

The quality of evaluation of relevance, impacts,[29] efficiency and sustainability is critical of any ex-post evaluation. The average ratings for the four determinants and quality of evaluation of contribution to the ITTO objectives are given in Figure 4.4. In general, the evaluation quality has been satisfactory varying from 80 % to 95% among determinants (Appendix 4.1). The rating was outstanding in 3% to 7% of the reports.

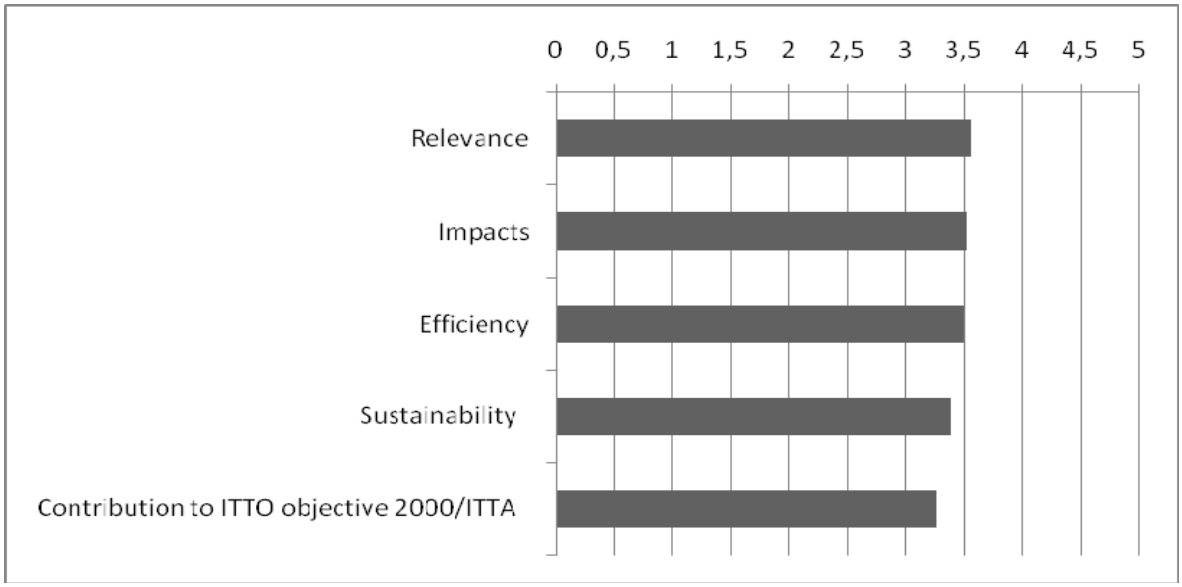
The quality of evaluating relevance proved to be best among the four determinants as it is also easier to asses than the other three determinants. Only with two exceptions, the quality was rated as satisfactory or excellent. An outstanding evaluation considered all the aspects related to relevance, i.e. addressing beneficiary needs, policy compatibility, realism, internal logic and consistency of the project, implementation arrangements, economic impact, participation and local opportunities, innovation and partner interest alignment.

Impacts that also included evaluation of effectiveness in achieving objectives have been generally satisfactorily evaluated (86%) within the limitations of the time and information available. A good impact assessment included analysis of the baseline data against the post-project situation using the logical framework matrix as the basis (if it was adequate for this purpose). In addition to the specific aspects of the project, a good impact assessment covered gender, environment, capacity strengthening, institutional strengthening, social capital and empowerment, economic impacts, information and knowledge, and various other intended and unintended impacts. In 7% of the reports, the treatment was outstanding with a clear analysis of whether the project had attributed the identified impacts which was absent in many evaluation reports. A main common factor limiting evaluation of impacts was lack of baseline data but this was usually outside the control of evaluators who had to rely on the available information.

Efficiency included resource allocation, cost efficiency, project duration lag and actor performance. The quality of evaluation was at least moderately satisfactory in 89% of the reports but in 11% the discussion was superficial and was considered moderately unsatisfactory. There was only one case that did not deal with this aspect at all.

[29] Evaluation of effectiveness was included here under impacts as they are related.

Figure 4.4 Average ratings of the evaluation quality by main determinant



Source: Meta-evaluation working files

The trickiest determinant to evaluate is obviously sustainability which includes five pillars (economic, environmental, social and institutional sustainability, and technical viability). However, six percent of the reports evaluated it in an outstanding manner and in another 80% the treatment was at least moderately satisfactory within the limitations of the timing of the evaluation (cf. section 6.6) and the available information. However, two percent did not discuss sustainability at all and in another 14% the evaluation of sustainability was unsatisfactory. There is apparently a need to provide further guidance on this issue, which is important for all the stakeholders.

4.5 Evaluation quality of contribution to ITTO objectives

Assessment of the evaluation quality of the projects' contribution to ITTO Objective 2000 and the objectives of the ITTA considered both the scope and depth of ex-post evaluation. In 73% of the reports, the quality was satisfactory/moderately satisfactory even though in almost a half of the cases statements were only made on the linkage with the ITTO objectives (Appendix 4.1). In 7% the treatment was outstanding including specific qualification of the contributions in view of their significance. Satisfactory reports often also included assessment on the project's contribution to the ITTO Action Plans.

However, in about 20% of the reports the evaluation of ITTO contributions was considered unsatisfactory (mostly moderately unsatisfactory) and a few reports (all were earlier ones) missed this aspect entirely. There appears to be a need for further guidance what is expected from ex-post evaluations with regard to the contribution of projects to ITTO objectives. This can be a laborious effort for evaluators and therefore there should be clarity on what is expected.

4.6 Evaluation quality of follow-up activities and monitoring

Most ex-post evaluations (81%) also assessed satisfactorily whether follow-up activities were undertaken after the completion of the evaluated project and in 6% of the cases this assessment was outstanding (Appendix 4.1). Only 13% of those reports which covered this aspect did it unsatisfactorily but 7% of all the sampled ex-post evaluations did not consider this aspect at all.

Evaluation of monitoring was not an explicit task in most evaluation TORs. However, 71% of the reports did it satisfactorily/moderately satisfactorily but more than a quarter only superficially. About 7% of the reports did not make any observation on monitoring. In addition to absence of reference to monitoring in the evaluators' TOR, another reason may have been that no problems were found in implementation and therefore monitoring was not commented on.

4.7 Overall quality of ex-post evaluations

The average rating of all the evaluation quality determinants was 3.41 or almost halfway between moderately satisfactory and satisfactory in the sampled ex-post evaluations carried out up to 2010 (Table 4.1). The highest ratings were obtained for the quality of judgment and assessment of relevance and impacts. The largest variation of ratings was observed in the evaluation quality of contribution to the ITTO objectives and that of follow-up activities and monitoring. In the other key determinants differences in variation were smaller.[30]

The average ratings for the quality of evaluation in the projects of the Reforestation and Forest Management Division were generally somewhat higher than in the other Divisions (Table 4.1 Average meta-evaluation ratings of evaluation quality by determinant and Division

Determinant	Average all projects	Division		
		EIMI	FI	RFM
Judgment	3.72			
Applicability	3.26	3.07	3.29	3.31
Replicability	3.20	3.15	3.15	3.23
Relevance	3.55	3.50	3.39	3.66
Impacts	3.52	3.29	3.36	3.68
Efficiency	3.49	3.50	3.46	3.51
Sustainability	3.39	3.31	3.11	3.56
Contribution to ITTO Objectives	3.26	2.91	2.86	3.56
All quality determinants	**3.41**	**3.27**	**3.22**	**3.56**
Number of projects	92	14	28	50

Source: Meta-evaluation working files; the range for calculating the average rating is from one to five. No weighting was applied. Data on non-evaluated determinants is not included in the average.

Figure 4.5). There was a minor overall difference between the projects of EIMI and FI. This difference was not, however, systematic in all the key determinants. The sample size and intra-divisional variation have an influence on the results. The widest variation in evaluation quality ratings was in general observed in the EIMI projects followed by the FI ones. The large sample size has likely contributed to the lowest degree of variation in the quality ratings of the RFM projects.

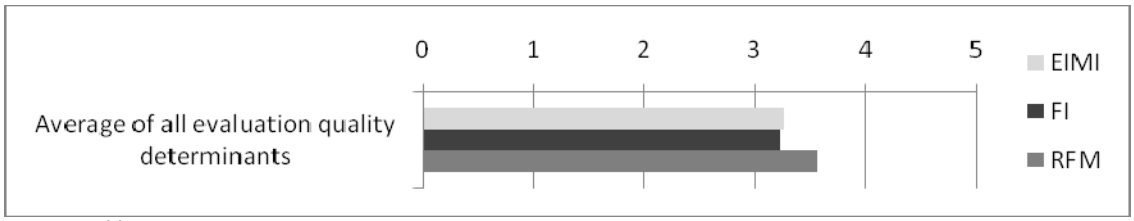
Table 4.1 Average meta-evaluation ratings of evaluation quality by determinant and Division

Determinant	Average all projects	Division		
		EIMI	FI	RFM
Judgment	3.72			
Applicability	3.26	3.07	3.29	3.31
Replicability	3.20	3.15	3.15	3.23
Relevance	3.55	3.50	3.39	3.66
Impacts	3.52	3.29	3.36	3.68
Efficiency	3.49	3.50	3.46	3.51
Sustainability	3.39	3.31	3.11	3.56
Contribution to ITTO Objectives	3.26	2.91	2.86	3.56
All quality determinants	**3.41**	**3.27**	**3.22**	**3.56**
Number of projects	92	14	28	50

Source: Meta-evaluation working files; the range for calculating the average rating is from one to five. No weighting was applied. Data on non-evaluated determinants is not included in the average.

[30] However, in some sub-determinants there was wider variation in the ratings.

Figure 4.5 Average ratings for all evaluation quality determinants by Division

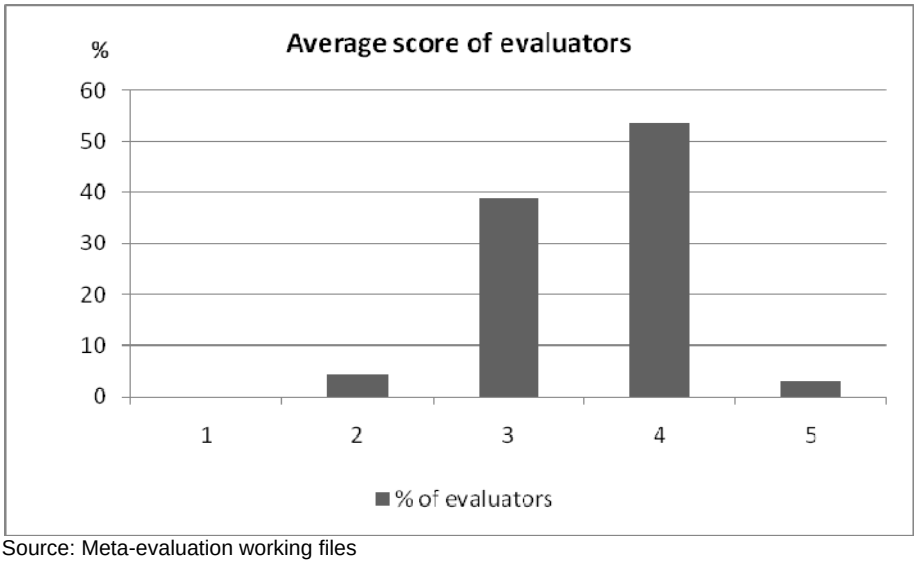


Source: Table 4.1

4.8 Quality of evaluators

A comparison between evaluators revealed that there is significant variation. Of the 26 evaluators assessed, 3% proved to be excellent, 53% were satisfactory and 39% moderately satisfactory (Figure 4.6). The share of moderately unsatisfactory was 4.5%. The result emphasizes the importance of a good selection process for evaluators and shortage of available high-quality consultants for this kind of demanding work.

Figure 4.6 Quality of evaluators



Source: Meta-evaluation working files

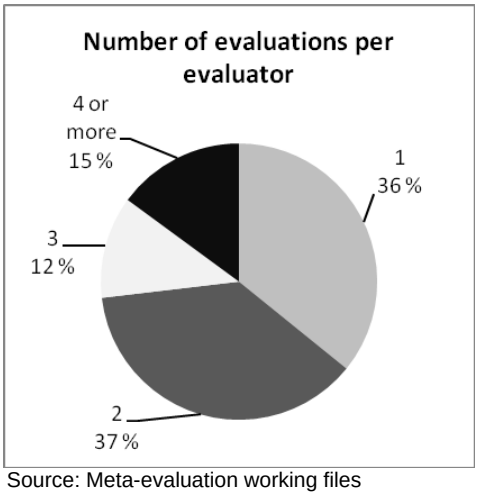
In general, the evaluators' quality was consistently satisfactory as the average ratings varied relatively little over most quality aspects. However, weaker areas include evaluation of the logframe and impacts linked to the logframe, exit strategy, impact of external risks on the project, and replicability.

There are some caveats to be taken into account in interpreting the results. Many evaluation reports were authored by a team and the same rating was given to all of them without considering their actual role in the conduct of the assignment. This may represent a positive bias in the results as the response rate was significantly higher among team leaders than co-consultants.

Almost two thirds of the evaluators (64.2%) were involved in two or more evaluations (Figure 4.7).[31] Those who had carried out three or more evaluations (26.9% of the total) had a satisfactory quality rating. There were only a few early cases when a weak evaluator had been used twice. The result demonstrates that there appears to be effective quality control in place.

[31] Their quality score was measured as an average of all the ex-post evaluations participated.

Figure 4.7 Number of evaluations per evaluator in the sampled projects



Source: Meta-evaluation working files

4.9 Quality change over time of ex-post evaluations

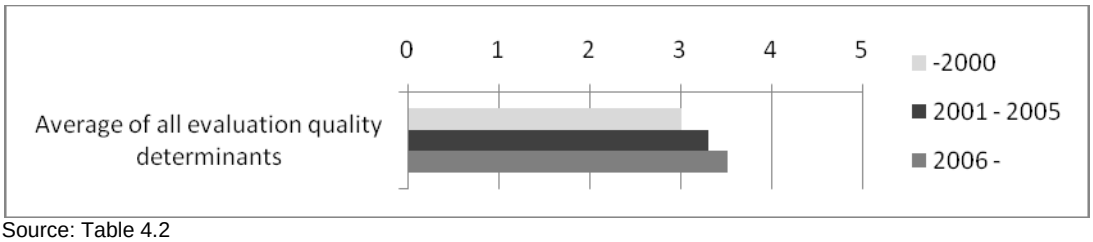
A comparative analysis on the quality of evaluation was made between reports that were completed before 2000, in 2000-2005, and in 2006 and thereafter. The results (Table 4.2 and Figure 4.8) show that there has been a clear improvement in the quality if measured based on the overall average of all the determinants of evaluation quality. The improvement has been particularly strong in the quality of judgment and evaluation of relevance, impacts, efficiency, and sustainability. The evaluations carried out before 2000 were considerably weaker than those during the last ten years when assessed based on the current criteria. Both improved guidance by the Organization and evaluators' capacity have likely contributed to this change.

Table 4.2 Quality change of ex-post evaluation

Period	Number of evaluations	Average rating of all evaluation quality determinants	Change in the rating %
1998-2000	5	3.01	N.a.
2001-2005	32	3.31	10.0
2006-	55	3.51	6.0
Total	**92**	**3.41**	**N.a.**

Source: Meta-evaluation working files

Figure 4.8 Average rating for all evaluation quality determinants by period



Source: Table 4.2

5. QUALITY OF EX-POST EVALUATED PROJECTS

5.1 Overall results

The results on the meta-evaluation of the quality of ex-post evaluated projects are here reported for the OECD/DAC evaluation determinants, i.e. (i) relevance, (ii) effectiveness, (iii) impacts, (iv) sustainability, and (v) efficiency. Each of these key quality determinants was broken down into components that the meta-evaluation team had assessed based on the sampled ex-post evaluation reports and other supporting documentation using the adopted rating scale (section 2.5; Appendix 5.1). Under impacts, we evaluated the level of impacts, targeted beneficiaries, thematic areas of impact, as well as applicability of project outputs and replicability of the project itself. Under efficiency, the performance of implementation by type of actor, lags in project completion, as well as the quality of project monitoring were evaluated. The chapter also analyzes changes in the project quality over time and impacts on the project quality of pre-projects and phasing. An additional element of the projects' quality is their contribution to the achievement of the ITTO objectives which was assessed considering the level of impact.

The results are reported by means of the calculated average ratings and frequency distributions (Appendix 5.1). The calculation of averages was based on the ratings[32] as assessed by the meta-evaluation team. The average rating for each determinant was calculated based on the ratings of its components.[33] No weighting was applied in the calculation of determinant averages.

The contents of ex-post evaluation reports varied. The missing information in the ex-post evaluation reports[34] was not included in the calculation of averages and frequency distributions but its occurrence is reported separately in Appendix 5.1.

The overall results of the average quality of the ex-post evaluated projects for all projects are summarized in Figure 5.1, by Division in Figure 5.2, and by region in Figure 5.3.

Figure 5.1 Key quality determinants of the sampled ex-post evaluated projects

Source: Meta-evaluation project assessment worksheets

In general, the average quality of ITTO's ex-post evaluated projects has been satisfactory. Effectiveness, efficiency and relevance have received higher quality ratings than impacts and sustainability. There are differences between divisions and regions which are discussed under each determinant in the following sections.

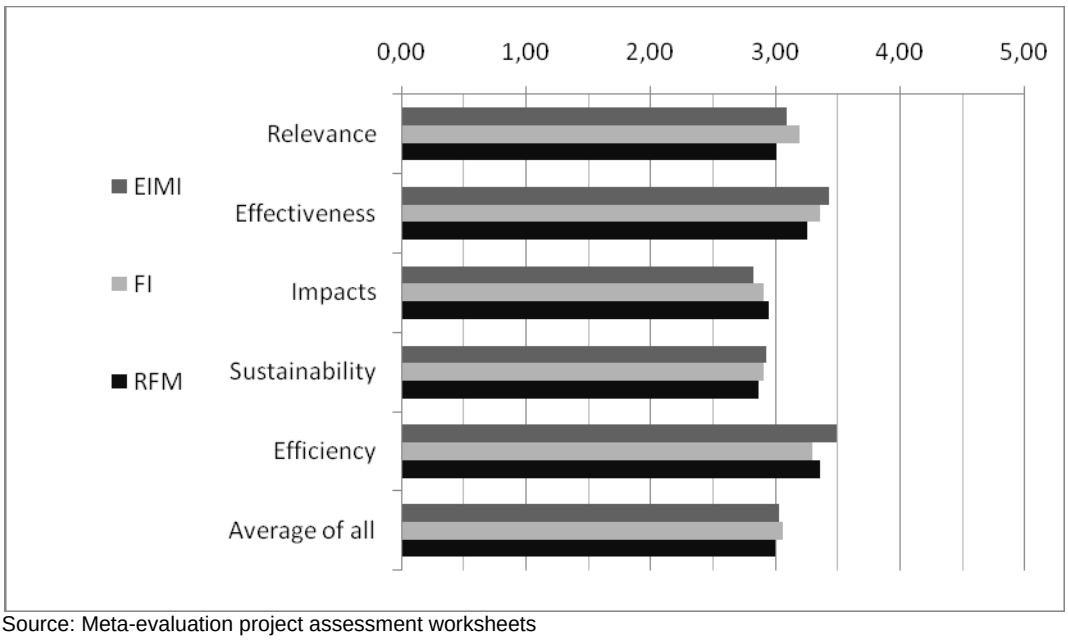
---

[32] 1 = unsatisfactory, 2 = moderately unsatisfactory, 3 = moderately satisfactory, 4 = satisfactory, 5 = excellent

[33] Effectiveness had no components.

[34] This was rated as 0 = not evaluated.

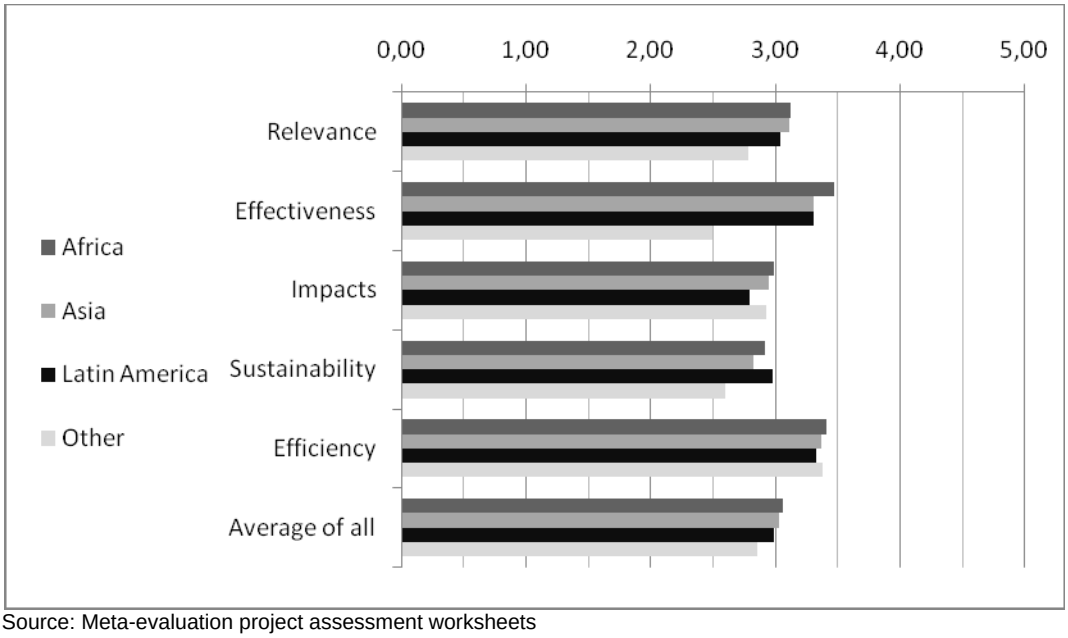
Figure 5.2 Key quality determinants of the sampled ex-post evaluated projects by Division



Source: Meta-evaluation project assessment worksheets

Figure 5.3 also includes international level projects as “other” which were part of the sample of ex-post evaluations included in the analysis. These four projects have a lower rating than the country and regional projects due to some weaknesses in relevance and sustainability, but their efficiency and impacts were generally satisfactory.

Figure 5.3 Key quality determinants of the ex-post evaluated projects by region

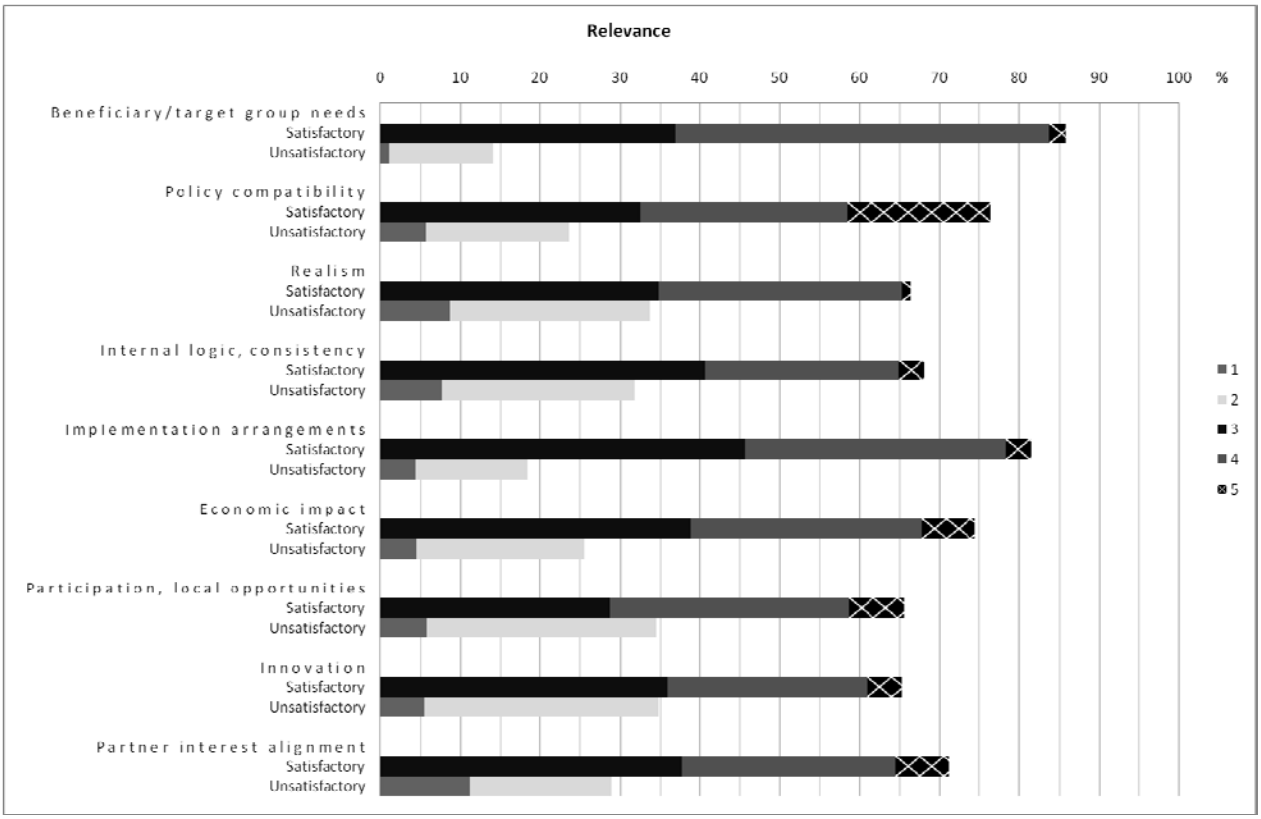


Source: Meta-evaluation project assessment worksheets

5.2 Relevance

The meta-evaluation results for relevance are summarized in Figure 5.4 and Appendix 5.2 in which excellent, satisfactory and moderately satisfactory observations are combined in the upper bar and moderately unsatisfactory and unsatisfactory observations[35] in the lower bar. Relevance was divided into nine components and in general the ITTO projects appear as highly relevant. When all the projects are considered, strengths in the project design have been alignment with beneficiary/target group needs, implementation arrangements, policy compatibility, economic impact, participation and provision of local opportunities, and partner interest alignment. Somewhat weaker areas include realism and internal logic in project design but there is significant scope for improvement also with regard to participation and innovation. However, in each component there is variation across projects.

Figure 5.4 Quality of relevance by component in the sampled ex-post evaluated projects



Source: Appendix 5.1

There is also variation between Divisions. Forest Industry projects as a whole have a somewhat higher overall rating in relevance than in the other Divisions (Figure 5.2; Appendix 5.2). Their strengths in relevance are particularly in economic impact, addressing beneficiary needs, participation, and partner interest alignment. On the contrary, the EIMI projects' weaknesses are in participation, partner interest alignment and innovation, which can be partly explained by the inherent nature of projects in this field. The RFM projects have a somewhat lower average overall rating in relevance than in the other Divisions. The main reasons are weaknesses in realism, internal logic and consistency in project design, economic impact, and innovation while in the other components of relevance the project quality is largely similar to that in the other Divisions.

Projects in Africa and Asia have a somewhat higher relevance rating than in Latin America (Figure 5.3, Appendix 5.2). In the case of Africa strengths are observed in strong policy compatibility, innovation and economic impact but realism, internal logic and consistency in project design are weaker than in the other regions. In Asia, policy compatibility, beneficiary needs and innovation are common

[35] In all the sub-components most of the observations in this group were moderately unsatisfactory.

strengths while weaker areas are partner interest alignment, implementation arrangements, and participation. In Latin America, strengths in project quality include addressing beneficiary needs, economic impact, participation, and partner interest alignment. Weaknesses are largely similar to those in the other regions but there has been somewhat less policy compatibility in the Latin American projects. The international level projects have suffered from lower ratings in relevance than those of country specific projects in the three regions.

Relevance is a time-bound concept as what was relevant ten years ago may not be so in the current situation. Information on the thematic relevance of the ITTO projects is provided in sections 5.4.4 and 5.9.

5.3 Effectiveness

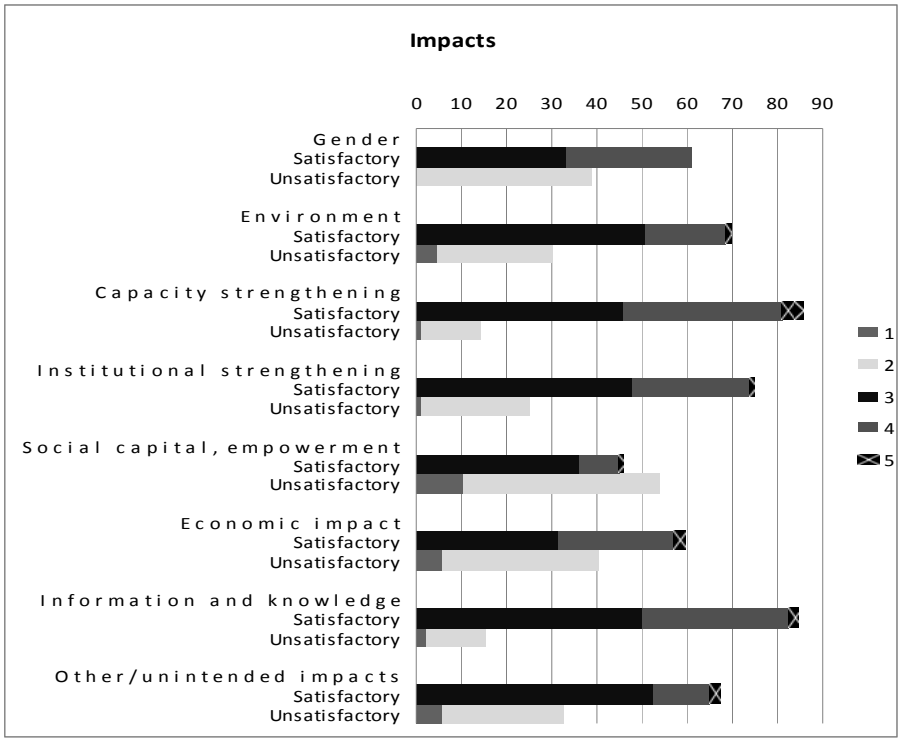
About 80% of the sampled ex-post evaluated projects were rated satisfactory and 5% excellent in terms of effectiveness, which indicates that the specific objectives were generally well achieved (Appendix 5.3). There was only minor variation between Divisions, with the FI projects performing slightly better than those of the other Divisions. Among the regions, the African projects have been performing slightly better in effectiveness than in Latin America and Asia. Only a half of the international level projects in the sample were rated (moderately) satisfactory and the other half (moderately) unsatisfactory.

5.4 Impacts

5.4.1 Impacts by components

In general, the projects have had satisfactory impacts but further attention is required as there are areas in which unsatisfactory performance was observed (Appendix 5.1). Impacts were evaluated based on ten components. The highest ratings were found in strengthening of capacity and institutions as well as information and knowledge (Figure 5.5). Weaker areas included gender, building up of social capital and empowerment, and economic impact. About 80% of ex-post evaluation reports made no reference to gender and 15% to social capital (Appendix 5.1). However, most projects that addressed gender aspects did it satisfactorily but in more than a third the treatment was moderately unsatisfactory. Another area that needs stronger attention in the future guidance for ITTO projects is economic impact as 35% of the projects performed moderately unsatisfactorily and 5% unsatisfactorily in this respect.

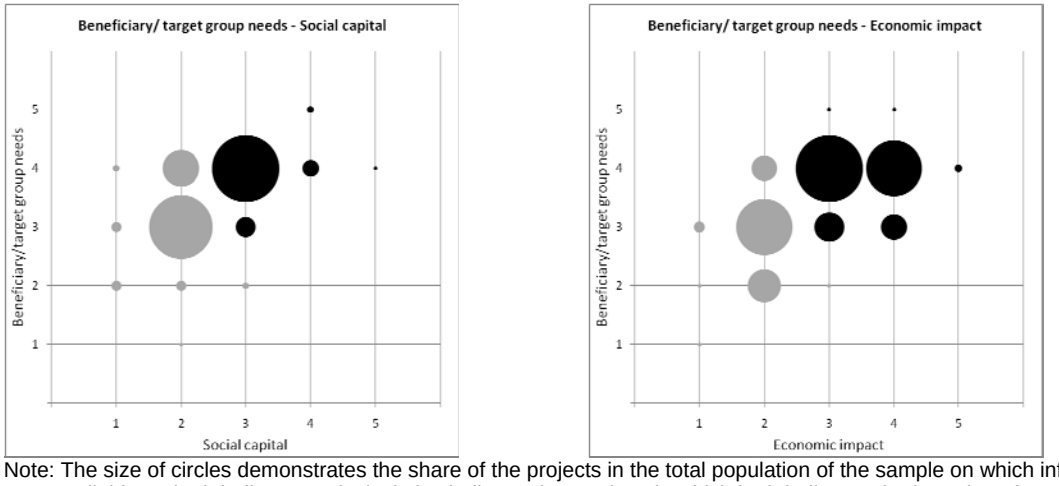
Figure 5.5 Quality of impacts by component in the sampled ex-post evaluated projects



Source: Appendix 5.1

Figure 5.6 explores some of the linkages between relevance in project design and impacts achieved on the ground. It demonstrates that successful identification of beneficiary target group needs contributes to positive impact in the strengthening of social capital. The same holds largely true for generating economic impacts.

Figure 5.6 Quality of impacts and beneficiary target group needs



Note: The size of circles demonstrates the share of the projects in the total population of the sample on which information was available on both indicators. Black circles indicate observations in which both indicators had a rating of 3 or more.
Source: Meta-evaluation project assessment worksheets

Differences in impacts between Divisions were minor with RFM projects performing somewhat better than those by FI and EIMI but there was variation by component (Appendix 5.4). This is particularly the case with gender, which is explicitly addressed more rarely in the EIMI and Forest Industry projects than in RFM projects. The latter also received a higher rating in environment and strengthening of social capital than in the two other Divisions. The FI projects had on average a higher rating in capacity strengthening and economic impact than in the EIMI and RFM projects.

The projects in Asia and Latin America received somewhat lower ratings in their impacts than those in Africa (Appendix 5.2). This was mainly due to gender, capacity strengthening and social capital but in strengthening of capacity and institutions as well as economic impacts, Africa's ratings were lowest.

In general, assessing impacts of the ITTO projects is seriously constrained by limited data on the baseline information and lack of feasible quantitative indicators. Evaluators have therefore usually made their judgment on impacts based on their observations from documentation, interviews and field visits. True assessments of impacts with/without the project are rare.

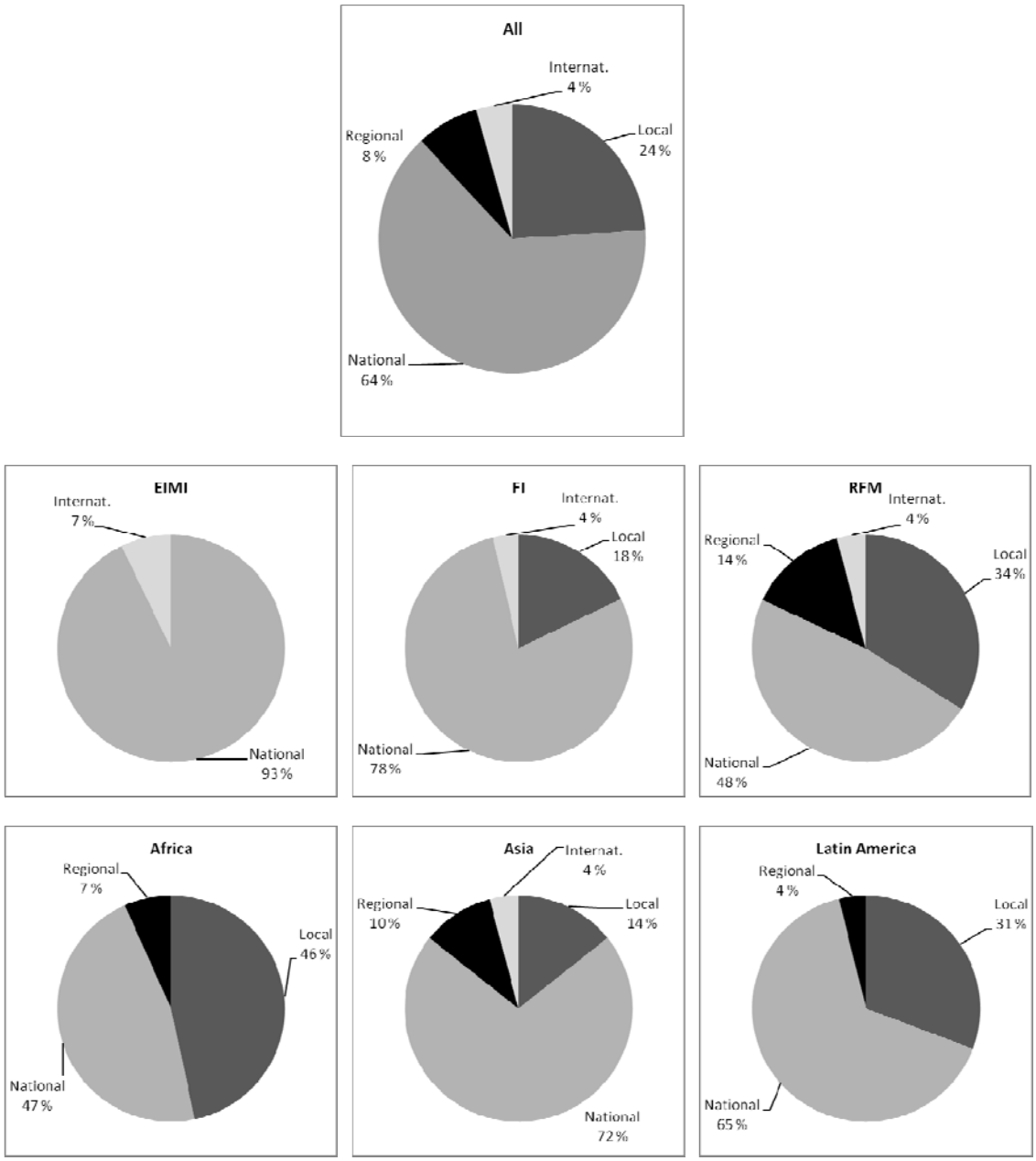
5.4.2 Level of project impacts

In the consideration of project impacts it is useful to clarify on which level interventions have been taken. Such an analysis is however constrained by the fact that many, if not most, projects contribute to more than one level. Therefore, we have adopted an incremental bottom-up approach; for example, a project which had only a local level intervention was classified as "local" but if it also contributed to a national level it was classified as "national".

Over 60% of all the sampled ex-post evaluated projects targeted at impacts at the national level and almost a quarter were aimed only at a lower level, i.e. local communities, individual FMUs or enterprises (Figure 5.7). There are significant differences between regions and Divisions in the level of interventions. Almost a half of the African projects were targeted at a local level and almost the other

half at the national level. In Asia, 72 % of the sampled projects were targeted at the national level and 14% at the local level. In Latin America two thirds were on national level and about 30% at the local level. Asia had more regional level projects (10%) than Africa (7%) and Latin America (4%).

Figure 5.7 Level of project impacts



Source: Meta-evaluation project assessment worksheets

National-level impacts were targeted by 93% of the EIMI and 78% of the FI projects. The RFM projects have been in this respect most diverse, with 34% targeted only at the local level, 48% at the national level and 17% at regional and international levels.

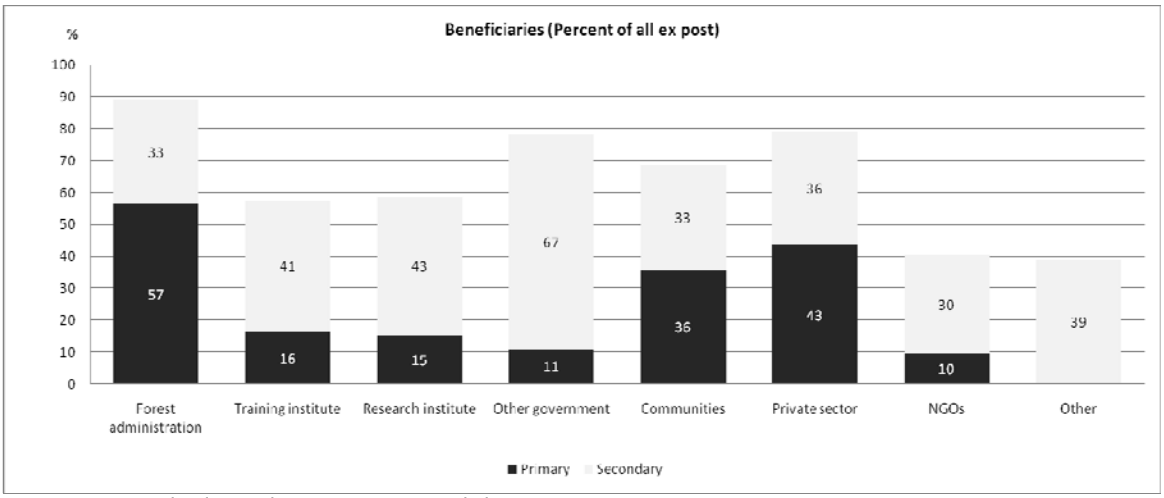
5.4.3 Project beneficiaries

Another dimension of the project impacts is who have been the beneficiaries. The meta-evaluation divided these into primary and secondary beneficiaries as in many projects both types are common. Eight groups of beneficiaries were identified: (i) forest administration, (ii) training institute, (iii) research institute, (iv) other government institutions, (v) communities and smallholders, (vi) the private sector,

(vii) civil society organizations, and (viii) other. On an average, there were about five beneficiary groups per each sampled ex-post evaluated project.

Forest administration was among the primary beneficiaries in 57% of the projects and also benefited as a secondary target group from another 33% (Figure 5.8). The private sector was the main beneficiary in more than a third of the projects and secondary beneficiary in another third. Communities and smallholders were the main target group in 36% of the projects and they were secondary target group in another 33%. Training and research institutes were the primary beneficiary in 15-16% of the projects and secondary beneficiary in another 41-42%. Other government institutions and NGOs were primary beneficiaries in about 10% of the projects. The former were secondary beneficiary in another two thirds and NGOs in another 30%. [36]

Figure 5.8 Primary and secondary beneficiaries in the sampled ex-post evaluated projects



Source: Meta-evaluation project assessment worksheets

The analysis by Division (Appendix 5.5) reveals that the beneficiary patterns differ due to the inherent nature of the projects. In EIMI projects the primary target groups have been forest administrations (71%) and the private sector (36%). Other government institutions have been a relatively important target group but also NGOs and training and research institutes have benefited from the EIMI projects, albeit more often as secondary beneficiaries.

In FI projects, the private sector has been the primary beneficiary in 82% of the projects, followed by communities and smallholders (43%), forest administrations (21%) and research institutes (18%). Training and research institutes have been the most important secondary beneficiaries in FI projects.

In almost three quarters of the RFM projects (72%), forest administrations have been the primary target group. Communities and smallholders were the main beneficiary in 42% but a secondary beneficiary in another 42%. Training institutes and the private sector have also been important main beneficiaries in RFM (24% each) followed by research bodies (16%). NGOs have been the main target in 14% of RFM projects but benefited also from another 40% as secondary beneficiary.

Also the regional beneficiary patterns differ (Appendix 5.6). In Africa forest administrations have been the primary beneficiary in 87 % of the region's projects. Communities and smallholders have been the main target group in 38% of Latin American projects, but also in Africa their share has been important (40%).

The private sector has been a main beneficiary in more than a half of projects in Asia and over a third in Latin America but in Africa the share was only 13%. This is partly compensated by the fact that in 53% of Africa's projects the private sector has been secondary beneficiary.

[36] Note that the percentages across beneficiary groups are not to be added as projects had typically more than one primary and/or secondary beneficiary group. There is therefore an element of overlap in frequencies between groups.

Training institutes have been more frequently a main beneficiary in Africa than in the other regions while in Asia research agencies have been more often a main beneficiary than elsewhere. In Latin America training and research institutes have been clearly less important target groups than in the other regions.

NGOs have been slightly more often a main beneficiary in Asia and Latin America than in Africa but, if secondary beneficiaries are taken into account, the differences are minor.

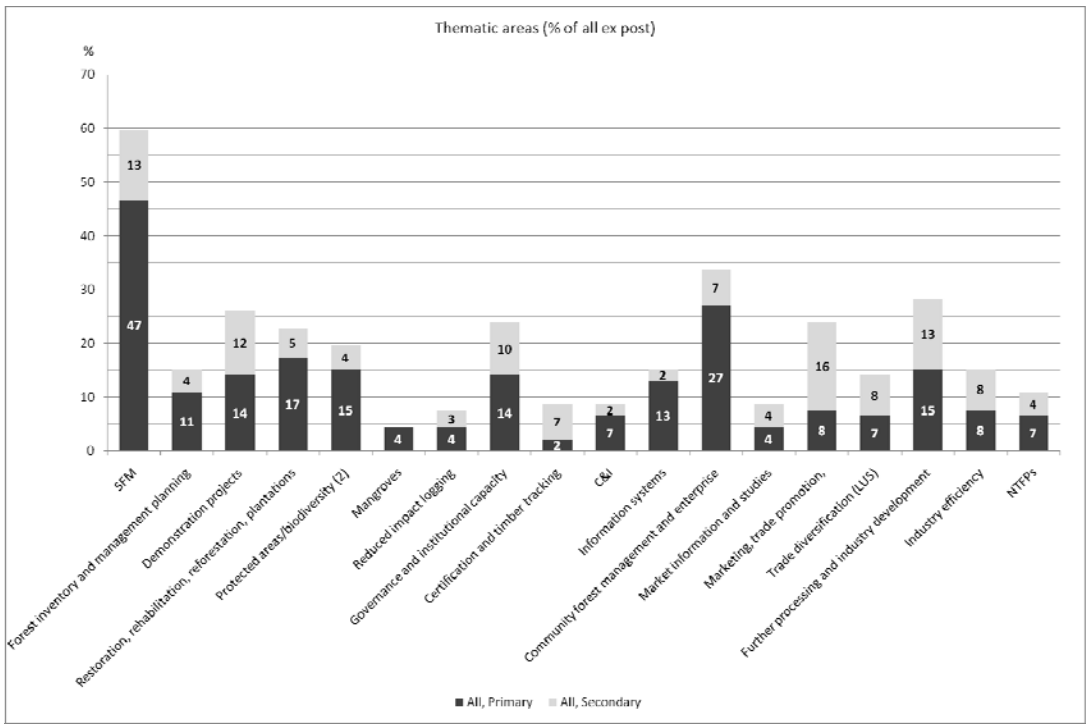
5.4.4 Thematic areas

Project impacts in various thematic areas were explored based on which primary or secondary intervention areas were targeted at in the project strategy. Eighteen substantive thematic areas were selected for the analysis. In the evaluation, a maximum of four primary and another four secondary thematic areas was allowed for each project. Most projects had a contribution in more than one area and therefore there is an element of overlap. There are also cases of overlap across the themes as, for instance, SFM as an overarching theme overlaps with its sub-themes. However, these sub-themes were deemed strategically pertinent for the impact analysis. Another example is the overlap between further processing and industry development and industry efficiency. In addition to substantive thematic areas, five cross-cutting themes were also identified, including R&D, innovation, technology transfer, human resource development (incl. training), and investment promotion. Substantive and cross-cutting thematic areas are discussed separately below.

Substantive thematic areas

Sixty percent of the sampled ex-post evaluations had an intervention in the area of SFM, and in four fifths of them SFM was a primary theme (Figure 5.9). Among the specific sub-themes community forest management and enterprise (34%), demonstration (26%), protected areas/biodiversity (19%), restoration/rehabilitation/reforestation/plantations (22%), and forest inventory/management planning (15%) were the most important ones. These projects were mostly clearly focused but demonstration was also often an element of projects targeted at community forestry and restoration/reforestation.

Figure 5.9 Substantive thematic areas of ex-post evaluated projects



Source: Meta-evaluation project assessment worksheets

Strengthening of governance and institutional capacity were a thematic intervention area in about a quarter of projects. Fifteen percent of the projects focused on strengthening of information systems, mostly as the primary thematic area. Almost ten percent were on certification/timber tracking and C&I, each.

Marketing and trade promotion was an element of 24% of the projects but mostly as an additional theme for industry, NTFP and community enterprise projects. Trade diversification (including promotion of lesser used species) was targeted at by 15% of the ex-post evaluated projects; more than a half of them as a secondary thematic area in projects on SFM, plantations, NTFP, marketing, and industry development.

Only 7% of the sampled projects were on reduced impact logging (RIL) but more than a half of them focused on this theme.

Further processing and industry development were impact areas in 28% of the projects and industry efficiency in 16%. A number of projects in community forest management and enterprise, and NTFPs included further processing as a secondary thematic area.

There are differences in impact areas between the ITTO Divisions which are due to their mandates, RFM focusing on reforestation and forest management, EIMI on markets, marketing, trade, C&I and certification, and FI on further processing, industry efficiency, RIL and NTFPs (Appendix 5.7). “Cross-breeding” between Divisions is, however, important. Half of the EIMI and FI projects had SFM as a primary or secondary impact area. While strengthening of governance was part of almost two thirds of EIMI’s projects, also RFM and FI targeted impacts in this area (20% and 11% of their projects, respectively). About 46% of FI projects (mostly enterprise level support) aimed at impacts in marketing and trade promotion, and 14% of EIMI projects were linked with further processing and industry development.

The main target areas in Africa have been forest inventory and management planning (60% of the region’s sampled projects), restoration/rehabilitation/reforestation/plantations and governance and institutional capacity (53% each) followed by SFM and community forest management and enterprise (47% each) (Appendix 5.8). Information systems (27%) and demonstration projects (20%) have also been important areas in this region.

In Asia, 57% of the projects were on SFM, demonstration areas (31%) and protected areas/biodiversity (22%) being the most important themes. Other important impact areas in the region have been further processing and industry development (41%), marketing and trade promotion (35%) and community forest management and enterprise (27%).

In Latin America, SFM has been the main target area (77% of the region’s total) with a focus on community forest management and enterprise (42%), demonstration areas (23%), protected areas/biodiversity (19%), and restoration/rehabilitation/reforestation/plantations (19%). More than a quarter of the projects were aimed at strengthening of governance and institutional capacity. Information systems, certification and timber tracking and RIL were other impact areas. In relative terms, there have been fewer projects in marketing and trade promotion, trade diversification, further processing and industry efficiency, and NTFPs in Latin America than in Asia but more than in Africa.

As a conclusion, impacts have been sought through projects that have been

(a) closely targeted at specific substantive themes to achieve tangible results within the available resources and time period; these themes are often technically oriented and can deliver the targeted verifiable impacts; and

(b) focused on problems in which a narrow project strategy was not deemed adequate and therefore simultaneous interventions in more than one impact area were necessary; such problems are typical in the ITTO producing member countries but project impacts tend to be difficult to quantify due to lack of adequate baseline information and absence of verifiable indicators.

Cross-cutting thematic areas

In the meta-evaluation only five cross-cutting areas were included.[37] Human resource development (HRD), particularly training, is a key strategic area in which ITTO projects seek impacts. HRD has been a primary thematic area in 42% of the ex-post evaluated projects and a secondary element in more than another quarter (**Error! Reference source not found.**). This result is in line with the findings of Hardcastle & Umali (2007) which found that almost a half of the ITTO projects overall had contributed to HRD in 2002-2006.

R&D is the next important cross-cutting thematic area being targeted by 30% of the projects but only in 17% as a primary theme. The earlier analysis of all the ITTO projects in 2002-2006 found a similar result, (just below 20%) (Hardcastle & Umali 2007). R&D overlaps with innovation which was a primary targeted impact area in only 2% of the projects but included in another 20% as a secondary cross-cutting theme. R&D overlaps also with technology transfer being however a more important target area. Investment promotion has been only marginally addressed in ex-post evaluated projects, as it has been only a secondary target area in relatively few projects (13%), mostly in FI and EIMI.

HRD is the main cross-cutting theme in all the regions. In relative terms, the projects in Latin America have been more targeted at HRD, technology transfer and investment promotion than in the other two regions where R&D and innovation have been somewhat more emphasized.

The projects under the Forest Industry Division have been more active in technology transfer (54% of the Division's projects), innovation (36%) and investment promotion (18%) than those under the other two Divisions. The EIMI projects have mainly targeted at HRD (79%) but also innovation (21%) is an important area. The RFM projects have had a strong focus on HRD (72%) and R&D (38%) but also the other cross-cutting thematic areas have been covered by more than 10% projects, each.

5.4.5 Applicability and replicability

Project impacts are influenced by the applicability of the products produced, lessons learned and recommendations made, as well as the replicability of the project as a whole. In the meta-evaluation these were assessed based on the level of (potential) application and replication (local level, national, regional, international, and applicable at all levels, i.e. exceptional quality[38]). The assessment was made incrementally so that e.g., a local level project, which produced products, lessons and recommendations both at local and national level, was classified as "national". The results were calculated for all the projects (Figure 5.11) and analyzed by thematic areas.

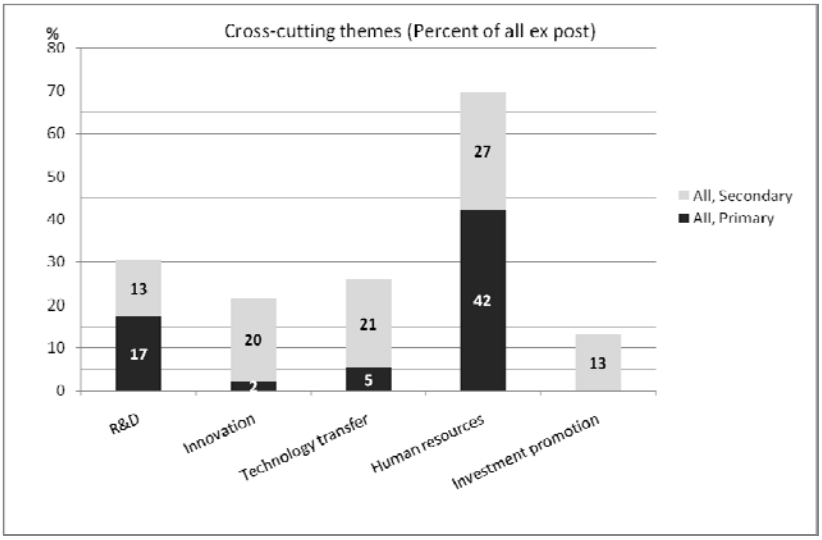
In general, local level projects in SFM, demonstration areas, community forestry, protected areas, and restoration and reforestation have generated key products that have been applicable at national and often also at a regional level. Lessons tend to be somewhat more specific but, for instance in SFM, demonstration projects, biodiversity conservation and mangroves, they are also frequently applicable on an international level. Recommendations tend to be specific to the project site conditions or the country in question but, e.g., in forest inventory and management planning, restoration and reforestation, recommendations are often applicable on an international level. A large share of projects in the fields of SFM, demonstration, restoration and reforestation, protected areas are replicable regionally and internationally.

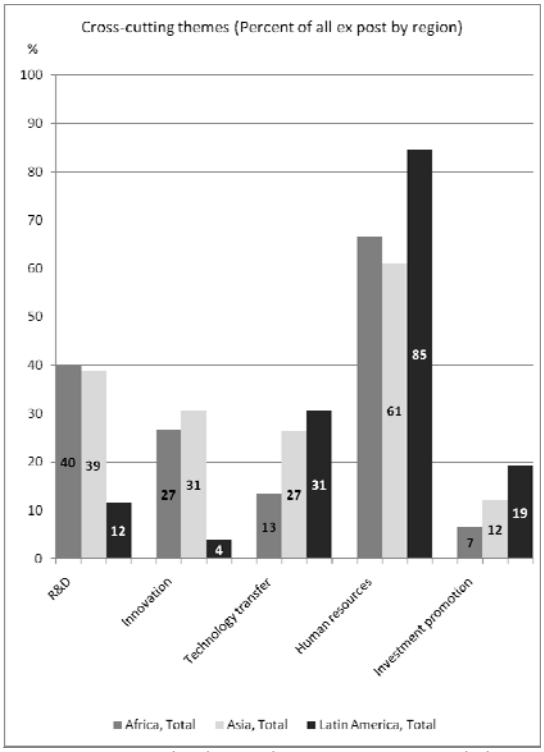
In governance and institutional capacity projects, the outcomes have typically been applicable on national and regional levels but many were also replicable internationally. Certification and C&I projects have produced products, lessons and recommendations which are applicable both regionally and internationally and these projects have a high degree of replicability.

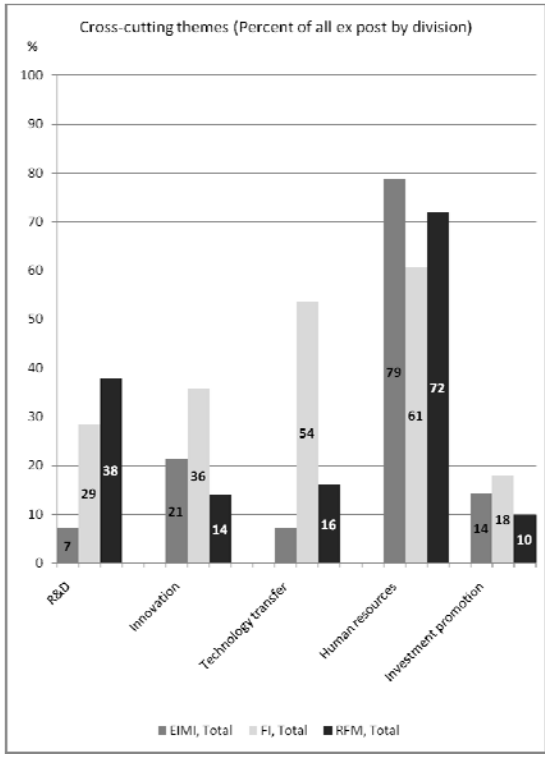
[37] In the ITTO Yokohama Action Plan 2002-2006 16 cross-cutting *actions* were identified. The ITTO Action Plan 2008-2011 covered five cross-cutting areas to shape biennial work programmes. These were (i) R&D and technology transfer, (ii) communication and outreach, (iii) strengthening of databases and information systems, (iv) capacity building, and (v) international cooperation. The selected five cross-cutting themes here cover the areas which are particularly relevant for project work. Demonstration and C&I projects were classified separately under substantive thematic areas which were earlier classified as cross-cutting themes.

[38] Score 1 to 5, respectively.

Figure 5.10 Cross-cutting themes of the sampled ex-post evaluated projects







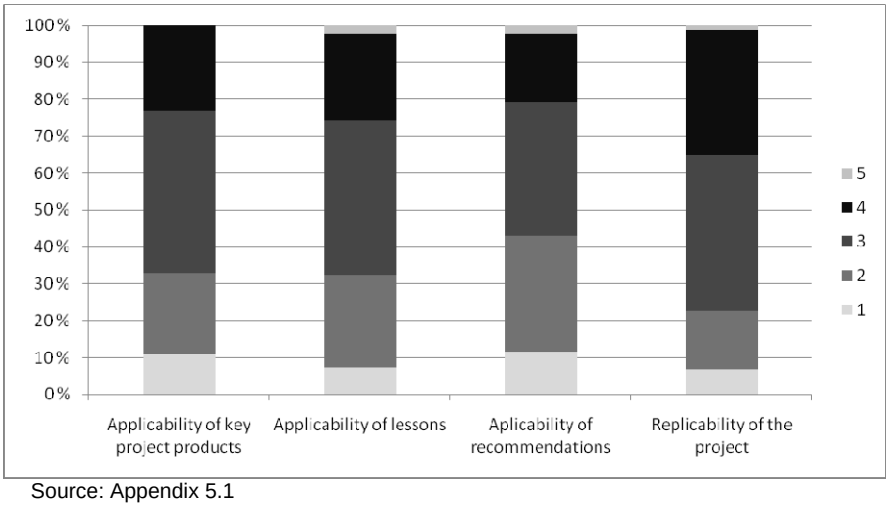
Source: Meta-evaluation project assessment worksheets

Projects in market information, marketing, trade promotion and diversification have produced outputs that are applicable nationally and regionally and they were usually replicable on both levels.

The products of projects in further processing, industry efficiency and RIL have also been typically applicable on national and regional levels. NTFP projects have generated lessons and recommendations that are often applicable internationally.

Projects with components in R&D, innovation and technology transfer have produced outputs that are usually applicable regionally and internationally. However, recommendations tend to be mostly applicable nationally and locally.

Figure 5.11 Applicability and replicability of the sampled ex-post evaluated projects



Source: Appendix 5.1

Human resource development is part of 45% of the sampled ex-post evaluated projects. About three quarters of them have generated products that are applicable regionally/ internationally while the lessons learned are mainly applicable on a regional level. In about 30% of the projects, recommendations were applicable nationally. More than 80% of these projects were replicable regionally/internationally.

Over all the thematic areas, about 36 to 44% of the sampled ex-post evaluated projects generated products, lessons and recommendations that were applicable on regional level and another 23 to 33% that were applicable internationally. Nationally applicable outputs represent 22 to 31% of the total and those which were applicable locally 7 to 12%. One third of projects were replicable internationally and another 42% regionally. It can be concluded that ITTO's project work has produced an important public good that can be capitalized through effective dissemination.

5.5 Sustainability

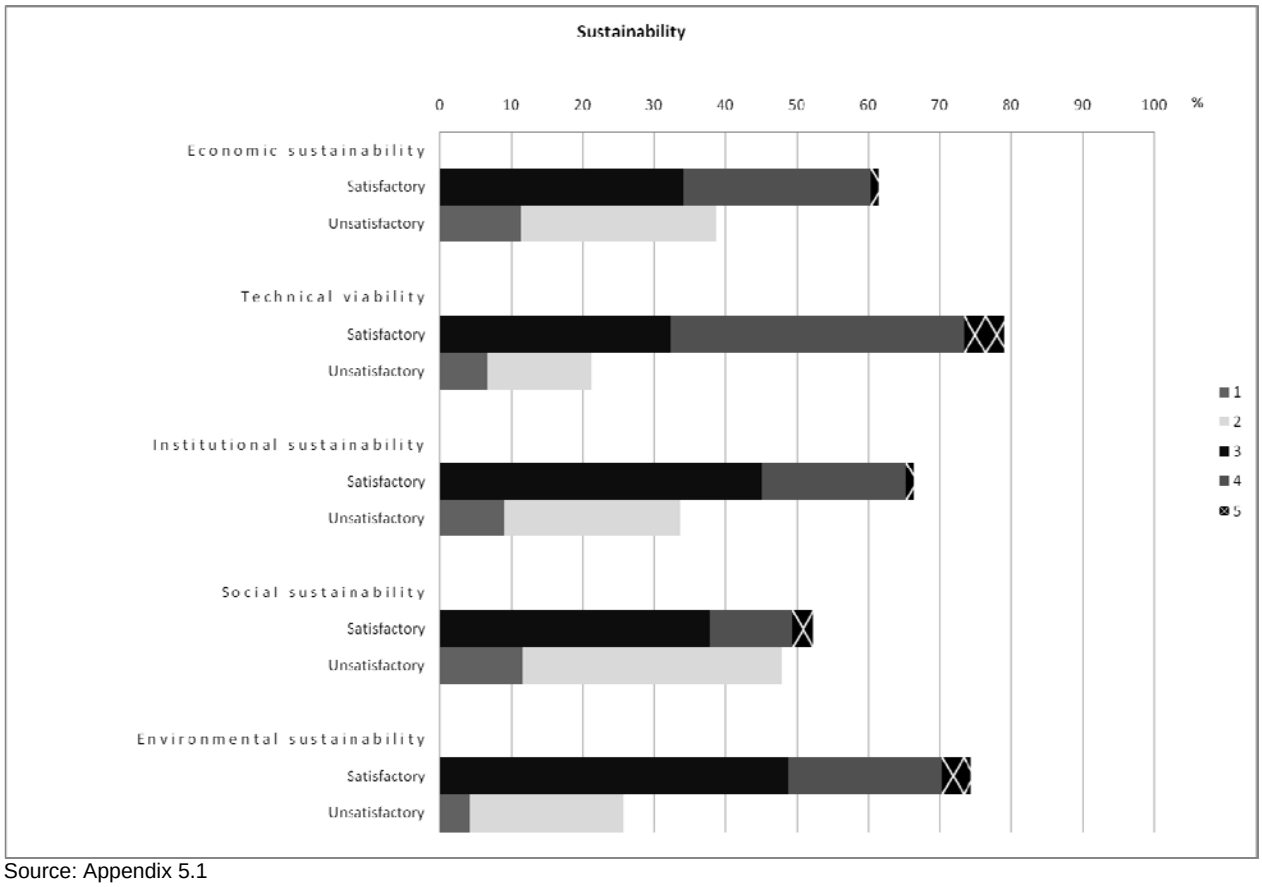
5.5.1 Sustainability by components

The ex-post evaluated projects have achieved on average a satisfactory level of sustainability (Figure 5.1). However, about a third had weaknesses in this area, resulting in moderately unsatisfactory/unsatisfactory performance, which is a cause of concern (Appendix 5.9). However, there are differences between the pillars of sustainability and their components (Figure 5.12).

Technical viability obtained the highest rating and was the least problematic in the ex-post evaluated ITTO projects which often tend to be technically oriented. Social sustainability was the weakest aspect. Environmental sustainability received the second highest rating followed by economic and institutional sustainability. In the following we will focus attention on these four pillars of sustainability of which the average ratings are depicted in Figure 5.13.

Environmental sustainability has in general received satisfactory ratings as contributions to it are an inherent feature in ITTO projects which are all crafted towards sustainable forest management with a strong focus on environmental aspects, either directly or indirectly. This is, however, not always the case as, in a quarter of cases, environmental sustainability was rated as moderately unsatisfactory/ unsatisfactory which highlights the need for improvement. Another cause of concern was that 20% of the ex-post evaluation reports did not address this aspect at all, apparently due to the fact that these projects were not directly linked with environmental aspects (e.g. those focusing on marketing, industry development, information systems or technical training).

Figure 5.12 Quality of sustainability by component in the sampled ex-post evaluated projects



Source: Appendix 5.1

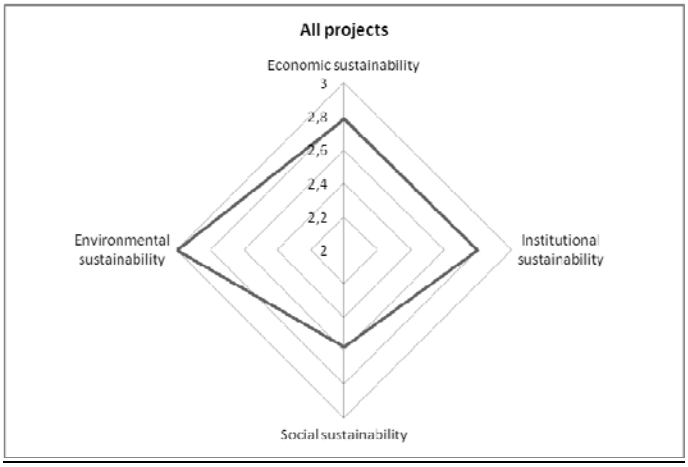
About 60% of the projects were rated satisfactory in economic sustainability but the high incidence of moderately unsatisfactory and unsatisfactory ratings indicates that the area needs future attention. This is not limited to production-oriented projects but it also concerns conservation projects and community forestry in which post-project financing for additional necessary support is not secured or the started activities have not yet resulted economic benefits for communities to provide an incentive for their continuation. The same problems were also found in demonstration and permanent sample plot projects in which the investment is lost if funding for follow-up activities dries up due to lack of domestic financing.

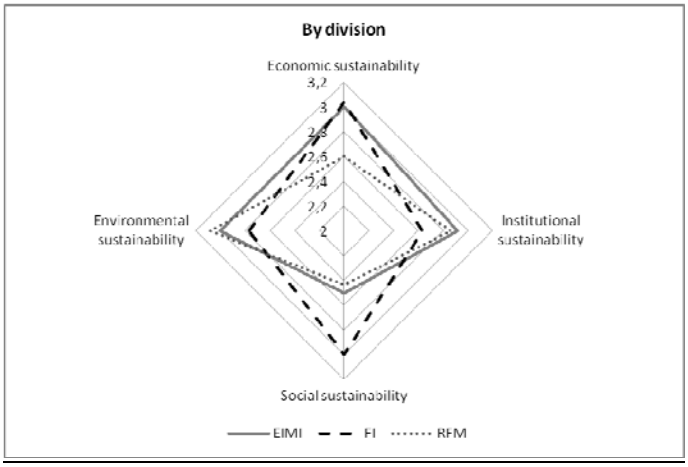
Institutional sustainability is usually duly considered in ex-post evaluations and about two thirds received satisfactory rating (mostly moderately satisfactory). This demonstrates that in most cases the institutions have adopted and are using the products generated after the project completions or were in the process of doing it when ex-post evaluations were carried out. However, there are also problems in this area as in one third of the projects, the rating was moderately unsatisfactory/ unsatisfactory. This was often the case when the project was implemented without a proper integration within the existing organizational structure like a separate sub-entity. Typical other cases are e.g. the information systems that were developed were not taken into use, disappearance of the Executing Agency as a result of institutional reform, or shifting the key personnel to entirely new duties elsewhere.

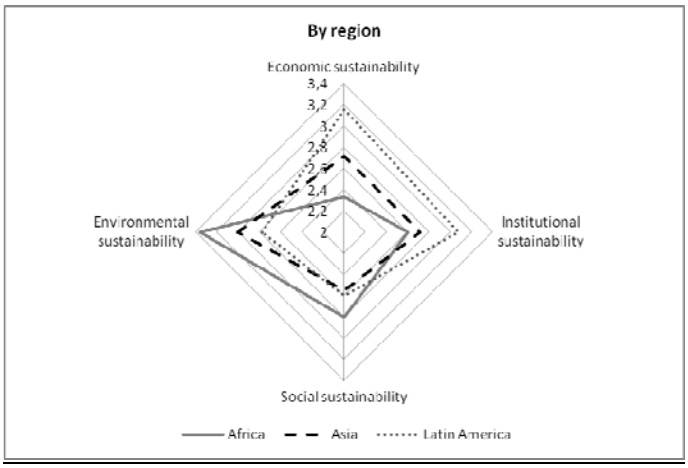
Social sustainability appears to be the most problematic area in the ex-post evaluated projects. It was not assessed at all in a quarter of ex-post evaluation reports (Appendix 5.1). This can be partly explained by the fact that there were no social aspects in many technically oriented projects (e.g. forest information systems or industry efficiency). Another likely reason is that sustainability was not included in the standard TOR of ex-post evaluation assignments and therefore it was not probably considered by evaluators if there was no specific reason for it. However, the result is a source of concern but with the introduction of the new manual for monitoring and evaluation (ITTO 2009b) which

provides explicit guidance on the issue of sustainability, the situation is apparently improving (cf. section 6.4.1).

Figure 5.13 Quality of sustainability by main pillar







Source: Meta-evaluation project assessment worksheets

There are differences between Divisions in the overall rating of sustainability (Figure 5.13). The EIMI projects have performed more strongly than those of RFM and FI if an average of all sustainability components is considered (Appendix 5.9). More than three quarters of EIMI projects were rated as satisfactory/moderately satisfactory while in the FI and RFM projects the share was about two thirds. This may be partly explained by the fact that social and environmental sustainability were more frequently not assessed at all in the EIMI projects due their inherent nature.

There is also variation among components. In economic sustainability, the FI and EIMI projects were rated above average but in RFM projects the average rating was clearly lower. As pointed out in several ex-post evaluation reports,[39] particularly community forestry projects have not sufficiently considered economic aspects in their design and implementation, and many conservation projects lack financing mechanisms after their completion.

In technical viability the RFM and EIMI projects were generally rated at similar satisfactory levels but the quality of FI projects appears weaker. This is partly explained by the fact that in some industry projects the proposed technologies have not been adapted to local situations or there have been insufficient efforts to promote their uptake.

In institutional sustainability the EIMI and RFM projects are again rated at similar levels but in Forest Industry the situation was weaker. This is likely to be associated by the fact that government agencies implementing forest industry projects are not always structured in a way that could ensure pursuance of project results after termination. Another likely reason has been that and when private sector organizations are executing projects, or activities, responsibilities and interests for follow-up action have dissipated after the project completion.

The FI projects were rated highest in terms of social sustainability, possibly thanks to emphasis on small-scale and community forest enterprises as well as projects building up capability in certification.[40] The low rating in RFM projects may be due to the fact that, in relative terms, there have been a large number of technically oriented projects. On the other hand, several community forestry projects have been implemented which drived for social sustainability (cf. section 5.4.4). However, it is important to note that lack of sustained economic benefits tends to negatively affect social sustainability.

A comparison between regions (Figure 5.3, and Appendix 5.9) reveals that projects in Latin America received the highest rating in the overall average sustainability indicator followed by Africa and Asia. This was particularly thanks to economic and institutional sustainability (Figure 5.13). Africa's projects had the highest ratings among the three regions in environmental and social sustainability as well as technical viability. Asia's strengths have been in technical viability and institutional sustainability but not at the level of the other two regions.

5.5.2 Trade-offs and linkages

Figure 5.14 explores trade-offs between the three main pillars of sustainability. In an ideal situation, there should be a strong positive linkage between them but in practice projects are different and cannot contribute to the three pillars in the same way. Economic and social sustainability appear to have a strong positive inter-linkage demonstrating the potential for win-win interventions. However, there is significant scope for improvement in enhancing performance as 58% of the projects had weaknesses in both respects (grey circles in the first part of Figure 5.14).

The second graph in Figure 5.14 suggests that the positive linkage between economic and environmental sustainability has been weaker than in the previous case. On the other hand, the result also demonstrates that there appears to be no discernable negative trade-off in the sampled projects. This may be partly explained by the fact that most ITTO projects perform well in terms of environmental sustainability. Economic sustainability has been more often a cause of concern as pointed out in the previous section. Similar conclusions may be made from the third graph of Figure 5.14 where environmental and social sustainability are depicted against each other.

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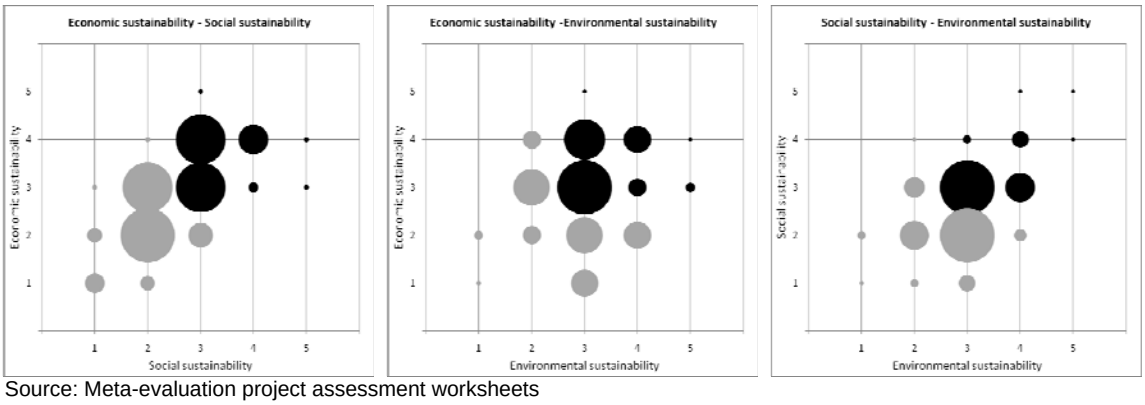
[39] See Dourojeanni & Sève (2006) synthesis report on ex-post evaluated community forestry projects.

[40] Social criteria are an integral part of forest certification standards.

Figure 5.14 Trade-offs in the quality of sustainability pillars



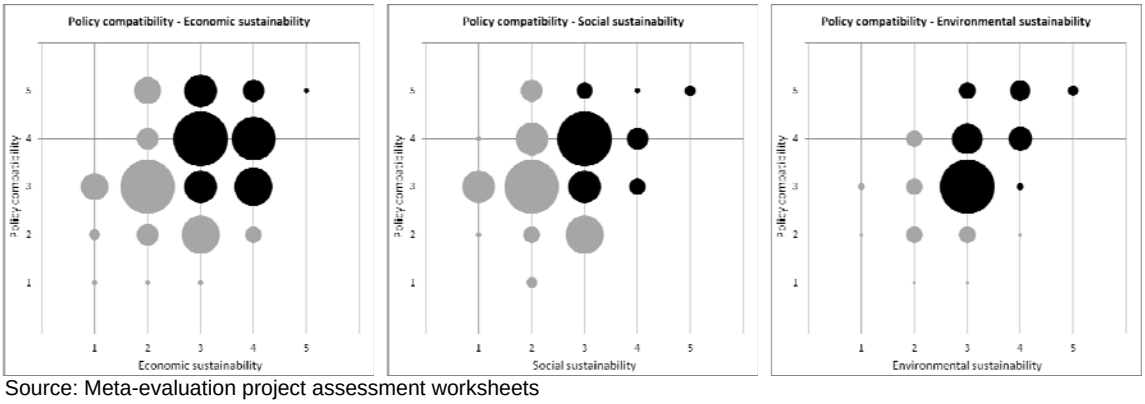
Source: Meta-evaluation project assessment worksheets

The linkage between policy compatibility and the three pillars of sustainability (Figure 5.15) appears to be relatively strong. A large share of projects had a satisfactory (or higher) rating both in economic sustainability and policy compatibility showing that in this respect there are strong win-win possibilities to be enhanced further as many projects have high policy compatibility but weak economic sustainability. This is particularly due to the fact that the continuation of financing of the activities catalyzed by ITTO projects had not been secured and therefore project activities were discontinued.

In spite of the a priori strong linkage between policy compatibility and social sustainability, it appears somewhat weaker than in the previous case (the second graph in Figure 5.15). However, social sustainability after project completion appears to suffer from the same weaknesses as economic sustainability, probably for the same reason, i.e. lack of support to follow-up activities.

In the case of environmental sustainability (the third graph in Figure 5.15), there is strong positive linkage with national policies. The same problems as in the other dimensions of sustainability exist but apparently less strongly. One could assume that catalytic project interventions have more lasting environmental impacts than in the economic and social areas but this hypothesis would require further study.

Figure 5.15 Quality of sustainability and policy compatibility



Source: Meta-evaluation project assessment worksheets

5.5.3 Post-project action

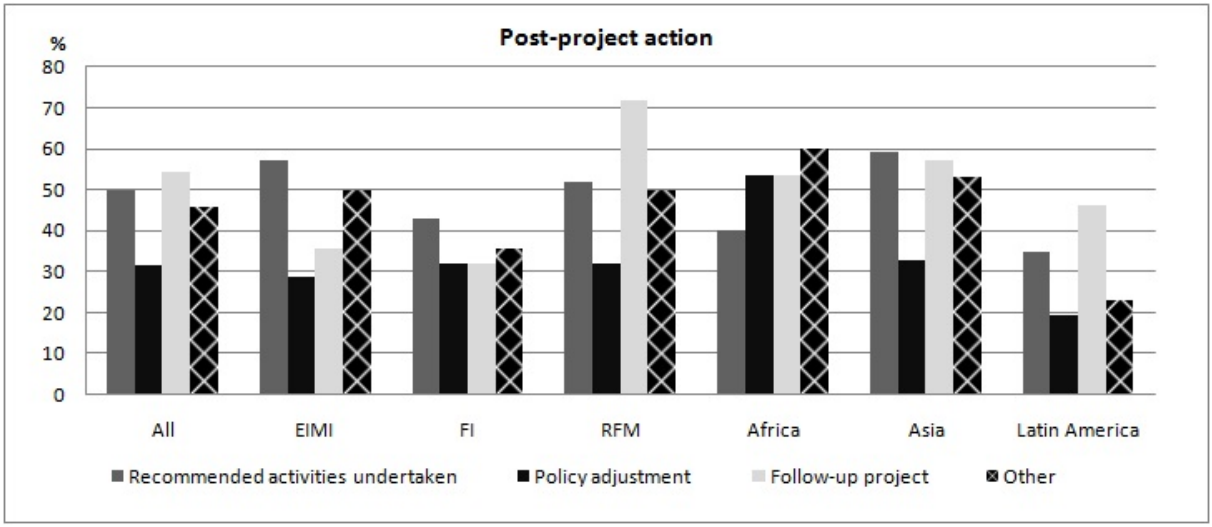
Action taken by the Executing Agencies and stakeholders after the project completion can provide supporting indication on sustainability. Based on the sampled ex-post evaluation reports, data was compiled on whether recommended activities and policy adjustment had been undertaken, and whether a follow-up project or other activities had been designed or implemented.

In a half of all the sampled projects, recommended activities had been undertaken (Figure 5.16). The EIMI projects had the highest rating in this indicator, followed by RFM and FI. Regionally, the Asian projects had the highest rating followed by Africa and Latin America.

Policy adjustment had been undertaken after the project's completion in 32% of all the projects. The differences between Divisions were not significant but RFM and FI performed somewhat better than EIMI. In Africa 53% of the region's projects led to policy adjustment compared to 33% in Asia and only 19% in Latin America.

More than a half of all the sampled projects led to design/implementation of a follow-up project or other post-project activities suggesting that the interventions opened up a new opportunity for future support, or there was a need to continue the started activities to ensure sustainability. The share was only a third in the EIMI and FI projects but in 70% of the RFM projects, a follow-up project or other post-project action was designed or undertaken. This highlights that it appears easier to design interventions that have a clearly defined end-point in FI and EIMI than in RFM.

Figure 5.16 Post-project action after completion in the sampled ex-post evaluated projects



Source: Appendix 5.1

5.6 Efficiency

5.6.1 Efficiency by component

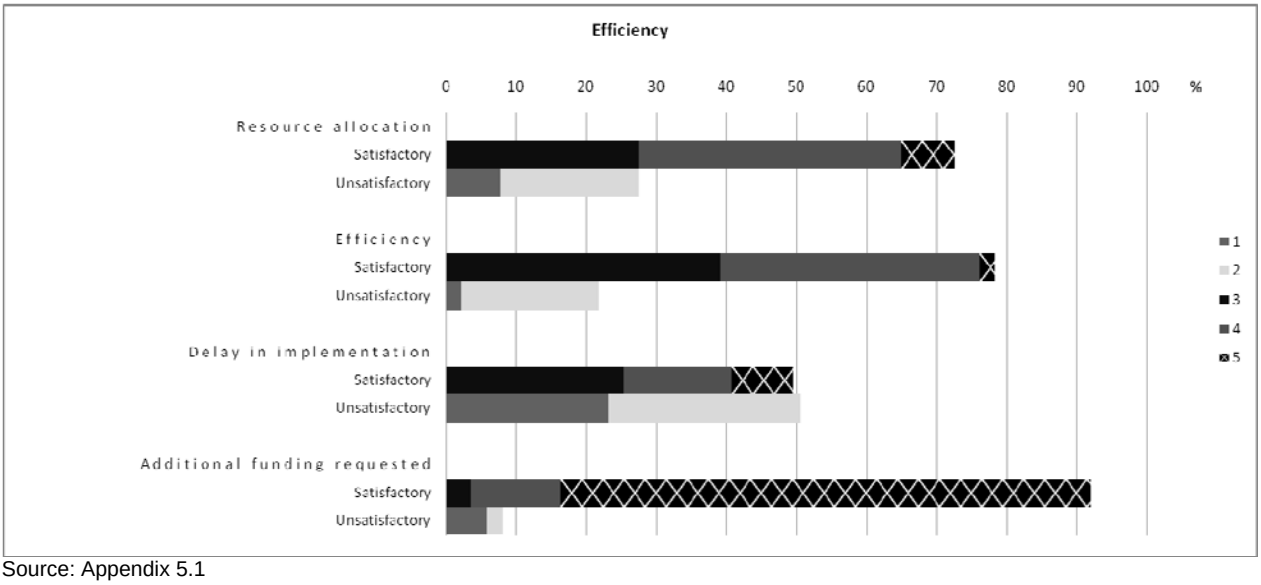
As regards efficiency, the project quality has been on average satisfactory (Figure 5.1), which is explained by generally good resource allocation and cost-efficiency as well keeping the expenditure within the budget limits. Delays in implementation are common and this has a negative impact on the overall efficiency index (Figure 5.17). Additional funding is rarely requested indicating that the activities have been implemented within the planned budgets in spite of sometimes insufficient resources.

EIMI projects have performed best followed by RFM and FI but differences are not significant (Appendix 5.10). This has been particularly thanks to better adherence to the planned implementation period but the impact was however partly cancelled by somewhat weaker resource allocation than in the projects of the other Divisions. In cost-efficiency the differences between Divisions are minor.

Also between regions the differences in the overall efficiency index are marginal. Asia's projects have somewhat better resource allocation and cost-efficiency but tend to suffer from longer delays than in the other regions. The difference between Africa and Latin America is mainly due to the longer lags in project duration in the latter region (cf. section 5.6.2).

No sampled evaluation report had explicit information on the financial or economic rates of return of the productive activities promoted. This is a major lacuna to be addressed in both the project design and evaluations.

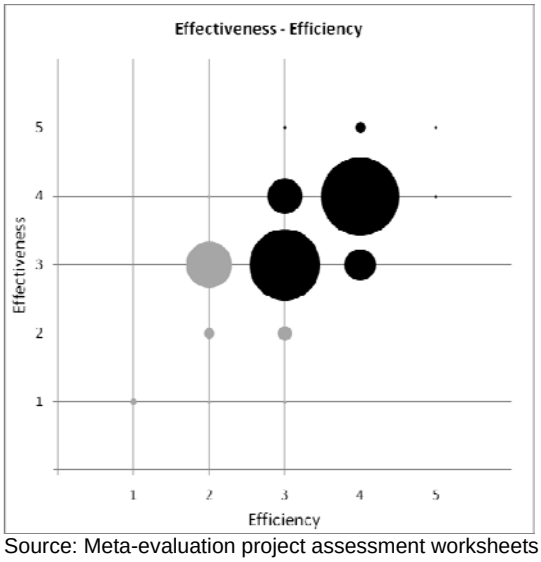
Figure 5.17 Quality of efficiency by component in the sampled ex-post evaluated projects



Source: Appendix 5.1

There is a positive linkage between effectiveness in achieving objectives and efficiency (Figure 5.18). This is explained by the fact that both indicators can be interpreted as a subset of project management capacity. This emphasizes the importance of selection of capable Executing Agencies in ITTO's project work.

Figure 5.18 Trade-off between effectiveness and efficiency



Source: Meta-evaluation project assessment worksheets

5.6.2 Project duration lag

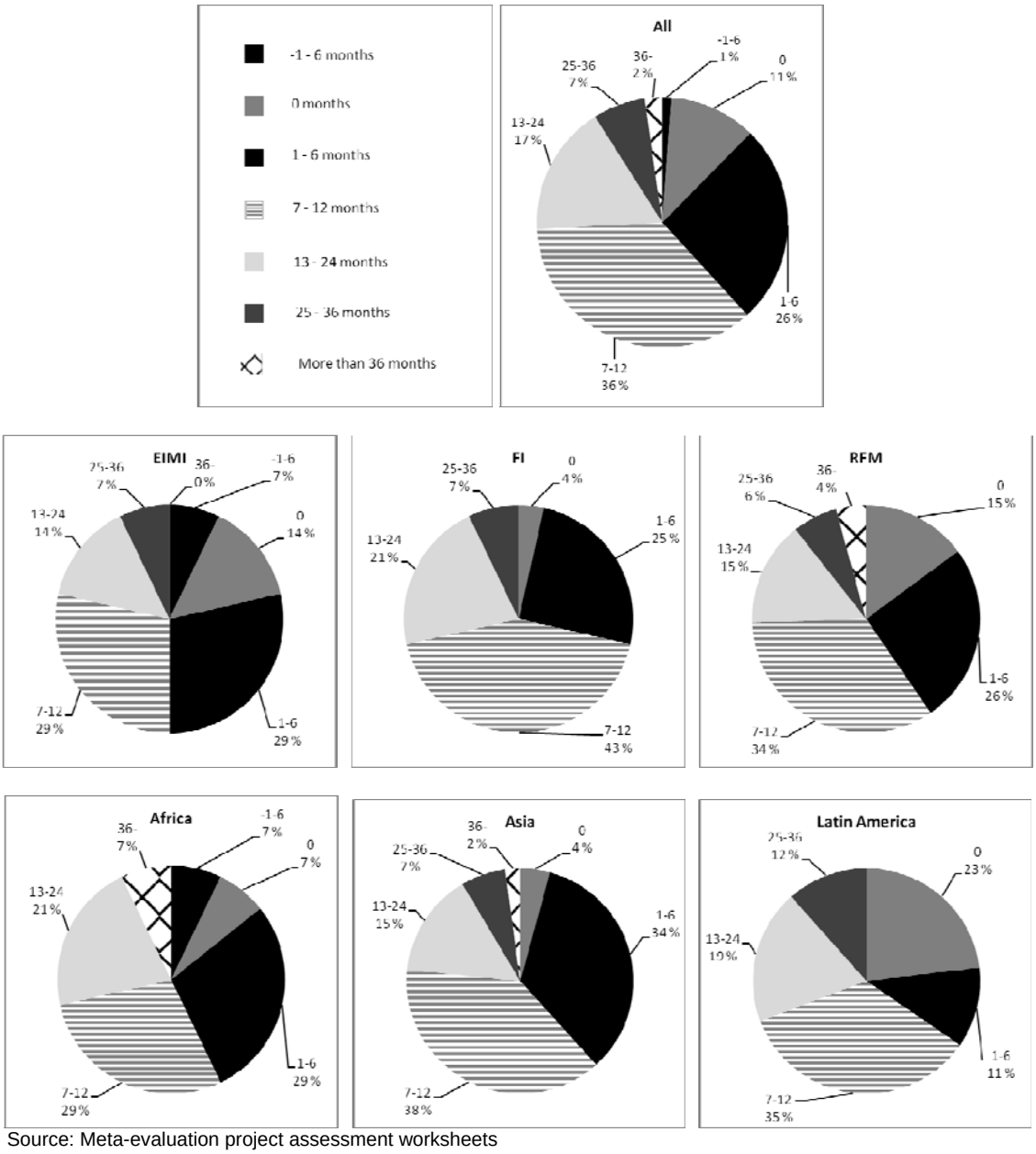
About 12% of the sampled ex-post evaluated projects have been completed within the planned project period (Figure 5.19). One quarter has had a delay of 1 to 6 months and a third 7 to 12 months. These delays are typically due to bureaucratic procedures in starting and completing the project, changes in the implementation environment, staff rotation, and various unexpected events. One quarter of the

projects had delays of more than a year and the maximum length is five years. In some cases projects have been artificially kept alive for other purposes (e.g. for budgetary reasons to ensure follow-up domestic financing) even though the project activities have been completed.

About 21% of the EIMI projects have been completed within the planned period while in RFM the share was 15% and FI 4%. The FI projects have also had longer completion delays than in the other Divisions.

Regionally, almost a quarter of projects in Latin America have been implemented as planned, followed by Africa (14%) and Asia (4%). On the other hand, Latin America suffers from the longest delays compared to the other regions as 12% of its projects are completed more than two years after the planned period against Asia´s 8% and Africa's 7%. It can be questioned whether it is a good practice to allow such long implementation delays and whether (dis)incentives should be introduced to improve the situation.

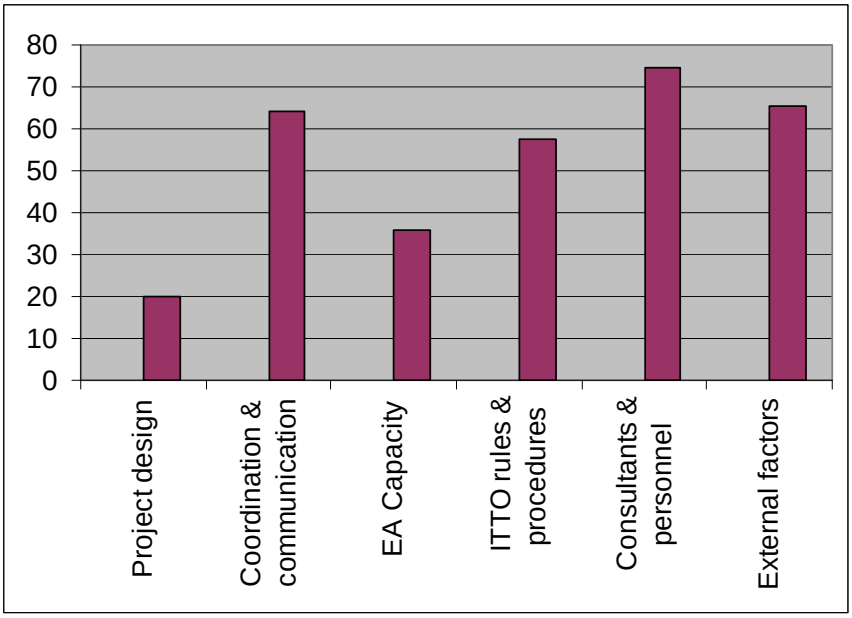
Figure 5.19 Project duration lag in months (actual – planned)



Source: Meta-evaluation project assessment worksheets

In 2003, an Expert Panel on Management of Project Implementation (ITTO 2003) examined the reasons for delays in implementation in 184 on-going projects of which 75 were behind the schedule. Six main reasons were identified including (i) difficulties in recruiting consultants and local personnel for the projects, (ii) external factors (natural disasters, civil and political unrest, political and institutional change, exchange fluctuations and economic crisis), (iii) coordination and communication, (iv) inability of EAs in complying with the ITTO rules and procedures, (v) inadequate capacity in project management, and (vi) poor project design (Figure 5.20). The Panel made a number of recommendations to overcome these problems.

Figure 5.20 Reasons for project implementation delays



Source: Calculated based on data in ITTO (2003)

5.6.3 Actor performance of implementation

As part of efficiency, actor performance of project implementation was assessed based on the ex-post evaluation reports, Project Completion Reports, Project Steering Committee minutes and monitoring reports.[41] Performance was evaluated for EAs, PSCs, project partners and the ITTO Secretariat. The EA performance was usually evaluated by ex-post evaluators but 22% of the reports did not mention PSC's performance at all. Performance of the ITTO Secretariat was not evaluated in 9% of ex-post evaluations.

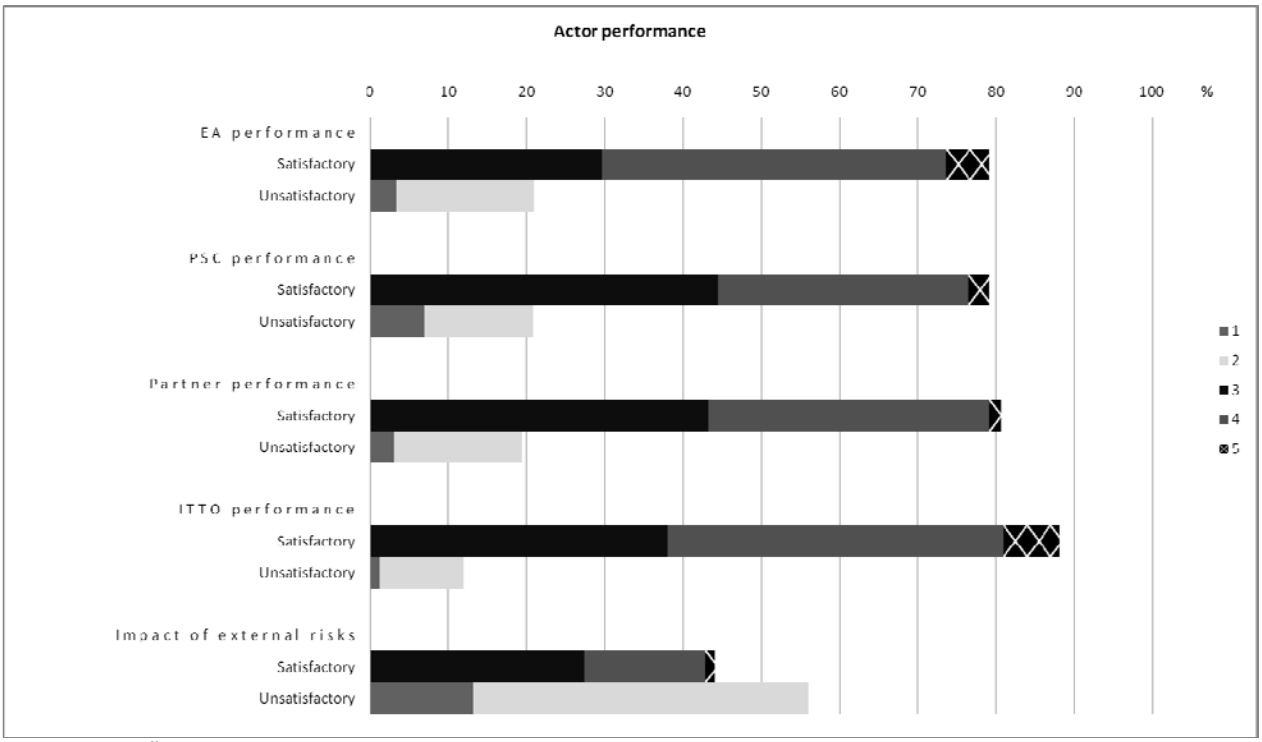
Over all the sampled projects, the actor performance as a whole was found satisfactory and the highest rating was obtained by the ITTO Secretariat followed by EAs (Figure 5.21). Somewhat lower ratings resulted for PSCs and partner performance. This may be because ex-post evaluators had probably more often commented on these latter two actors only when some issues had surfaced up during the documentation review and interviews.

As the averages hide variation, it is in this case important to know also differences in frequency distributions. In 5% of the sampled projects, the EA performance was considered excellent but 3% were failures or unsatisfactory and 21% moderately unsatisfactory.

ITTO's performance was evaluated satisfactory in 81% of the projects and excellent in 7%. In 10% it was moderately unsatisfactory and in 1% there was a failure. These lower rated projects were mostly implemented in the 1990s when the Organization was still on the initial levels of its learning curve.

[41] A smaller sample of PSC minutes and monitoring reports were reviewed. They were selected based on the information in PCRs and ex-post evaluation reports. The sample was selected subjectively considering whether there was a specific reason to merit detailed examination of these supporting documents.

Figure 5.21 Quality of actor performance in the sampled ex-post evaluated projects



Source: Appendix 5.1

EAs of Forest Industry projects have performed more efficiently than in the case of RFM and EIMI (Appendix 5.11). On the other hand, PSC performance was rated highest in the RFM projects followed by FI and EIMI. Partner performance was rated highest in FI followed by RFM and, with a larger difference, with EIMI.

The ITTO Secretariat obtained the highest rating in RFM projects while the difference between EIMI and FI was marginal.

The average ratings for performance indicators by region were satisfactory. However, the projects in Latin America have had somewhat better actor performance than in Asia followed by Africa. This can be interpreted as specific needs for capacity building in Africa. In this region forest administrations have been more often primary beneficiaries and EAs than elsewhere.

In general, external factors have had a moderate to significant impact on the project performance. However, in 15% of all the sampled projects it was a major factor representing an obstacle to smooth implementation. Bureaucratic delays in fund transfer, changes in government policy and institutional responsibilities, and exceptional weather conditions were typical examples for external factors. Risks for implementation are inherent in many project types funded by ITTO and they should be duly considered in project design. Contingency plans would be necessary when the likelihood of risk incidence appears high. In about 11% of the sampled projects, the identified risks had materialized and only in about 60% of the cases the impact was minor, or the risks did not have any effect on performance.

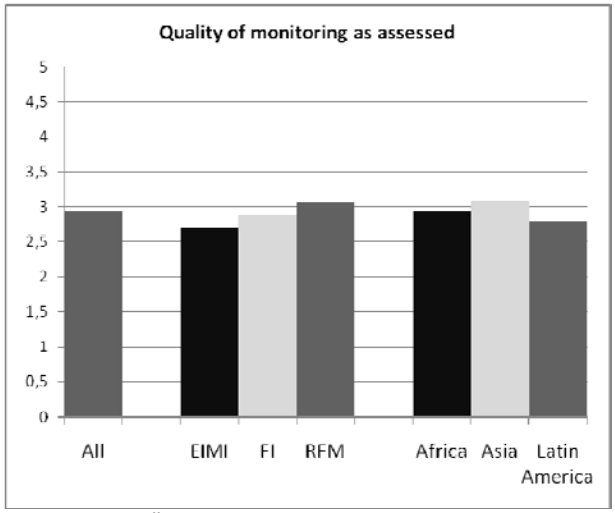
5.6.4 Quality of project monitoring and Project Completion Reports

The meta-evaluation compiled information on the quality of project monitoring as it was assessed in ex-post evaluation reports.[42] The results show that monitoring has generally been satisfactory (Figure

[42] A sample of project monitoring reports was also reviewed by the meta-evaluation team.

5.22). In four percent of the cases monitoring was considered excellent and in 61% satisfactory. However, in 23% of the projects needs for improvement were identified as monitoring was rated as moderately unsatisfactory and in 4% as unsatisfactory.

Figure 5.22 Quality of monitoring in the sampled ex-post evaluated projects

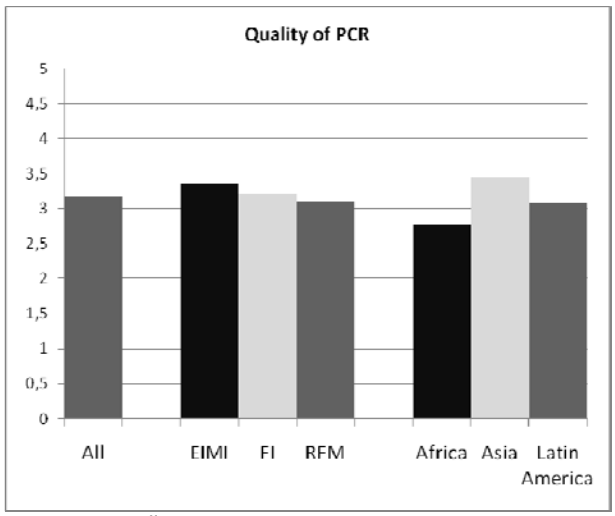


Source: Appendix 5.1

The highest average rating was obtained by projects in RFM followed by FI and EIMI. Regionally, the Asian projects had slightly better quality in monitoring followed by Africa and Latin America.

As a whole, the quality of Project Completion Reports (PCR) has also been satisfactory (Figure 5.23). The EIMI projects obtained the highest rating among Divisions followed by FI and RFM. Regionally, the Asian projects had the highest quality rating of PCRs followed by Latin America and Africa. However, the average ratings hide variation in PCRs and 20% of them were moderately unsatisfactory and 2% unsatisfactory (Appendix 5.1).[43] However, the new guidance (ITTO 2009 b; ITTO 2009c) is expected to improve the PCR quality and its variation.

Figure 5.23 Quality of Project Completion Reports in the sampled ex-post evaluated projects



Source: Appendix 5.1

[43] Only 71% of ex-post evaluation reports had assessed PCRs which were excluded in the analysis for this reason.

5.7 Change in project quality over time

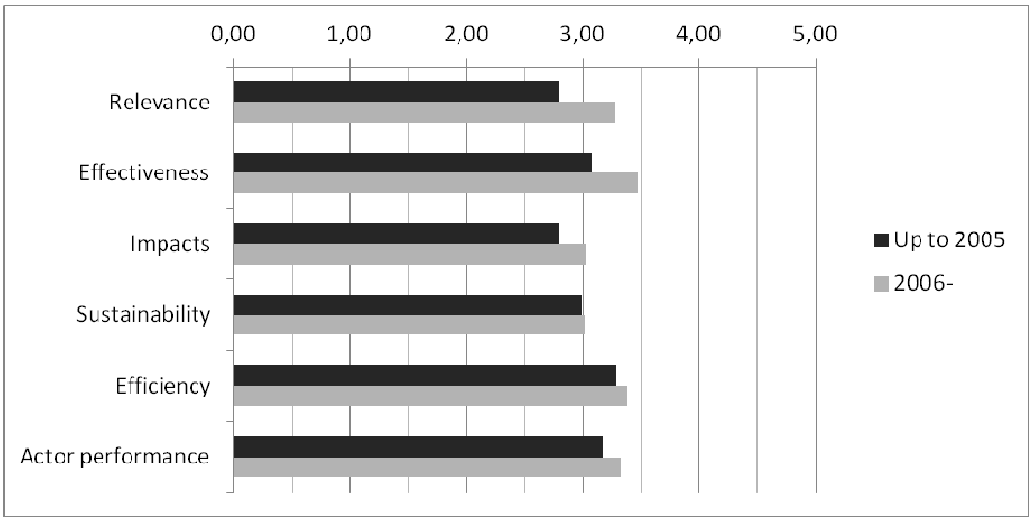
A comparative analysis on the quality of projects was made between those that were evaluated in 2005 or before, and those in 2006 or thereafter. The results (Table 5.1 and Figure 5.24) show that there has been a clear improvement in the quality of projects. The training courses organized on project formulation have likely contributed to this improvement through better design (cf. section 6.9.9).

The change has been strongest in relevance and effectiveness but only marginal in impacts and sustainability. There is obviously scope for improvement in all areas, particularly in the latter two aspects. Future capacity building should give more emphasis on strategic aspects of project design and implementation than on meeting the formal requirements of documentation. In addition, implementation should probably be more flexible in changing conditions rather than strictly adhering to ex-ante project implementation plans. However, further study on the issue would be needed to make definitive conclusions.

Table 5.1 Change of project quality over time in the sampled ex-post evaluated projects

Determinant	Up to 2005	2006-	All
Relevance	2,80	3,27	3,08
Effectiveness	3,08	3,47	3,32
Impacts	2,80	3,02	2,93
Sustainability	2,99	3,02	2,89
Efficiency	3,29	3,38	3,34
Actor performance	3,18	3,32	3,26
Source: Meta-evaluation project assessment worksheets			

Figure 5.24 Change of project quality over time in the sampled ex-post evaluated projects



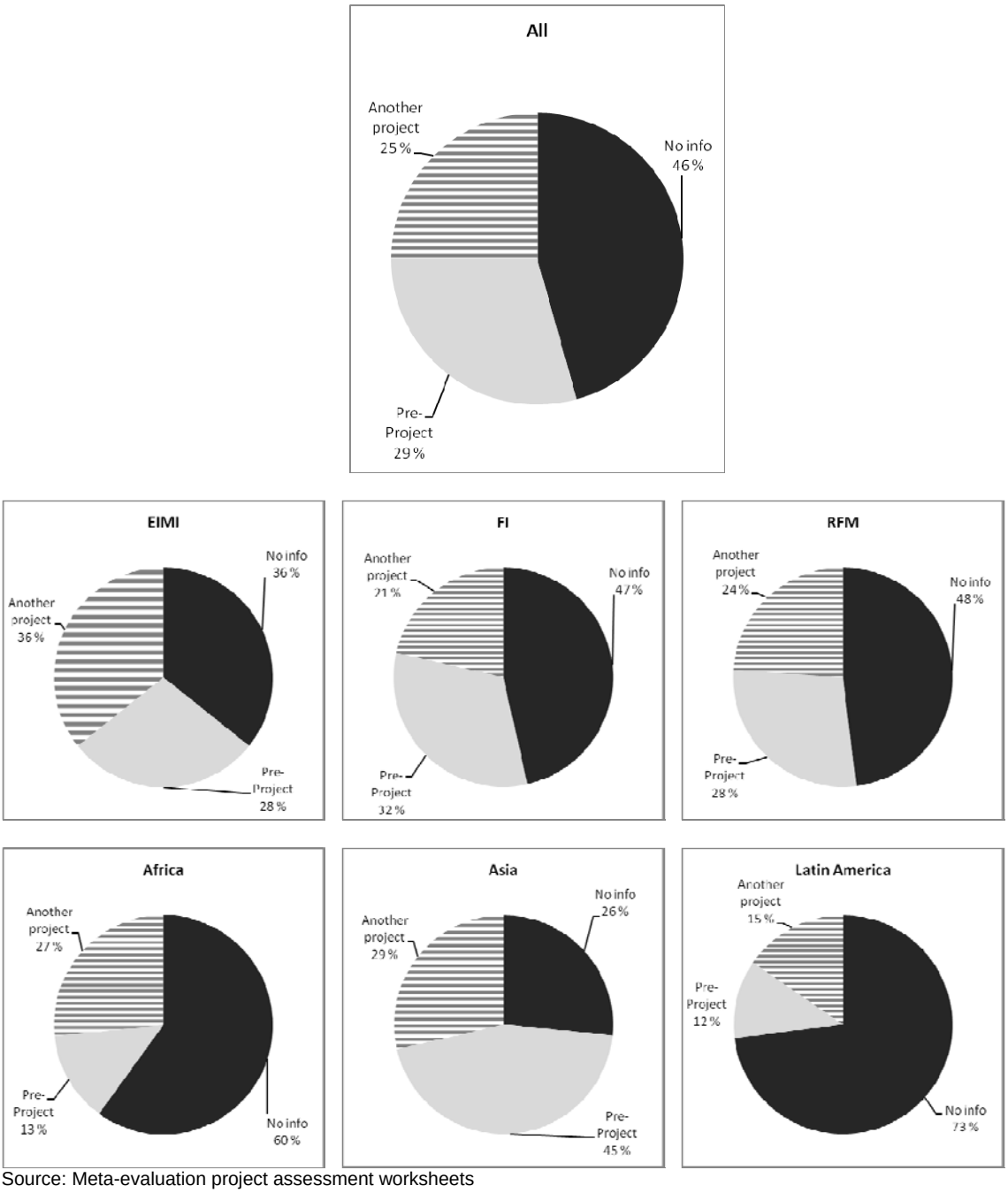
Source: Table 5.1

5.8 Impact on project quality of preparatory work and phasing

A comparative analysis on the quality of projects was made between those that were preceded by a (a) pre-project or (b) another project (usually a previous phase), and (c) those that did not have such support in order to understand whether preparatory work resulted in improved project design and

implementation. Almost a half of the sampled projects belonged to the last category and a pre-project or a previous phase/another project was applied in about a quarter of cases, each (Figure 5.25).[44] Pre-projects were particularly common in Asia (45 percent of the cases) and, to a lesser extent, in Latin America and Africa. In the EIMI projects, previous phases or other projects were, in relative terms, more common than in those of FI and RFM.

Figure 5.25 Pre-projects or another previous project before the ITTO funded project



Source: Meta-evaluation project assessment worksheets

The results (Table 5.2 and Figure 5.26) convincingly show that the investment in preparatory support has resulted in improvement in the project quality but the impact may have not been as large as was

[44] Phased projects represent 13% of the total number of the ITTO projects. Their higher incidence in the sampled ex-post evaluated projects is explained by the fact that the sample did not include small projects.

expected. Pre-projects have certainly improved actor performance but in the other quality determinants the impact appears marginal.

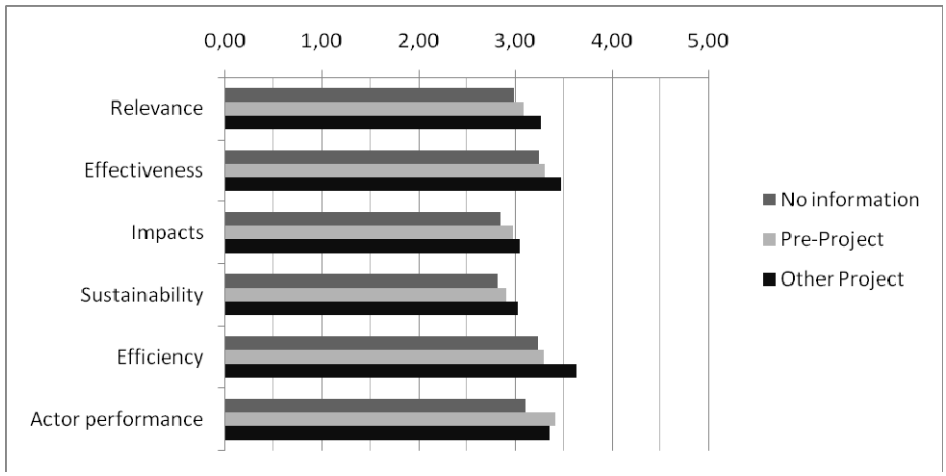
On the other hand, if there had been a previous project (often a previous phase of the same project), the impact on project quality had usually been significant. The conclusion may be interpreted as justifying a subsequent phase, if such a need is identified.

Table 5.2 Impact of pre-projects and other previous support on project quality

Quality determinant	No information on previous support	Pre-project	Other project	All
Relevance	2,99	3,09	3,26	3,08
Effectiveness	3,24	3,30	3,48	3,32
Impacts	2,85	2,99	3,07	2,94
Sustainability	2,82	2,91	3,02	2,89
Efficiency	3,23	3,29	3,63	3,34
Actor performance	3,11	3,42	3,35	3,26

Source: Meta-evaluation project assessment worksheets

Figure 5.26 Impact of pre-projects and other previous support on project quality



Source: Table 5.2

5.9 Contribution to ITTO's objectives

Due to the limitations of data in the ex-post evaluation reports, the projects' contribution to the ITTO objectives could only be assessed in view of their level of impact. With a few exceptions, the reports only identified the existence of linkages with the ITTO Objective 2000, specific objectives of the ITTA and the relevant actions of the ITTO Action Plan without evaluating the significance of contribution.

The meta-evaluation applied 16 contribution areas that attempted to capture the ITTO objectives for the entire study period from 1997 to 2010. Five aspects were cross-cutting (information sharing, R&D, access to, and transfer of technologies, capacity building and investment promotion) while the rest were substantively thematic.

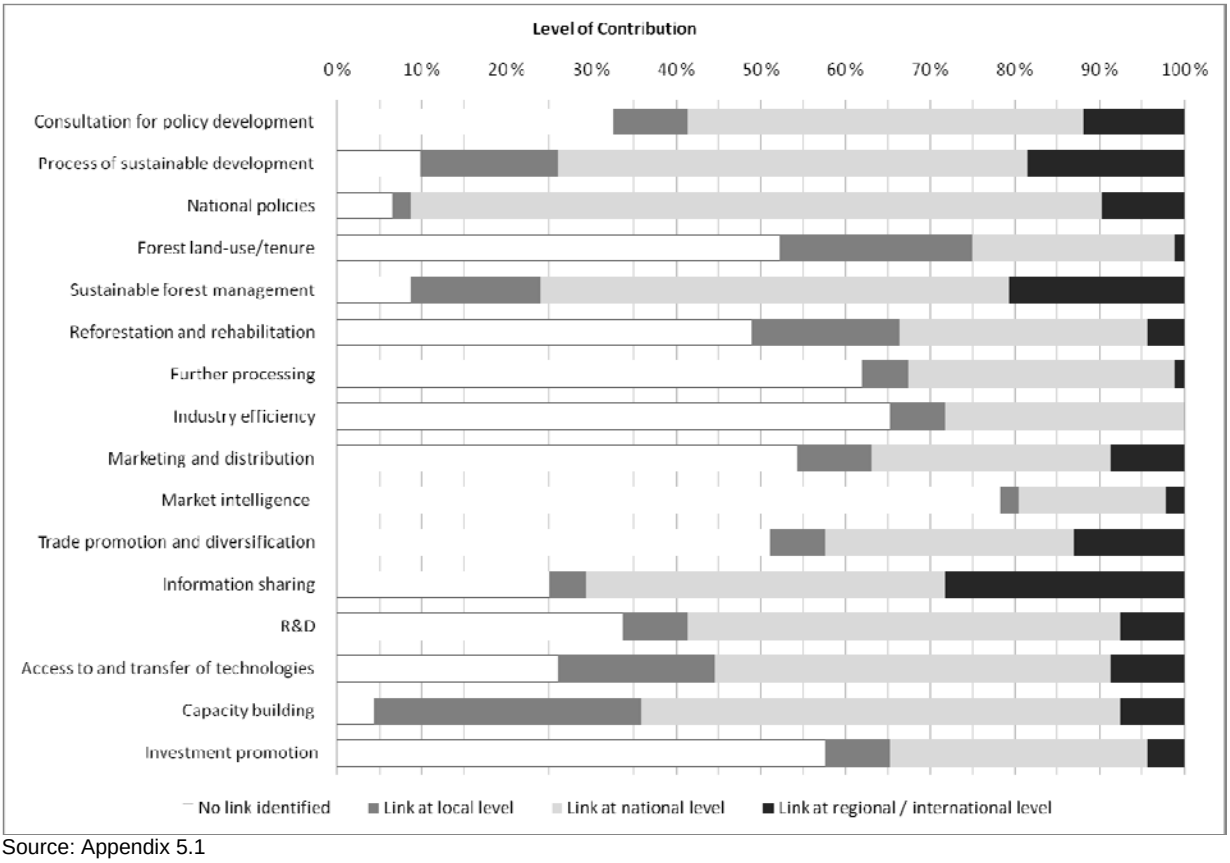
Based on the available information and their own judgment, the meta-evaluators assessed the levels of project contributions whether they were observed on local, national or regional/international level. These levels were treated incrementally. For instance, if a local community targeted project had impact on the national level through e.g. policy adjustment, training or providing a replicable model for

national-level mainstreaming, the contribution was identified at national level. Similarly, a national-level project that developed an approach to implement C&I for SFM which could serve as a model for other countries in the region, was classified as a contribution on a regional level.[45] The results for all the meta-evaluated projects are given in Figure 5.27 and Appendix 5.1.

About two thirds of the projects generated a contribution to consultation for policy development, mostly at a national level. However, one sixth of these made also a contribution at the regional/international level. Consultation is an important element of most ITTO projects that are not narrowly technically or research oriented.
More than 90% of all the evaluated projects contributed to the process of sustainable development. Almost one fifth of them were purely locally oriented (mostly community forest management and enterprise projects). Another fifth contributed on the regional/international level but the impact was mostly at national and local levels.

Strengthening of national policies was an area of contribution in 94% of the projects that shows that also local level projects can be important in this respect if there is a feedback loop from ground level implementation of new piloted approaches to policy adjustment. About 10% of projects also generated potential contributions at regional/international level.

Figure 5.27 Level of contributions to the ITTO objectives of the sampled ex-post evaluated projects



Source: Appendix 5.1

Forest land-use and tenure was a direct or indirect element in 48% of the sampled evaluated projects which suggests that this issue needs targeted interventions and can be less easily built in projects with other objectives. Half of the contributions of these projects were only at a local level while the other half was both on national and local levels.

[45] This was not an ideal approach but was considered appropriate in view of the characteristics of the project sample.

More than 90% of the evaluated projects had direct or indirect contributions to sustainable forest management. Most of them were national and local but about 20% could also provide contributions at the regional/international level. The result shows that there has obviously been a very strong focus on "the core business" of ITTO in its project work.

Reforestation, restoration and rehabilitation projects have generally been clearly targeted and contributions in this area were observed in about a half of the cases. These were mainly national and local and the contributions at the regional and international level were found only in less than 10% of these projects.

The contribution patterns of projects related to further processing and industry development and industry efficiency were largely similar. As interventions need to be clearly targeted like in the previous case, only about one third of all the evaluated projects made contributions to these objectives. In many pilot projects they have remained only on the local level, i.e. participating pilot enterprises. In this area, regional and international contributions have been marginal when measured based on the number of projects and linkages of their outputs and lessons learned.

Strengthening of marketing and distribution was contributed by 46% of the evaluated projects. Although, almost by definition, the contributions are at enterprise or national level, one fifth of these projects also generated regional/international level benefits.

Only 22% of the evaluated projects contributed to market intelligence and four fifths of them at the national level while the rest was equally shared between purely enterprise level projects and those which contributed also at the regional/international level. This is understandable as country projects in this area have strongly focused on strengthening of national information systems.

The pattern in the area of trade promotion and diversification is quite different as several projects in forest resource management and industry development are targeted at expanding the range of species and products, including NTFPs, thereby enhancing trade diversification in the long run. Almost a half of the evaluated projects contributed to this area, mostly at national and local levels but a quarter generated also benefits at the regional/international level.

Three quarters of the projects contributed to information sharing and in addition to the national level, 25% of these projects provided contributions at regional/international level. R&D contributions were provided by two thirds of the projects, mostly at national level. More than 70% of the projects had an element of access to, and transfer of technologies and the contributions were mostly at a national level but in many pilot or demonstration projects they were limited to the local level. On the other hand, about 10% of the technology-linked projects made also contributions at the regional/international level.

Almost all the projects had a capacity building effect, mostly on a national level. In a third of these projects the contributions were on a local level and almost in a tenth on the regional/international level. There is apparently potential to enhance capacity building components in the future.

The last cross-cutting aspect of the analysis was investment promotion to which 43% of the evaluated projects had some linkage, mostly indirect through improving the information base or other enabling conditions. Again, the contribution was mainly on national or local level which is understandable in country specific projects. However, about a tenth of the projects with this cross-cutting objective contributed also at the regional/international level.

The evaluated ITTO projects had in general a strong focus on local and national contributions. Pure locally oriented projects are found particularly in the areas of process of sustainable development (and poverty reduction), forest land-use/tenure, SFM, reforestation, restoration and rehabilitation, and several projects in development of industry and marketing.

A divisional analysis revealed that, in relative terms, the EIMI projects perform better with regard to generating contributions to the ITTO objectives at the regional and national levels than the other two divisions. The Forest Industry projects tend to focus more narrowly on the national and local levels but their contributions at the regional/international level are also significant in the cross-cutting objectives of information sharing, R&D, facilitated access to technologies, and capacity building. In these areas the contributions of the EIMI projects have been limited. The contribution pattern of the RFM projects

are also strong and clearly focused on the various aspects of forest resource management. These projects have less linkage with those of the EIMI and FI divisions than these with the RFM projects.

Regionally, Africa's projects appear to have a strong focus in contributions to the ITTO objectives on national level and the regional/international level appears to be weaker than in the other regions. Asia's projects have somewhat more frequent contributions to regional/international level than Latin America but differences are minor. On the other hand, Africa and Latin America have had more projects with solely local contributions compared to those in Asia.

As a conclusion, ITTO's ex-post evaluated projects have had a strong focus in their contributions to ITTO objectives in the areas of strengthening of national policies, SFM, and capacity building. Projects which dealt with forest land-use and tenure, reforestation, rehabilitation and plantations, industry and markets and marketing have usually been focused having, in relative terms, less contribution to the cross-cutting objectives of the Organization. Projects which contributed to the ITTO objectives at the national level are those which dealt with consultation for policy development, process of sustainable development, strengthening of national policies and SFM. These projects also generated significant benefits at international/regional level which demonstrates the Organization's capacity to provide global public goods.

6. EVALUATION OF THE MONITORING AND EVALUATION FUNCTION

This chapter is largely based on stakeholder consultations with (i) producing country Focal Points, (ii) Executing Agencies (EA), (iii) evaluators, (iv) consuming country Focal Points, and (v) the ITTO professional staff. In addition, (vi) a number of specialists were interviewed and (vii) the members of the Civil Society Advisory Group (CSAG) and the Trade Advisory Group (TAG) provided their views. The detailed results of the stakeholder consultations are reported in Annex I. Furthermore, the meta-evaluation reviewed the ITTO manuals and other guidance for ex-post evaluations as well as the current means of dissemination.

The chapter first provides an overview of the function of the ex-post evaluation and selected general results of the stakeholder views. This is followed by a detailed examination of selected issues which merit future attention, including (a) the choice of projects for ex-post evaluation, (b) mid-term evaluation, (c) guidance for evaluation assignments, (d) evaluation teams, (e) timing of ex-post evaluation, (f) evaluation missions, (g) management response and follow-up of recommendations, (h) dissemination of the results and other knowledge management, (i) monitoring, and (j) organization of the monitoring and evaluation function.

6.1 Overview of the ex-post evaluation as a function in ITTO

6.1.1 Main activities

Ex-post evaluations have been implemented by the Divisions for selected projects that they are responsible for implementation. Project Managers have drafted the TOR and pre-selected consultant candidates for decision by the Executive Director. They have organized evaluation missions, arranged logistical support, supervised the work by consultants and reviewed the draft and final reports. Project Managers have also been responsible for preparing a short summary of the completed projects for approval by Committees. Monitoring of projects is also the responsibility of Project Managers and recently a new tool, On-Line Monitoring System (OLMS), was introduced to facilitate communication between the Secretariat and Project Coordinators of Executing Agencies.

The results of ex-post evaluations have been presented to Committees and the final reports or their executive summaries have been posted on the ITTO website. The main lessons learned and recommendations of ex-post evaluations are also disseminated through an article in the Tropical Forest Update. Following the ITTC Decision 3(XXVIII), thematic summary reports have been prepared based on ex-post evaluation of a group of projects. Other means of dissemination have been used on an *ad hoc* basis.

6.1.2 Overview of stakeholder views

Executing Agencies

Executing Agencies receive the preliminary findings at the end of the evaluation mission and they have an opportunity to provide a management response, which is usually done if the issues have not been discussed exhaustively with the evaluation team already during the mission. EAs have also an opportunity to comment on the draft final report and present their views in the Committee meeting. However, these opportunities are not always effectively utilized. EAs also receive the final evaluation report but there is no mechanism in ITTO to follow up the implementation of the recommendations made.
A majority of the responding EAs have found ex-post evaluation reports of their projects useful and they consider the quality of reports somewhat better than the results on the quality of the sampled projects of this meta-evaluation (cf. chapter 4).

Producing country Focal Points

Focal Points in producing countries participate in the approval of project proposals to be submitted to ITTO financing but almost a half of them also contribute to the design of project proposals. Most Focal Points participate in the coordination and monitoring of Executing Agencies and they receive progress and ex-post evaluation reports but do not always review them. Most responding Focal Points were satisfied with the quality of ex-post evaluations. The others identified three main areas for improvement: (i) a standard practice for commenting draft reports, (ii) careful selection of competent consultants, and (iii) more field time during the missions. There appears to be a missing link in the feedback loop between ex-post evaluations and the design of new projects in many producing member countries even though two thirds of the responding Focal Points thought that the evaluation results have contributed to new projects design.

Consuming country Focal Points

For consuming country Focal Points ex-post evaluation reports have been a source of information on lessons learned and recommendations for improvement of the present practices. The views on the value of the reports are largely similar to those of their counterparts in producing member countries but consuming countries place somewhat more value to thematic summary reports as a useful communication means. Dissemination of the results of ex-post evaluations is a key issue for ITTO's Focal Points in both producing and consuming member countries.

Evaluators

Most of the evaluators considered the management of the ex-post evaluation process in their case well organized, the choice of projects relevant and TOR appropriate. They also appreciated carrying out group evaluations and preparation of summary ex-post evaluation reports. Evaluators had differing views on the available guidance and a suitable period between the project completion and the evaluation. More than a third found that the field time was too short to collect necessary information. A majority found presentation of the results in the Committee session of limited value as the allocated time was too short to allow proper discussion on the lessons learned and recommendations.

Advisory Groups

CSAG members considered that effective use of the ex-post evaluation results has been limited due to cumbersome access to lessons learned and good practices. Evaluation reports have not been prepared for field-level practitioners and they are generally available only in one language. They shared the view of evaluators on the limited value of oral presentations during Committee sessions. CSAG members also felt that evaluation teams should have adequate expertise on social aspects and the private sector when the scope of projects calls for multiple perspectives to the collected information.

The involvement of TAG members in ex-post evaluation has been very limited, not least because very few ITTO projects have specific trade elements. This has also resulted in lack of awareness of

relevant lessons learned for the private sector from ex-post evaluations. Both CSAG and TAG called for involvement of civil society and private sector participants in future ex-post evaluations through appropriate means.

Secretariat staff

The perception of Project Managers is that the evaluation system is well established and generally robust but they identified a number of areas that could be improved.[46]

6.2 Choice of projects for evaluation

Evaluation is a tool which needs to be applied selectively and ITTO's policy has been to focus on larger projects because of cost-effectiveness (ITTO 2009). The current guidance for selection of projects for ex-post evaluation is provided by Decision 3(XXVIII) (Appendix 6.1). The selection decision is made by the Committees based on a short-list prepared by the Secretariat and considering the nature of the project. The selection criteria are as follows:

(a) ITTO budget of individual projects or groups of projects above an appropriate level (e.g. USD400,000);

(b) Clear benefits to be derived from learning more about facts, achievements and difficulties during project implementation and completion;

(c) The potential for wider application of lessons learned;

(d) Other factors as considered appropriate by the Committee

These criteria focus on obtaining information for continual improvement and, as far as possible, they have apparently been respected in the Committee selection decisions.[47] In addition, in phased projects a successive phase has often been subject to ex-post evaluation of the previous phase but this principle has not always been applied. Some previous Expert Panel members emphasized that this should become a rule to be systematically applied.

Evaluators considered almost invariably (98%) that the chosen projects were relevant from the evaluation perspective. This was particularly the case of projects that needed (i) a mid-term review for adjusting the intervention strategy or (ii) a second follow-up phase, and (iii) projects that were not successful and therefore evaluation was able to avoid launching of an unnecessary second phase. There have also been a few cases in which the Executing Agency did not have competence to implement the activities (e.g. a forest agency implementing a scientific research project and an NGO implementing an extension service) and the evaluation has helped direct the follow-up work to a competent Executing Agency.

A strict selection criterion on the size of the project needs revision. Sometimes small projects generate important impacts and useful lessons but these cannot be detected and systematized because such projects have not been eligible for ex-post evaluation. On the other hand, the project size/value has declined along the last few years and only a few are larger than USD400,000.

Some consuming country Focal Points called for an improvement in project selection for ex-post evaluation based on consistent selection criteria. For example, it may not be necessary to evaluate similar projects year after year that yield similar findings, which has sometimes been the case. One option for a more strategic approach could be to select a set of different projects from the various Committees and focus only on one or two aspects of each, such as stakeholder participation and economic sustainability that are typical cross-cutting issues.

For grouping of projects to be evaluated the following approaches are defined in Decision 3(XXVIII):

[46] Dissemination of lessons, identification and selection of good consultants, consultations with countries on the evaluation results, and follow-up of implementation of recommendations.

[47] However, there is not always adequate ex ante information on items (b) and (c) before the Committee decision.

(i) Phased project evaluation for grouping of projects implemented over several years in two or more phases;

(ii) Country group evaluation for multiple projects at the country level to determine the impact of ITTO activities in the country and to improve methods employed in formulation and implementation of future projects in that country;

(iii) Thematic group evaluation for a specified category of project work to identify common problems associated with implementation of projects related to a defined theme to assist in the formulation and implementation of future projects;

(iv) ITTO goal evaluation groups projects contributing to the organization's goals as spelled out in the Action Plan.

Of these grouping options, 15 thematic group evaluations have been carried out and one for a country group evaluation (China). Evaluation of phased projects as a group has in practice focused on the latest phase as the previous phases have usually been already evaluated But the successive evaluation reports have considered the results of evaluations of earlier phases. No group-based ex-post evaluations have been carried out for projects contributing to selected goals of the Organization but individual evaluation reports have identified to which goals of the Action Plan the project has contributed.

In line with Decision 3(XXVIII) stakeholders generally emphasized the learning function of ex-post evaluations. There was also a strong common view that thematic summary reports are a useful tool for condensing information and therefore valuable for dissemination.[48] However, several stakeholders called for a more strategic approach to identify lessons learned, successful practices and pitfalls to be avoided in project design and implementation.[49]

Evaluators noted that evaluation would be needed of projects which are (i) strategically particularly relevant, (ii) projects on themes on which there are still few lessons learned (e.g. industrial development), or (iii) which were implemented by NGOs or in a partnership between different types of actor. Ex-post evaluations can be fewer, done aiming at improving future project design and implementation, and be well chosen among apparent successes and failures. They should be strategic and fill information gaps and their lessons learned to be disseminated should be applicable broadly in similar projects.

The thematic approach to project selection and grouping of several projects under the same theme has been a strategic and cost-effective way to implement ex-post evaluations. The link with the strategic intervention areas of the Thematic Programmes could be considered in this context in view of the changing emphasis of project financing (cf. section 6.9.6).

The meta-evaluation considers that grouping ex-post evaluation by ITTO goals can be largely covered if it is combined with thematic evaluations. Evaluation of a group of projects in a country could be potentially useful if at the same time the impacts of ITTO's project and non-project work could be considered with a strategic view on the broad objectives of making progress towards SFM, capacity building, policy development and governance. In such evaluations ITTO's competitive advantage should be looked into within the framework of all external support to the country in the field of forests together with relevant national programmes. A mere collection of executive summaries of individual project-level ex-post evaluations is not effective.

6.3 Mid-term evaluation

In the manuals on project formulation, monitoring and evaluation (ITTO 1999; 2009b) mid-term (or on-going) evaluations were identified as a tool for those situations which demand decision taking beyond the authority level of project staff and when guidance is needed and sought from independent experts. Mid-term evaluation is singled out as particularly relevant for large, complex or long-lasting projects at a moment when assumptions made at the planning stage will require re-examination in the project design or work plan for possible revision in light of experience so far.

[48] This was particularly important for consuming country Focal Points and evaluators.

[49] It appears that many successful and other projects have not been evaluated (cf. section 3.3). In the sampled meta-evaluation projects only a few bad examples were found to learn from earlier mistakes.

More specifically, the ITTO 2009 Manual defines circumstances when mid-term evaluations will be carried out:

- There are problems in project implementation, upon request from either the ITTO Secretariat, donors or the Project Steering Committee
- The need for mid-term evaluation was foreseen at the early stage of project development or implementation

In practice, mid-term evaluation has rarely been practised and even then usually as a "punitive measure" for Executing Agencies which have not been successful in implementing their project. This undermines mid-term evaluation as a potentially useful management tool for an efficient project cycle management. According to the Secretariat staff interviews, the problem has been that there was not in the past any budget for mid-term evaluation and therefore it was not used.

A large majority of evaluators (85%) thought that a mid-term evaluation would have been useful to improve the performance of project implementation. Some other stakeholders also had similar views. This derives from the fact that the country contexts and policy frameworks are dynamic, and the project design may no more be relevant, not least because of the long preparatory and decision-making process of ITTO projects funded from the Special Account. In addition, stock-taking of accumulating experience would often be useful for improving performance during the project period. If a project lasts more than two years, a mid-term evaluation can be instrumental. Finally, in phased projects, a mid-term evaluation could be carried out well before the completion of the first phase to facilitate smooth continuation of the activities in the next phase in order to avoid unnecessary lags having negative impacts on project activities and sustainability.

There is a need to make a full use of mid-term evaluation as a proactive tool to improve project performance in ITTO. The competence to identify when mid-term evaluation would be useful lies with the Secretariat and the Executing Agency/PSC. Mid-term evaluation involving independent assessment has a somewhat different complementary function from that of internal periodic review of projects as defined in ITTO (2009b).

The Manual on Standard Operating Procedures for the ITTO Project Cycle (ITTO 2009c) defines a number of detailed requirements for mid-term evaluation, including the report length and contents, which the meta-evaluation considers unhelpful and partly irrelevant. The TOR for mid-term evaluation/review should be drafted by the Project Manager considering the specific nature of the project as well as key issues to be addressed within an agreed general framework.

As a conclusion, we consider mid-term evaluations as a good value for money tool in specific situations. They should be used more proactively than in the past to improve project performance and efficiency. It should be also applied in phased projects to ensure their smooth implementation.

6.4 Guidance for ex-post evaluations

6.4.1 Manuals

In 1991 the ITTC made its first decision (ITTC 2(X)) which set a number of provisions for ex-post evaluation of projects. It specified that evaluation be undertaken by a team composed of at least three independent persons with possible participation of donor country representatives as observers.[50] The Secretariat was requested to ensure that lessons learned, both positive and negative, would be available to members. The purpose was to disseminate information widely to officials responsible for project preparation.

Subsequently, a manual was developed and approved for Project Monitoring, Review and Evaluation (ITTO 1999). It laid down generic elements for the evaluation process, analysis of project design, group review and general guidance for how to prepare, plan and adapt the evaluation process to specific conditions as well as for how to prepare evaluation reports.

[50] At their own expense.

In 2000 the ITTC made a specific Decision on ex-post evaluation of projects (ITTC 3(XXVIII)) that set the rules for selection of projects, established a separate pool of funds for financing ex-post evaluations, and changed the requirement of three independent consultants to carry out ex-post evaluations to one to three independent consultants depending on the size and nature of the evaluation (Appendix 6.1). The Decision called for consultation with project stakeholders as part of the evaluation process. The Executive Director was requested to synthesize and disseminate the results of ex-post evaluations and take active steps to make lessons learned broadly available to stakeholders and the interested public. Finally, the decision requested to convene at appropriate intervals an Expert Panel comprised of ITTO stakeholders to synthesize the lessons learned and to provide recommendations to the Council accordingly.[51]

After this Decision, the number of evaluations started to increase and 15 reports were prepared to synthesize results of individual project-level ex-post evaluations for selected thematic areas (Appendix 6.2). A series of regional training courses and workshops was also organized to disseminate lessons on implementing SFM in ITTO projects (cf. section 6.9.9). The Decision was targeted at making a better use of the investment by focusing on generating lessons learned and disseminating them through the ITTO website, the Tropical Forest Update and other means.

Further guidance was issued in 2009 by the adoption of a new Manual for Project Monitoring, Review, Reporting and Evaluation (ITTO 2009b). The document clarified the definitions, introduced the concept of thematic evaluations and improved the earlier guidance on the evaluation process and reporting. For example, sustainability was introduced as one of the key evaluation determinants, which was not specifically mentioned in the earlier manual. Stakeholder involvement and ownership were also included, together with the traditional determinants, i.e. relevance, effectiveness, impacts, efficiency, and sustainability.

The work of ex-post evaluation teams has been guided by the respective ITTO manuals and the Terms-of- Reference. Almost all evaluators (88%) had used the ITTO Manual for Project Monitoring, Reporting and Evaluation[52] and 81% found it useful for their work. In some cases, the Manual complemented otherwise weak TOR and its checklist was generally considered useful. On the other hand, it was pointed out that long generic check-lists easily divert the evaluator's attention from the critical major issues. In fact, some evaluators pointed out that the Manual was only partially useful for their work due to its generic nature and there should be more focus on aspects that represent comparative advantage of ITTO. For instance, in plantation and conservation projects it is critical to focus on sustainability after the project completion and thereby design of adequate exit strategies.

Together with the new Manual and other guidance,[53] an adequate general framework for the ex-post evaluation activity exists in ITTO but, due to its generic nature, there is a need to have additional specific guidance, including in TORs. However, ex-post evaluation in the past appears to have often been more a formal requirement than a strategic diagnostic tool for learning. The evolving guidance on how ex-post evaluation should be applied represents an improvement but systemic links with strategy design, project formulation and broad sharing of lessons learned still need improvement in order to improve coherence and effectiveness, and to better address relevant specific aspects in ITTO projects.[54].

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51 Such Expert Panels have never been organized.

52 The replies mostly referred to the 1999 version and only the latest evaluation teams have benefited from the current ITTO Manual for Project Monitoring, Review, Reporting and Evaluation (2009).

53 The Executive Director recently issued an instruction to Project Managers who are preparing ex-post evaluations to pay specific attention to impacts on the ground.

54 The section on evaluation of the 2009 Manual has several weaknesses which include (i) lack of reference to ITTC 3(XXVIII) which laid down the specific provision for ex-post evaluation in terms of criteria for selection (omission) and the team composition (inconsistency), (ii) mid-term evaluation is weakly explained, (iii) composition of mid-term evaluations is erroneous and lacks Secretariat participation, (iv) no mention on the PSC minutes as a source of information to be studied, (v) scope of ex-post evaluation contains errors, (vi) lack of clarification of evaluation questions in the planning stage, (vii) unbalanced focus on project design (including Annex 1 which lists in the first section points to be considered rather in the appraisal stage), (viii) proposing group review which should be part of project design/appraisal rather than ex-post evaluation, (ix) somewhat weak description of the LFM for evaluation (no reference to use indicators for measurement), (x) lack of clarity why competition is contrasted with coordination during ex-post evaluation, (xi) drafting evaluation work plan should probably be the task of team leader of evaluation, not by Project Managers who draft TOR, (xii) guidance for the format of evaluation report is not according to the ITTO standard, and (xiii) need for improvements in Annex I and to some extent in Annex II.

In order to facilitate (i) the efficient evaluation of on-going projects before their completion and (ii) the implementation of follow-up actions to apply lessons learned from ex-post evaluations, the following amendments to the ITTO Manual for Project Monitoring, Review, Reporting and Evaluation are deemed necessary in due course:

- Revise mechanisms for project monitoring and reporting to facilitate the use of indicators of the logical framework matrix to report on progress and completion. Indicators in the LFM should often be improved during project implementation, and therefore respective guidance would be necessary in Annexes B, C and E of the Manual (ITTO 2009b)

- Provide guidance on how to improve the analysis of project sustainability from its implementation stage. In many projects, the measures to ensure sustainability outlined in the project document have not been adequately considered during implementation. Guidance on how to analyze the sustainability would be useful in Annexes C and E (ITTO 2009b) drawing on the section on Sustainability in the Manual for Project Formulation (ITTO 2009a)[55].

- Clarify the identification of lessons learned in the format of Project Completion Reports (Annex E in ITTO 2009b). Many PCRs have provided limited information on lessons contributing to success or failure in achieving specific objectives (cf. section 5.6.4).

6.4.2 Terms-of-Reference of ex-post evaluations

The TORs of the sampled 92 ex-post evaluated projects were assessed as part of the meta-evaluation. Almost all the TORs were found satisfactory (50%) or moderately satisfactory (38%). The latter refers to standard TORs as outlined in the ITTO manuals without any specificities of the project. Satisfactory TORs had task descriptions that identified key issues or specific aspects to be evaluated. In 7% of the cases the TOR provided additional specific guidance for evaluators for their assignment.

More than 90% of the evaluators considered their TOR appropriate and realistic providing adequate guidance for their assignment. However, some evaluators pointed out that TORs have been too long, repetitive, partly inconsistent and even confusing. Some evaluators also pointed out that the TORs were often too ambitious in view of the time and information available. There were several calls for having the ex-post evaluation tasks more focused on the critical aspects of the project. As one evaluator pointed out *"the TOR should have focused on assessing the project's achievement and impacts, success or failure, by using pre-defined logical framework as the main tool of assessment."* Such a focus would have been necessary e.g. in transboundary conservation projects or projects which were implemented by several agencies in partnership.

6.5 Evaluation teams

The ITTC Decision 2(X) defined that ex-post evaluations be undertaken by a team composed of at least three independent persons, selected by the Committee. This was adjusted in Decision 3(XXVIII) to a requirement of from one to three independent consultants, depending on the size and nature of the evaluation.

The ITTO Manual for Project Monitoring, Review, Reporting and Evaluation (2009b) states an additional minimum requirement which is not fully consistent with Decision 3(XXVIII): *"The team can consist two consultants representing the producer and consumer member countries of ITTO. The evaluation can be assisted by two or three persons from the project appointed by the EA and ITTO. Donor countries can participate as observers."*

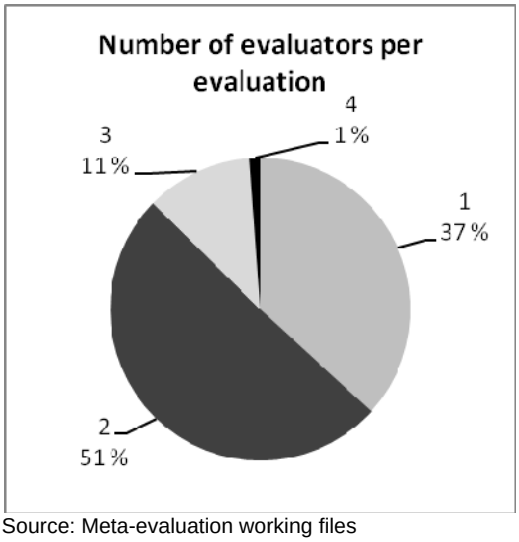
In practice, more than a half of the sampled ex-post evaluations have been carried out by two consultants and 37% only by one (Figure 6.1). Three or more consultants have participated in the

[55] Points for analyzing project sustainability could be drawn from page 57 (Sustainability) of ITTO Manual for Project Formulation (2009).

team only in 12% of the cases. An increasing number of ex-post evaluations has been carried out only by one consultant.

Decision 3(XXVIII) led to a significant improvement in cost-efficiency as since then several evaluations have been carried out by two or only one consultant. Even though the impact on evaluation quality of the team size was not analyzed explicitly in the meta-evaluation, this has apparently rarely reduced the quality of evaluation (cf. chapter 4).

Figure 6.1 Number of team members in the sampled ex-post evaluations



Source: Meta-evaluation working files

As explained in section 4.7, the quality of evaluators varies which has sometimes resulted in unsatisfactory performance that should be avoided. As a general observation, it appears that sometimes the knowledge on ITTO as an organization has been a more important selection criterion than specific substantive expertise or knowledge on local conditions.

Based on the assessment of ex-post evaluation quality and personal field experience, we consider that the professional qualifications of consultants are more important than their countries of origin. However, it is also crucial for the team to have good knowledge on local/country conditions to collect and analyze information. This was also emphasized by EAs in the stakeholder survey (Annex I).

The size of the team should be established based on the nature, complexity and size of the project(s) to be evaluated. As noted by CSAG and TAG, evaluation teams should also have adequate expertise on social aspects and the private sector when the scope of projects calls for such expertise.

Both a number of Secretariat staff members and consuming country Focal Points noted that ITTO should have a broader range of qualified experts in its roster, including social scientists and economists. Furthermore, locally based professionals[56] could be invited to join the teams to both build up country capacity and to provide a local perspective.

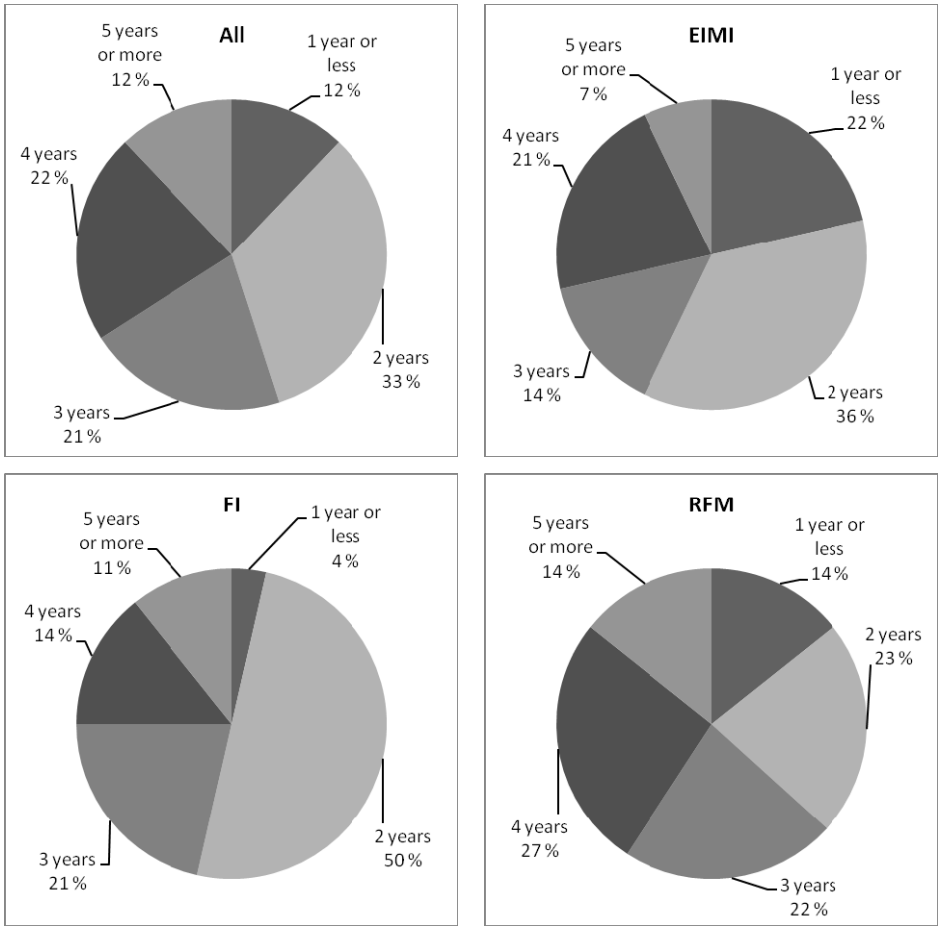
6.6 Timing of ex-post evaluations

Based on the sampled ex-post evaluations, the time lapse between project completion and ex-post evaluation was analyzed. One third of evaluations have been carried out two years after the completion but also four and three years have been common (22% and 21%, respectively) (Figure 6.2). Twelve percent of the evaluations took place 5 to 7 years from the completion date. Another twelve percent had a lag of one year or less.

[56] E.g. those who have received Freezailah Fellowship grants.

There are some distinct differences between Divisions. In Forest Industry more than a half of evaluations took place within two years. In the EIMI projects more than a fifth was carried out after one year. The timing of the RFM evaluations were relatively evenly distributed among 1 to 5 years but about two fifths of them have been carried out four or more years from the completion (with one case of 10-year lapse).

Figure 6.2 Lag between the project completion and ex-post evaluation in the sampled projects



Source: Meta-evaluation working files

In general, Executing Agencies considered the timing of ex-post evaluations appropriate but almost a fifth (19%) thought it came too late to be useful. One EA noted that ex-post evaluations should be carried out within three months of project closure and later evaluations could determine project sustainability.

Almost three quarters (73%) of evaluators found the timing appropriate but almost one fifth (19%) too late. Eight percent considered timing too soon to assess impacts and sustainability; all these projects were executed by government agencies. However, a number of evaluators pointed out that when a project has long delays in completion of its activities and obligations, there may be a need to intervene with a mid-term evaluation rather than to wait until the formal completion has taken place (cf. section 6.3).

Some evaluators felt that if evaluation is carried out 6-12 months after the project, the project staff can still be interviewed, implementation of recommendations made in the PCR can be easily verified, and stakeholders can be effectively consulted. On the other hand, most staff members considered 2 (and sometimes up to 4) years a suitable period for measuring impacts and assessing sustainability of project results.

The meta-evaluation considers that a fixed period for the lapse between the completion and ex-post evaluation is not useful as this depends, inter alia, on the nature and size of the project as well as the specific focus of evaluation. Too long lags (beyond four years) should be avoided and limited to specific issues such as relevance in the new policy and institutional environment, direct and indirect impacts, and sustainability. The experience has shown that institutional memory of EAs is often short and suffers from inherent constant rotation of staff. Therefore, data collection on actor performance, efficiency and effectiveness becomes the more difficult the longer the lag between completion and evaluation.

6.7 Evaluation missions

Ex-post evaluation assignments are usually one-month contracts of which one week is spent for fieldwork in the country. In view of the tasks identified in the TOR and needs for site visits and stakeholder consultations, this is not always sufficient and tends to have a negative impact on the quality of evaluation.

Field time was sufficient for about 60% of evaluators but for the others more (23%) or much more time (17%) would have been needed. This was particularly the case when more than one field site should have been visited in projects with pilot or demonstration areas far from each other. In the case of mixed projects involving both government and non-government agencies, much more field time would have been necessary as these often include a broader range of stakeholders and their activities focus on communities. In these projects there is need to have adequate provisions for consultation with all the relevant parties. However, some evaluators pointed out that additional consultations would have unlikely changed their conclusions.

Executing Agencies also pointed out that the in-country time was often insufficient to carry out field visits and consult with all the relevant stakeholder groups. Particularly when the sites are distant with difficult access, only a partial view can be obtained on the project's achievements and beneficiary views. This is a typical problem in projects dealing with community forestry, demonstration areas and small-scale enterprises.

The observations made by evaluators based on the available documentation generally (almost 70% of the cases) corresponded to those made in the field but, in a quarter of projects, this was not the case. Discrepancies have been found in some projects dealing with e.g. transboundary conservation, permanent sample plots, and forest industry. This emphasizes the importance of the accountability objective of ex-post evaluations.

Only with a few exceptions (13%), evaluators considered the organization of evaluation assignment satisfactory and several even excellent. In general, Executing Agencies were well prepared for the mission but there have been also a few exceptions due to breakdowns in the pre-mission information flow. In most cases the participation of the Executing Agency in the evaluation was substantial.

It can be concluded that a strictly standardized approach for organizing ex-post evaluation missions is not always appropriate and particularly the time allowance for field visits should duly take into account when resources are allocated. On the other hand, the use of structured questionnaires should be encouraged to consult such stakeholder groups with whom personal interviews are not necessary. Combining evaluation of different projects under the same assignment can also have a negative impact on the quality of work.

6.8 Management response and follow-up of evaluation recommendations

It is a standard practice to provide a management response to the preliminary findings at the end of the evaluation mission and to the draft report. If received in writing, the response should be included as an annex to the final report but this has only rarely happened in the sampled ex-post evaluation reports. Another, but less formal means to provide the management response is the comment by

Executing Agency[57] in the Committee session after the oral presentation of the ex-post evaluation report.

Three quarters of EAs reported that they had an opportunity to learn about the preliminary findings and recommendations before the mission left the country. Almost two thirds of EAs provided (orally) a management response to the preliminary findings but only 44% thought that it was duly considered in the evaluators' final report. This largely coincides with the views of evaluators. The EAs provided a management response to 81% of the missions and usually concurred with their findings and recommendations. However, only in 27% of the cases the management response led to substantive revision in the preliminary findings and recommendations. This is explained by the fact that, thanks to a close dialogue with the EA during the mission, management views had already been effectively considered by the evaluation team before presenting their preliminary findings.

Only in few cases there have been major disagreements on the main findings between the team and the EA when some of the reported facts could not be verified by field observations.

Several ex-post evaluations suggested a follow-up phase, which was taken up by a number of EAs by submitting respective proposals to ITTO. Some EAs also reported having gained better knowledge on formulation of new projects thanks to the evaluation mission which improved their understanding on how good logical frameworks can be elaborated and how to ensure that the objectives are realistic and the outputs verifiable.

The meta-evaluation considers it vital to have a timely formal management response (positive or negative) to preliminary evaluation results and to the draft report, particularly in projects implemented by a partnership of different organizations. As ITTO has presently no mechanism to pursue implementation of the recommendations made in ex-post evaluation reports, which undermines their usefulness. The Secretariat could adopt a practice to write to the EA 6-12 months after the submission of the final ex-post evaluation report to inquire what follow-up action has been taken on its recommendations.

6.9 Dissemination and other knowledge management

6.9.1 Current situation

Effectiveness of the learning function of ex-post evaluation depends on dissemination and other knowledge management to ensure that the lessons learned are duly considered in future project design and implementation. This is necessary to capitalize the significant investment made by ITTO in ex-post evaluations. In practice, effective knowledge management means that there is an operational feedback loop through various institutionalized ways for learning from experience to improve future practice. The evaluation function should seek continual improvement of operations within ITTO and more broadly, as the lessons learned are globally applicable public goods.

The current dissemination mechanisms include (i) distribution of the evaluation reports or their executive summaries to the country Focal Points before the Council sessions, (ii) oral presentations of the main results in the Committee sessions, (iii) distribution of hard copies of the reports during the ITTC sessions, (iv) sending the final reports to the Executing Agencies, (v) posting the reports or their executive summaries on the ITTO website, (vi) publication of summaries in the Tropical Forest Update, and (vii) sending reports upon request to interested parties based on the List of Publications in the website. In order to enhance the dissemination, (viii) a series of synthesis reports have been prepared and disseminated. In this section we examine all these methods based on the stakeholder consultations and the assessment of the meta-evaluation team.

6.9.2 Target groups

The main target groups of dissemination are (i) Executing Agencies and their Project Coordinators as well as (ii) future project formulators, all of whom can directly benefit from evaluation results. More

[57] Presented by the country Focal Point if the EA is not present.

broadly, the target groups also consist of (iii) country Focal Points, (iv) members of Project Steering Committees, (v) relevant government agencies, and (vi) other stakeholders.

Future project formulators are the most difficult target group to identify and reach ex ante as they include a huge number of diverse organizations and groups such as forest communities, the civil society, the private sector and specialists helping these groups in project formulation. In industry and market projects the private sector is an important target group.

Within ITTO the target groups include Project Managers as well as the members of the Expert Panel on Project Appraisal and the Thematic Programme Advisory Groups who would benefit from the lessons learned when they are assessing project proposals for funding.
Donor agencies, other international organizations and NGOs as well as professional consultants and experts in other countries are also potential users of ITTO's evaluation results. Two groups with somewhat different information needs can be identified as pointed out by one consuming country Focal Point:

(a) *Those who work in the international forests arena should be made fully aware of the work ITTO supports as a cutting edge organization which has a unique mandate and is responsive to new needs and delivering high quality results. Ex-post evaluations provide ITTO with technical credibility to outside audiences, including the Collaborative Partnership on Forests members as well as to ITTO member governments.*

(b) *Current and potential donors need adequate information so that they can demonstrate that funds given to ITTO have been well used and the work has been evaluated to high standards. Given the competition for funds, ITTO must also show its competitive advantage and its tight control of project quality and use of funds. Many donors also need information on legality of traded tropical timber products, impacts on poverty reduction and empowerment of marginalized groups, progress in SFM, and tropical forests in climate change mitigation and adaptation. In addition, it is important to know how the individual projects have fed into national/sub-national forest policies and processes, i.e. scaling up of project work and/or contribution to a broader region than the projects' geographic scope.*

A key issue to donors and other stakeholders is sustainability and viability of the supported activities for continuation after formal project completion. In addition, information on quantitative results would strongly support the fund-raising.

ITTO's knowledge management strategy needs to consider the various target groups whose information needs are partly different and reaching them needs a combination of dissemination channels and information products.

6.9.3 Ex-post evaluation reports

It goes without saying that Executing Agencies have received and usually reviewed draft and final ex-post evaluation reports. More than two thirds of the responding EA representatives thought that they have also benefited from ex-post evaluations of their own and other ITTO projects carried out in their country or elsewhere.

More than three quarters of all the producing country Focal Points have also reviewed ex-post evaluation reports and two thirds thought that the results have contributed to new project design in the country. While in Asia and Latin America Focal Points regularly review all ex-post evaluation reports in the country, in Africa this appeared to happen only in a third of cases. The responding African countries reported no feedback impact of ex-post evaluations on the formulation of new project proposals, while in the other regions, countries reported to make use of ex-post evaluation reports for this purpose.

The most important means for producing country Focal Points have been hard copies of reports received during ITTC sessions and also most of consuming country Focal Points found this

information channel useful. Three quarters thought copies requested from the Secretariat based on the Publications List either useful or very useful.[58]

Distribution of hard copies is a valuable dissemination mechanism but it is an on-off approach to share knowledge and it serves only some target groups. It can be expected that the role of hard copies in the future will diminish as they tend to end up in bookshelves being often difficult to retrieve when needed. This is not limited to the ex-post evaluation reports as, according to the Secretariat, the archives of the Organization contain large amounts of accumulated hard copies of project technical and completion reports most of which may not find users through the present dissemination mechanism. Selective digitization and indexing of potentially valuable documents and posting them on the ITTO website would be needed to improve sharing of this information.

6.9.4 Committee presentations on ex-post evaluation results

Two thirds of all the responding producing country Focal Points thought that presentations and discussions on the results of ex-post evaluations in ITTO's Committees have been either very useful or useful, but one third was either unaware of them or considered them not relevant. In Africa two thirds of the respondents belonged to this group while in Latin America their share was 20%. In Asia all the responding Focal Points considered presentations either very useful or useful.

Consuming country Focal Points found presentations and discussions on the results of ex-post evaluation reports in ITTO Committees very useful or useful and only 22% considered them of limited value.

These views contrast with those of evaluators. About 42% of the evaluators considered discussions on the ex-post evaluation results in ITTO Committees of limited value. Only a minority found that they were very useful (27%) or useful (15%). Almost all evaluators mentioned too limited time available to present the findings and to discuss the lessons learned and recommendations properly.[59] On the other hand, a third of evaluators reported that they could clarify issues in their oral presentation.

The survey results emphasize the value of good quality ex-post evaluation reports but raise a question whether the current practice of Committee presentations is appropriate, particularly with increased time pressure as the Committees have only one meeting a year. Options to improve the situation are:

(a) Be selective and focus oral presentations on those ex-post evaluations that have increased knowledge most
(b) Organize separate side events during the ITTC on reporting on ex-post evaluations
(c) Integrate lessons learned in the programmes of various ITTO technical meetings
(d) Discontinue with oral presentations in the Committee meetings and focus on other means of communication

6.9.5 Articles published in Tropical Forest Update

About a third of the responding Executing Agencies reported to have benefited from articles on ex-post evaluations in TFU. For producing country Focal Points, the TFU articles have been more important as 44% of them read these regularly. As TFU is published in three languages and most ex-post evaluation reports have been produced in English, the summary articles have been more useful for EAs and Focal Points in Latin America and the francophone Africa than in Asia.

For consuming country Focal Points the TFU articles on ex-post evaluations have been less important and 44% of them were even unaware of their existence.

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[58] There are no systematic records on how many hard copies on ex-post evaluation reports have been requested from the Secretariat.

[59] Several evaluators were frustrated by the fact that they may have had to travel four days to and from the ITTC sessions to make a presentation of ten minutes which could not do justice to their work and discussion was limited due to strict time constraints.

The current circulation of TFU is 15,000 copies in over 100 countries in hard copy in English, French and Spanish, and many more read it online.[60] TFU remains one of the key dissemination channels for broad audiences for sharing of knowledge generated by ITTO. Its added value partly comes from the fact that it is available in three languages. For the direct target groups of ex-post evaluation results other means of communication are necessary while TFU should continue its current practice focusing on lessons learned that can be broadly shared.

6.9.6 Synthesis reports and dissemination of thematic lessons

A total of 15 thematic synthesis reports of selected individual ex-post evaluation reports have been prepared to summarize lessons learned and general recommendations. The themes of these reports are listed below and a full list is provided in Appendix 6.2.

- Criteria & Indicators for SFM
- Biodiversity conservation
- Forest management and inventory
- Forest plantations/growth and yield (2 reports)
- Demonstration areas/model forests for SFM
- Mangrove conservation, management and rehabilitation
- Community participation in SFM
- Rehabilitation and management of degraded secondary forests
- SFM in Latin America (2)
- Fire management in Indonesia
- Reduced Impact Logging
- Forest information systems (2)

In addition, two summary reports exist consisting of executive summaries of projects in the fields of EIMI and FI. There is also one country report containing executive summaries of projects in China. These may not, however, be considered thematic summaries as there is no comparative analysis of projects.

In general, a great majority of all the stakeholder groups appreciated thematic synthesis reports as useful dissemination tools and urged the practice to be continued. This was also observed by Hardcastle & Umali (2007) in their review of the implementation of the Yokohama Action Plan. Among the producing country Focal Points, these reports are found useful particularly in Asia and Latin America, while in Africa two thirds of Focal Points were not aware of them. This may be mainly due to the language barrier as the thematic summaries do not exist in French or Spanish.

Stakeholders made several calls for improving synthesizing the results so that they become easily accessible for target groups. This was considered a main means to add value to the investment made in ITTO's evaluation work. Syntheses of evaluation reports should be specifically written to help formulators strengthen their project designs by avoiding pitfalls, including examples on what works and what does not in different situations.

In view of facilitating learning, some EAs proposed that the summaries could be complemented by simple brochures or leaflets focusing on practical guidance and lessons learned. A few Focal Points in consuming countries also shared this view.

It was also noted that synthesized information on lessons learned and recommendations could be used in ITTO's policy development work as well as by Thematic Program Advisory Committees, Expert Panels on Project Appraisal, and donors who are reviewing projects for financing.

The meta-evaluation team found that the quality of thematic summaries varies extensively; some are thorough and analytical while others are fairly superficial. Quality could be improved through better guidance on the format, contents and specific issues to be addressed. However, the outputs should be tailored to make them usable by the main target groups in ITTO member countries. The meta-

[60] Information provided by the Secretariat.

evaluation attempted to provide examples of thematic summaries (Annex II)[61] which focus on meeting the needs of the main target groups.

Disseminating the results of thematic synthesis reports through the present mechanisms may not be sufficient to capitalize the value of investment in their elaboration. Therefore, some stakeholders suggested that thematic conferences/meetings be organized to share experience on successful projects internationally, regionally or nationally, depending on the subject. The target groups of such events would include project coordinators, potential formulators of new projects among key stakeholder groups, country Focal Points and other stakeholders working in the subject area. The organization of such events would require staff time and funding that would need to be budgeted and this would therefore require a careful assessment of cost-effectiveness. The meta-evaluation team considers the idea useful but implementation should be focused on carefully selected strategically important topics linked with the Thematic Programmes.

6.9.7 ITTO website

The ITTO website is a major source of information for members and their stakeholders. It contains a wealth of information, including executive summaries of ex-post evaluation reports. Stakeholders identified several ways how the website could be improved to better meet their learning needs:

- There is need to improve accessibility and facilitated search by topics to ex-post evaluation reports and other valuable technical reports of projects, as in the current situation the user has to spend a lot of time in browsing to find what s/he is searching for. This could be achieved by indexing/classifying documents by keywords to facilitate searching through the on-line list of project evaluations or the List of ITTO Publications.[62]
- PowerPoint presentations on the ex-post evaluations used at Committee meetings could be posted together with the reports allowing a quick way to learn about the contents without going through the reports. The presentations are generally good and easily understood summaries and useful for accountability.
- The website could include a special section on highly successful projects that can serve as examples for other countries.
- Key synthesis documents on ex-post evaluations could be provided in all the official languages of the Organization

6.9.8 Dissemination in countries

While the Secretariat is responsible for sharing knowledge on the international level, the main duty for in-country dissemination lies with the producing country Focal Points, EAs and other stakeholders. Valuable experience from past projects needs to get back to the field; i.e. to the forest communities, the private sector and other stakeholders (i.e. to those who were involved in the project implementation, or will be involved in the future).

Only about a half of the responding EAs explained that they had disseminated the results of the ex-post evaluation reports to other parties in the country, while the other half had not done so. This is obviously a cause of concern, as most of the contents of ex-post evaluation reports are country specific with potentially valuable lessons learned for other national stakeholders.

Almost 90% of the responding Focal Points in producing countries stated that they have mechanisms to disseminate the results of ITTO project work but only in 22% such mechanisms exist for sharing knowledge of ex-post evaluation reports. Electronic means were mentioned as the most common tool for dissemination but in some less developed countries, hard copies are still necessary. It appears that in most cases the results of ex-post evaluations have not been effectively disseminated and the reports tend to be just filed for eventual future use.

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61 To be provided separately.

62 This should not be limited to ex-post evaluation reports but also include technical reports of projects that contain a lot of useful information on a wide variety of topics for broad audiences. Many of these reports are not currently accessible through other means than by requesting an electronic/hard copy from the Secretariat.

The situation could be improved by the following means:

- Executing Agencies could be required/requested to post ex-post evaluation reports on their own websites, or to establish a link with the respective webpage of the ITTO site.
- Focal Points could inform stakeholders through their own in-country distribution lists on the availability of new ex-post reports in the ITTO website.
- The Secretariat could periodically update Executing Agencies and Focal Points on the availability of new ex-post evaluation reports.

In addition, stakeholders made the following additional suggestions for dissemination of project outputs:

- Provisions for the dissemination of results should be specified in detail in the project document to ensure that the respective activities are also always implemented.
- Project budgets should include necessary allocations for dissemination.
- Key project results and lessons learned should be published before the project is completed.

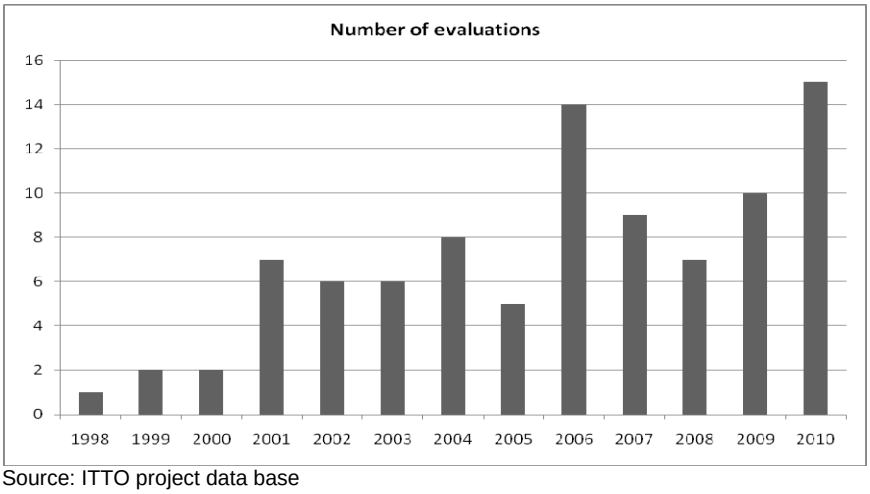
6.9.9 Other information gaps

Consuming countries were also asked about possible information gaps on ITTO's project work and other activities which could help donors identify areas to be supported. Two thirds of Focal Points appear to receive adequate information from the Organization but one third indicated that there are some gaps. These include, among others, information on poverty and economic impacts, multiplier effects, contributions to climate change mitigation and green economy, allocation of funding by programmes and type of projects, as well as quantitative baseline and monitoring data, particularly with regard to the status of forests and forest enterprises (cf. also section 6.9.2).

6.10 Strengthening feedback to project design and appraisal

One of the purposes of ex-post evaluation is to improve the quality of project proposals submitted to the ITTO. The first ex-post evaluations were carried out in 1997 but the activity took a strong boost after the ITTC Decision 3(XXVIII) taken in 2000 that set the basis for project selection, introduction of thematic synthesis reports, and enhanced dissemination (Figure 6.3; cf. section 6.4).

Figure 6.3 Number of ex-post evaluations 1998-2010



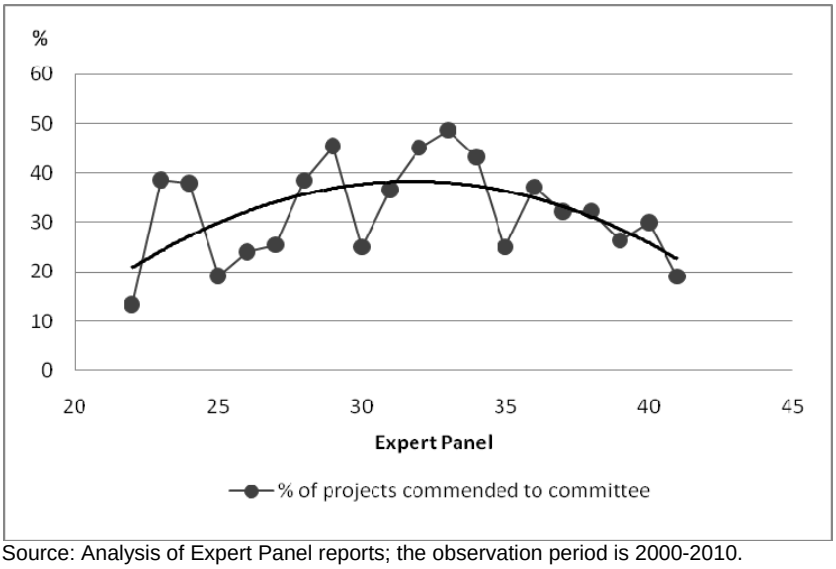
Source: ITTO project data base

The quality of project proposals has been a cause of concern for the Expert Panel on Project Appraisal since the beginning of ITTO. Weaknesses have been observed both in meeting the formal

requirements of proposal presentation and substantive aspects[63]. These weaknesses tend to persist over time as they have repeatedly come up in the reports of the Expert Panel in spite of improved manuals and training provided on project formulation.

In order to measure the quality of project proposals we have used the share of pre-project and project proposals commended to the Committees for approval (as they were presented, or with minor modifications)[64] of the total number of proposals submitted. The result (Figure 6.4) shows that in 2000-2007 there was an improvement in the quality of proposals, albeit with wide variation, but since then the trend has been downwards. The earlier improvement was probably a result of training courses and other efforts of the organization to build capacity in project formulation in producing member countries. It appears that the trends and quality variation in project proposals over time are independent from the number of proposals submitted (cf. Figure 6.5). Increasing ex-post evaluation activity has had no apparent correlation with the quality of project formulation (cf. Figure 6.3) as, were there such a link, the share of commended proposals by the Expert Panel should have increased during the last 3-4 years.

Figure 6.4 Share of project proposals commended to Committee by the Expert Panel on Project Appraisal



Source: Analysis of Expert Panel reports; the observation period is 2000-2010.

Interviews with the persons who had chaired eight Expert Panel meetings revealed that there have been repeated calls for consideration of the results of relevant ex-post evaluations by project formulators. Several Panels have noted that in many cases in which ex-post evaluations or diagnostic country missions had been undertaken, subsequent project proposals from the same countries have not taken account of (or even mentioned) them at all (cf. also ITTO 2009d).

Even phased projects have sometimes diverted away from design and objectives of completed phases which would justify continuation of new phases. In these situations mid-term evaluations should have been conducted before the completion of the previous phase (or ex-post evaluation should have been conducted immediately after completion of the previous phase).[65] Being fully aware of these problems e.g. the 34th Expert Panel noted lack of consideration of ex-post evaluation reports and recommended

[63] Among others, typical weaknesses have included (i) quality of problem analysis, (ii) lacking link between objectives and the problem analysis, (iii) inconsistent logical frameworks, (iv) inadequate explanation of relevance to ITTA/ITTO, (v) lack of analysis of gender, sustainability and risks, (vi) unclear benefits for targeted beneficiaries, (vii) elaboration of costs and benefits and inconsistencies in budget, (viii) no consideration of minimum possible costs for implementation, (ix) lack of consideration of related projects, and (x) lack of commitment by participating governments in transboundary or regional projects.

[64] Category 1 in the present appraisal system.

[65] There have been some exceptions such as the international forest industry capacity building project (PD013/95 Rev.3(I)) and successive information system projects in Gabon (PD029/96 Rev.1 (M)) which both had several phases and were evaluated accordingly.

to the Council making it compulsory to conduct ex-post evaluation of a completed phase I project before a phase II proposal is submitted without disrupting the timing of the supported activity.[66]

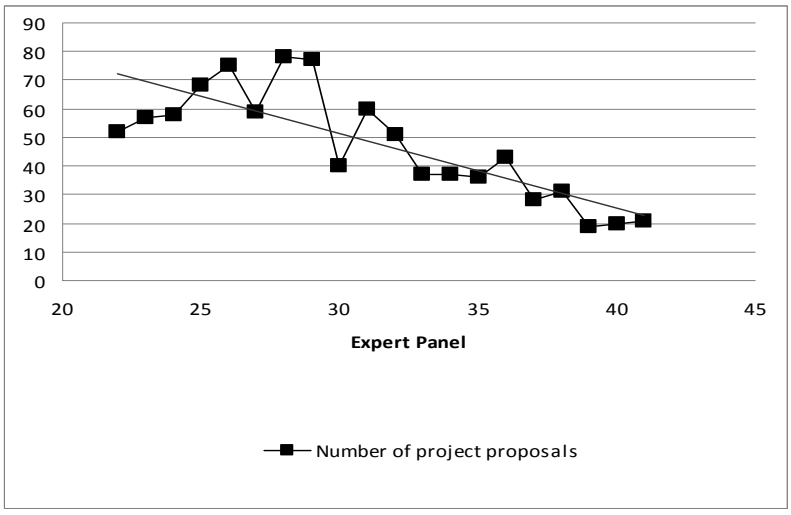
The Expert Panel has also felt that it could itself benefit from ex-post evaluation reports. For instance, the 35th Panel observed that the project proposals often refer to the results of some completed projects/pre-projects and ex-post evaluation reports and called for such reports to be provided to all Panel members in advance. In some cases the chair has specifically requested for a related ex-post evaluation report on similar projects to enable the Panel to consider respective earlier lessons learned in appraisal. Due to the heavy workload of Expert Panels until 2008 (Figure 6.5), this has, however, proved to be difficult to implement.

The situation changed as a result of the introduction of four Thematic Programmes (TP) which in 2009-2010 received a total of 69 proposals.[67] The increasing trend towards TPs is expected to continue provided that adequate funding through the five programmes can be ensured.[68]

ITTO has made a major effort to improve its members' capacity to formulate project proposals. In 1995-2002 a total of 21 regional training courses were organized with an estimated number of 450 participants representing a total investment of USD 2.9 million. The impact of these courses on the number and quality of project proposals has been significant but it has not been sustainable, probably mainly due to changes of personnel in potential executing agencies (Figure 6.4). As a response to the declining trend in the share of approved projects since 2007, three more regional courses were organized 2009 to familiarize the target groups with the revised Manual for project formulation.

A review of the training course programmes revealed that they have not included consideration of relevant ex-post evaluations as part of project formulation process (cf. ITTO 2009a). A review of the programmes of the ITTO training courses on project formulation revealed that lessons from ex-post evaluations have not been included and the course emphasis has often been on capacity building in meeting the formal requirements of project design.

Figure 6.5 Number of project proposals appraised by the Expert Panel



Source: Analysis of Expert Panel reports; the observation period is 2000-2010.

In conclusion, the systemic link between ex-post evaluation and project design and appraisal (cf. Figure 2.1) is relatively weak and it is not institutionalized. There is no requirement for project formulators to look into the lessons learned from the previous projects. The Expert Panel on Project Appraisal considers the results of ex-post evaluation reports on an ad hoc basis and this has largely

[66] This was reiterated by the 35th and 36th Expert Panels.
[67] REDDES, TFLET, CFME and TMT; a total of three cycles (2 in 2009 and one in 2010).
[68] The fifth TP Industry Development and Efficiency (IDE) remains to be started due to lack of financing.

been at the discretion of the co-chairs.[69] The ITTO Manual on project formulation does not contain specific guidance for benefiting from earlier lessons learned.

A number of measures have been suggested by stakeholders to improve the link between evaluation and project design and appraisal:

- The ITTO Manual on Project Formulation or related guidance could include specific reference/requirement to review the available lessons learned and this could be demonstrated in the project proposal.
- The Secretariat could routinely provide the members of the Expert Panel and the TPACs information on available lessons learned on the related thematic areas (particularly thematic synthesis reports) and relevant ex-post evaluation reports to assist Panel members in the appraisal of project proposals.
- Training courses on project formulations could include a section on the use of lessons learned from earlier projects and how to access relevant information on them.

6.11 Monitoring

6.11.1 Monitoring of projects and continual improvement of project work

Effective monitoring reduces the need for ex-post evaluations, particularly for accountability. The present ITTO provisions of project monitoring, review and reporting are detailed and cover all the necessary elements for generating necessary information on inputs, outputs, outcomes and direct impacts. The cornerstones of the system are identified objects and indicators, methods of data collection and means of verification, processing and analysis of the data, and defining corrective action (ITTO 2009b). The role of Project Steering Committees is crucial in making adjustment decisions based on this information but they do not usually meet frequently.

The meta-evaluation rated monitoring in a sample of projects and concluded that the quality of monitoring has generally been satisfactory (cf. section 5.6.4). However, in about a quarter of the cases there have been needs for improvement.

In the stakeholder survey, evaluators found monitoring by Executing Agencies in most cases satisfactory (58%) or excellent (23%) but in the rest (17%) it was weak which is in line with the results of the meta-evaluation ratings of the sampled projects. The current situation is probably better than the results of the sampled ex-post evaluated projects suggest, as they covered a period of more than 20 years.

In mixed projects with government agencies and non-government bodies as Executing Agency there has been a somewhat better oversight in monitoring than in the case of government-executed projects. This calls for attention to carefully assess the EA capacity before the project is approved.

In general, EAs perceived the current monitoring system robust and effective in meeting the information requirements. However, some EAs noted that simplification of reporting formats is needed, particularly unnecessary repetition should be avoided.

The ITTO staff considered the monitoring system generally well established but there are areas in which improvements are needed. The recently introduced On-Line Monitoring System (OLMS) is expected to facilitate monitoring of the progress of project implementation and day-to-day communication between Project Managers of the Secretariat and EA Project Coordinators. Less than a fifth of EAs responding to the stakeholder survey had used the OLMS and found it a useful communication mechanism with the Secretariat.

Some staff members expressed concerns on the adequacy of the OLMS's schematic approach to measure progress based on estimated percentage of implementation of activities and production of outputs. There was a common view among the staff that OLMS cannot replace monitoring visits in the field to effectively monitor progress. The ITTO's monitoring procedure should ensure that necessary

[69] Information provided by the Secretariat and Chairpersons of ten Expert Panels.

changes are actually implemented and corrections in the project cycle system as a whole are pursued based on the accumulating experience.

As part of the monitoring function, Project Managers prepare a summary of the project's accomplishment upon the receipt of the Project Completion Report (PCR) from the EA within three months of completion. The summary, not exceeding two pages, contains information on objectives, activities, outputs, lessons learned and recommendations. The practice of preparing these summaries appears to vary between CRF and CFI/CEM. At present CRF receives a report on each project (up to five pages) which contains financial facts, introduction, objectives, achievements and outputs, outcomes and impacts, lessons learned and sustainability, and a conclusion on termination for the Committee to decide. In the CFI/CEM the respective reports are shorter (1 to 2 pages) with information on key financial facts, objectives, agreements, implementation, outputs, main lessons, financial audit, and a proposal for the termination of the project. In both cases the reports appear to derive their information from the Project Completion Report without (explicit) assessment by the Secretariat.

The meta-evaluation deems it necessary to standardize the presentation of these termination reports into maximum two-page reports. In view of the fact that the ITTO Project Manager during her/his monitoring activity has gained insight about the strengths and weaknesses of the project and its implementation, it should also be her/his responsibility to prepare a standardized report to the Committee. The report should include Secretariat's own assessment on the project.

The existing summaries do not contain a rating by the Project Manager of the project in terms of the quality of design, relevance, effectiveness, immediate and potential impacts, expected sustainability, performance of actors, or significance of the project's contribution to the ITTO objectives and the goals of the Action Plan. Such an addition to the existing system would enable the Organization to monitor the continual improvement of its project work as the information could be annually/biennially compiled and analyzed for reporting to the Council and the Committees. This practice would also help the Committees select projects to be ex-post evaluated towards a more strategic and cost-effective approach. Project Managers are best informed to carry out an assessment of the completed projects' quality. Their ratings on performance would be validated in due course by subsequent ex-post evaluations of selected projects. A draft form to be used in assessment and reporting is given in Appendix 6.3.

6.11.2 Role of Project Steering Committees

The project-level meta-evaluation revealed that the Project Steering Committees (PSC) usually operate satisfactorily. However, a number of ex-post evaluation reports called for a more active role from PSC which is usually limited to annual meetings in order to ensure that the project implementation is on track and to assess possible need for adjustment in the work plan.

Stakeholders had somewhat different views on the PSC composition. It was pointed out that the membership should not be too extensive as it can be unhelpful for in-depth analysis of project implementation. On the other hand, there were also several calls to have all the relevant stakeholder groups represented in the PSC. There was a common view that for effective monitoring and decision-making PSC members should have adequate expertise and capacity to foresee obstacles in implementation by constantly questioning the EA delivery capacity. In deciding on the PSC compositions both stakeholder participation and expertise required by the size and nature of the project could be the guiding principles. The meta-evaluation does not propose strict common rules for the number and composition of PSC membership.

6.12 Organization of the monitoring and evaluation function

Until today, Project Managers have organized ex-post evaluations including (i) drafting the TOR, (ii) identifying a short-list of consultants, (iii) consultations with the EA on the evaluation work plan, (iv) contracting the consultants, (v) arranging pre-mission documentation and logistical support, (vi) reviewing draft and final reports of ex-post evaluation, and (vii) arranging their distribution to the country Focal Point and the Executing Agency. Other dissemination of the results is the responsibility of the Information Officer.

The respective workload directly correlates with the number of ex-post evaluations per year which has varied extensively showing an increasing trend and averaging about 10 during the last few years (Figure 6.3). Most of thematic evaluations have been carried out on the RFM projects and there are gaps in the other Divisions (cf. section 6.9.6).

According to the document "Implementation Management by the ITTO Secretariat (TFLET and REDDES), monitoring, reporting and evaluation actions of the TPs should be supported by LFM, outputs, and means of verification as defined in the Monitoring Protocol. In addition, an independent evaluation process is to be established to evaluate the effectiveness of the Thematic Programmes, including their sustainability. The monitoring and evaluation of TPs will significantly increase the workload of the monitoring and evaluation function.[70] In addition to Programme level periodic mid-term evaluations, individual TP projects will also be subject to ex-post evaluation in due course.

The number of future ex-post evaluations of projects funded by the Special Account may remain on the current level but could also decline along with the changing emphasis in funding towards Thematic Programmes. The monitoring and evaluation workload is therefore likely to remain on its current level as whole but it will depend on the funding volume.

The post of the Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Officer (PMEO) was established in 2007 to assist the Organization to further strengthen its ability to plan, improve the implementation of, and assess the impact of its activities. The post was filled in May 2009. The PMEO reports directly to the Executive Director and his job description includes, inter alia, the following tasks:

(a) Coordinate with all the Divisions of the Organization with a view to develop and monitor the implementation of the Thematic Programmes and Biennial Work Programmes of the Organization
(b) Be directly responsible for the sound implementation of the TPs
(c) In consultation with all the Divisions, design, plan and implement an effective monitoring and evaluation system and procedures, for the policy and project work of the Organization, including for ex-post and mid-term evaluations
(d) [Ensure that] Overall the system and procedures should aim to conduct the monitoring and evaluation work from the ITTO headquarters, and to ensure the necessary field visits for monitoring and evaluation to be effective for maintaining the quality of the projects being implemented. The system should also ensure the overall effectiveness and efficiency of the Organization;
(e) Supervise the effective implementation and further expansion of the recently developed On-Line Monitoring System for projects;
(f) In consultation with the relevant Divisions, assist in assessing project and pre-project proposals submitted, and provide Member countries with relevant assistance in conformity with the ITTA and ITTO criteria/priorities;
(g) Provide assistance, as required/requested, to the Expert Panel for the Appraisal of Project and Pre-Project Proposals

The Programme Management document referred to above also makes provision for Thematic Programme Assistant(s) to assist in all administrative and financial aspects of the work needed for the implementation of the Thematic Programmes. No Assistant to PMEO has been recruited as yet.

The establishment of the PMEO post is in line with the principles of good governance in international organizations. If Project Managers continue to be responsible for organization of ex-post evaluations, this may create a conflict of interest, which can now be avoided.

All the tasks listed above are relevant for the PMEO job description but there is a need for clarification on the following aspects:

- The PMEO job description is explicit on the development of the monitoring and evaluation system, but it is not explicit on the operational aspects of ex-post evaluation (cf. point (d) above).

[70] The experience on the CITES programme implementation provides relevant experience to estimate the workload requirements of TPs.

This issue could be clarified so that organization of ex-post evaluations becomes a clear responsibility of PMEO.

- Point (b) appears an overarching responsibility without identifying which activities are needed to implement it.
- In point (d), the PMEO's tasks in the development of monitoring could be specified.
- If the PMEO is directly engaged in the implementation of projects (in the capacity of Project Manager), this may create a conflict of interest for her/his main duties.
- Periodic compilation of analytical summaries on the completed projects based on the proposed reporting practice (cf. section 6.11.1 and Appendix 6.3) could be included in the duties of the PMEO.

At present, about two thirds of the working time of the PMEO is used for the management of the Thematic Programmes which does not allow sufficient resources to carry out the specific tasks related to monitoring and evaluation as defined in the job description.

PART III. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7. CONCLUSIONS

The main objectives of the meta-evaluation were to examine the quality of ITTO ex-post evaluations and synthesize their findings. During the course of work it became necessary to examine also the quality of projects and the monitoring and evaluation function of the Organization. A thematic review of lessons learned and recommendations of ex-post evaluated is not yet included in the report.

7.1 Portfolio analysis of ex-post evaluated projects

The significant accumulated investment in ex-post evaluation is not optimal from the perspective of accountability and learning. There are important gaps in the coverage of ex-post evaluated projects among smaller projects, producing member countries which have executed several ITTO projects, projects submitted by consuming member countries, and projects implemented by the ITTO Secretariat. There is a need for reconsideration in how ex-post evaluation should be targeted at in the future in order to maximize its effectiveness for learning and accountability.

7.2 Quality of ex-post evaluation

While the outputs of ITTO projects can be generally identified without difficulty, the evaluation of impacts and sustainability is typically constrained by lack of baseline information, quantifiable indicators of measurement, and lack of data to establish to what extent the various dimensions of sustainability have been achieved. Due to these factors, compounded by limited time and resources available and sometimes over-ambitious TOR, the quality of ex-post evaluations of the ITTO projects is often inherently imperfect.

Nevertheless, the quality of ex-post evaluations has been by and large satisfactory but there is variation between evaluators and, to a lesser extent, between ITTO Divisions. As a whole, unsatisfactory evaluations are few.

Weak areas in the coverage of ex-post evaluation reports include (i) assessment of the LFM and linking evaluation indicators with it, (ii) replicability of the project, (iii) exit strategy, (iv) impact of external risks on performance, and (v) monitoring and follow-up activities after the project termination Sustainability is often unsatisfactorily evaluated, partly due to lack of a clear exit strategy, and this area would require further evaluation guidance in ITTO projects. Only few evaluations have dealt with the question whether the project was the least-cost approach in delivering its outputs and outcomes.

With regard to accountability, evaluations have commonly focused on verification of the activities carried out and the outputs generated as well as review of the financial audit reports. Other aspects of accountability in the role of actors and adoption of recommendations, sharing of lessons, etc. have not always received due attention.

A significant improvement has taken place in the last 10 years in the quality of ex-post evaluations but there is still scope for improvement and the analysis revealed a number of ways for how to do it:

- careful selection of consultants and ensuring that adequate local expertise and multidisciplinary skills are drawn on; for this an expanded roster of potential candidates is needed
- clarity and consistency to be improved in the general guidance provided in the ITTO Manuals
- in the TOR of evaluation assignments, specific guidance to be provided to focus on key strategic issues, and how to address evaluate sustainability and impacts on the ground
- applying cost-efficient measures in collecting information such as questionnaire surveys among stakeholders and group meetings
- building a close systemic link between the project logical framework and evaluation indicators
- including a requirement for qualitative analysis of the projects' contribution to ITTO objectives

7.3 Project quality

It is well known that forestry projects need to address a uniquely complex set of issues and field projects are often implemented in challenging environments that are largely outside the control of those who fund, implement and benefit from the activities. Environmental degradation of the forest resources, extreme poverty, deficient infrastructure, limitations in market access, weak governance, and social conflicts are prevalent in many situations. Field projects can also be affected by external factors such as weather risks. On the other hand, ITTO's projects are fully country-driven which adds to their value. Their implementation is subject to changes in the political and institutional environment, which can sometimes be challenging.

In general, the average quality of the ex-post evaluated projects has been satisfactory. Effectiveness, efficiency and relevance have received higher quality ratings than impacts and sustainability. The differences between Divisions are not significant. Regionally, the projects in Africa have had the highest overall quality ratings in the sample, followed by Asia and Latin America. The international-level projects have suffered from a somewhat lower quality in relevance, effectiveness and sustainability, in spite of their relatively good impacts and efficiency.

Relevance

As regards relevance in the national or local context, strengths in the project design have included alignment with beneficiary/target group needs, implementation arrangements, policy compatibility, economic impact, participation and provision of local opportunities, and partner interest alignment. Somewhat weaker areas are realism and internal logic in project design but there is significant scope for improvement also with regard to participation and innovation.

Effectiveness

A large majority of the sampled ex-post evaluated projects were rated as satisfactory in terms of effectiveness and a few even as excellent, which indicates that the specific objectives were generally well achieved.

Impacts

Impacts have been sought through ITTO projects that have been

(a) closely targeted at specific substantive themes to achieve tangible results within the available resources and time period; these themes are often technically oriented and can deliver the targeted verifiable impacts; and
(b) focused on problems in which a narrow project strategy was not deemed adequate and therefore simultaneous interventions in more than one impact area were necessary; such problems are typical in the ITTO producing member countries; in these cases project impacts tend to be difficult to quantify due to lack of adequate baseline information and absence of verifiable indicators.

In general, the projects have had satisfactory impacts in strengthening of capacity and institutions as well as information and knowledge but lower ratings were found in gender, building up of social capital and empowerment, and economic impact. Most of the projects have impacts on national level even if the actual interventions took place on a local level. Local level projects have been particularly common in Africa and the RFM division.

The main intended target groups of ITTO projects have been forest administrations, the private sector and forest communities. Training and research institutes as well NGOs have also been targeted but to a considerably lesser extent. Successful identification of beneficiary needs has contributed to impacts, particularly in strengthening of social capital and, to a lesser extent, in generation of economic benefits. Weaknesses in gender aspects are partly due to lack of proper identification of beneficiary needs but – perhaps mainly - because gender is not relevant in many technically oriented ITTO projects.

Thematically, the main impact areas have been SFM (particularly restoration, rehabilitation, reforestation and plantations, demonstration of new practices, forest inventory, and management planning) which is the “core business” of ITTO. Another key impact area has been development of community forest management and enterprise. There has been less evaluation on further processing and industry development, reduced impact logging (RIL), information systems, governance, marketing and trade promotion, non-timber forest products, Criteria & Indicators for SFM, and certification and timber tracking and market information. This may not be considered compatible with ITTO’s strategic objectives.

Among the cross-cutting themes, human resource development has been the focal impact area covered by more than two thirds of projects. R&D has also been well represented, but there have been fewer projects with impacts in innovation, technology transfer, and hardly anything specifically targeted at investment promotion.

Direct project impacts could be considerably enhanced through effective sharing of knowledge. Most project products, lessons learned and recommendations identified are applicable nationally and often also regionally/internationally. In addition, many projects could be replicated in similar conditions beyond project sites and host countries. This emphasizes ITTO projects as global public goods.

Sustainability

In most ITTO projects sustainability has been either satisfactory or moderately satisfactory but a third has had problems in this respect. While technical and environmental sustainability were generally rated satisfactory, institutional, economic and particularly social sustainability have been more problematic. The latter has not been even assessed at all in a quarter of ex-post evaluations, which can be partly explained by the technical orientation of many projects which do not have a social dimension.

Economic and social sustainability appear to have a strong positive linkage demonstrating the potential for win-win interventions. Positive linkages between economic and environmental sustainability and between social and environmental sustainability were also identified although they appear to be weaker and there are cases with negative trade-offs as well.

Projects have usually a high degree of national policy compatibility and their sustainability has been aided by the fact that a third of the projects have led to policy adjustment. However, feasible exit strategies beyond identifying a need for follow-up external financial support appear to be few. The ITTO projects may therefore be classified into three main categories (cf. Hardcastle 2007):

1. One-off projects have clearly defined end products after which no further action is needed (e.g. technical or market studies, short-term R&D projects, etc.). However, the impacts and sustainability of the intervention will depend on how stakeholders pursue post-project utilization of these products. If dissemination is included in the strategy, impacts and sustainability can be evaluated in due course.
2. Phased projects have a clearly defined mid-point or milestone against which outputs and immediate impacts can be evaluated either before or soon after the completion of the phase to enable decision on possible support to the next phase. Evaluation of sustainability is relevant only after all the phases have been completed.
3. Projects with no clear end point or exit strategy do not allow evaluation of success and sustainability due to lack of proper indicators. The started activities often tend to collapse after the project completion.

Several sampled ex-post evaluated projects belong to the first group (forest inventory and management planning, training on RIL and industrial processing, market studies, etc.). A large number of larger (and thereby often ex-post evaluated) projects belong to the second group. Phasing has often been designed according to the availability of funds rather than based on a clearly defined logical milestone after which a mid-term evaluation would be useful.

Projects with no clearly defined end point possibly represent a significant share of ITTO projects. It is the lack of post-project financial support which endangers the often valuable results in forest protection, community forestry, strengthening of governance, demonstration areas, and many other

interventions. This emphasizes the importance of developing adequate exit strategies starting from the project design phase.

Efficiency

The efficiency of ITTO projects has on average been satisfactory as a result of appropriate resource allocation, effective monitoring, cost-efficiency, and keeping the expenditure within the budget limits. No sampled evaluation report had explicit information on the financial or economic rates of return of the productive activities promoted. This is a major lacuna to be addressed in both the project design and evaluations and it is directly linked with the lack of baseline information and activity data on costs and benefits.

Most ITTO projects have been implemented within the schedule or with a delay of less than a year but there are also several cases with much longer delays. It can be questioned whether it is a good practice to allow long implementation delays and whether (dis)incentives should be introduced to improve the situation.

Actor performance is part of efficiency and, on average, it was found as satisfactory, with the highest rating obtained by the ITTO Secretariat followed by Executing Agencies, Project Steering Committees and implementation partners.

Many project types funded by ITTO tend to suffer from inherent risks. External factors have had a significant negative influence on the implementation of 15% of the evaluated projects. Bureaucratic delays in fund transfer, changes in government policy and institutional responsibilities, and exceptional weather conditions have been quoted as typical examples. However, these have also sometimes been used as an excuse for the delays caused by Executing Agencies not being able to comply with the obligations of project agreements and implementation rules, or with the agreed work plans.

Contribution to ITTO Objectives

Multiple targets are common as most ITTO projects have contributed to the achievement of more than one ITTO objective. Sustainable development (including poverty reduction), improvement of national policies, SFM, and capacity building are typical examples of such multiple objectives. More than 60% of the projects have contributed to consultation for policy development, information sharing, R&D, and access to, and transfer of, technology. Projects which deal with forest land-use and tenure, reforestation, rehabilitation and plantations, industry, markets, and marketing tend to be more focused than in the other areas.

Targeting contributions to several ITTO objectives in a single project should not be an important decision-making criterion for funding. While multiple objectives are a positive feature in their own right, they easily increase complexity of the project and can divert attention from the project's strategic focus. In spite of apparent win-win opportunities between ITTO's objectives, these trade-offs need careful consideration in project design on a case-by-case basis.

Change in project quality and impact of preparatory action

Project quality has been improving in all respects, partly as a result of training courses organized on project formulation. There is still obviously a lot of scope for improvement in all areas, especially in enhancing impacts and sustainability. This may be interpreted as larger needs for capacity building in strategic aspects of project design than in meeting the formal requirements of documentation, and these aspects would also deserve due attention in future appraisals.

Investment in preparatory support has usually resulted in improvement of the project quality but the impact may have not been as large as expected. Pre-projects have certainly improved actor performance but the impact appears marginal in the other quality determinants. On the other hand, a previous project (often a previous phase of the same project) has usually signficantly improved project quality.

7.4 Monitoring and evaluation function

Monitoring and evaluation are well-established practices in ITTO with clearly defined procedures and responsibilities. Most stakeholders perceived that these activities are appropriately conducted and they produce valuable information on accountability and lessons for learning. However, information is not always easily accessible and the feedback loop to project design and implementation is not adequate. The meta-evaluation found that ex-post evaluation in the past may have often been more a formal requirement than a strategic diagnostic tool for learning.

Choice of projects for evaluation

The current criteria of project selection on benefits to be derived for lessons learned and their wider application of lessons learned are appropriate. The criterion on the minimum size of the project (e.g. USD400,000) needs revision as sometimes small projects have generated important impacts and useful lessons, but these cannot be detected and systematized because such projects have not been eligible for ex-post evaluation.

Thematic evaluation reports on a group of projects have been a valuable tool for synthesizing information and therefore appreciated for dissemination. Evaluation of a group of projects in a country could also be potentially useful, if at the same time the impacts of ITTO's project and non-project work could be considered, with a broader strategic view on making progress towards SFM. In such evaluations ITTO's competitive advantage should be looked into within the framework of other external support.

There is a need for a more strategic approach to identify lessons learned, successful practices and pitfalls to be avoided in project design and implementation. Ex-post evaluations can be fewer but well chosen among apparent successes and failures covering all the main thematic areas and different country situations. In general, preference should be given to group projects to be evaluated by substantive themes.

Mid-term evaluation

Mid-term evaluation is a good value for money tool in many situations. However, it has rarely been practised in ITTO projects and, even then, usually as a "punitive measure" for Executing Agencies which have not been successful in implementing their project. This undermines mid-term evaluation as a proactive management instrument to improve project performance. In phased projects, a mid-term evaluation should invariably be carried out, before the completion of each on-going phase for ensuring smooth continuation of the activities, as unnecessary disruption tends to negatively affect project impacts, sustainability and cost-efficiency.

Guidance for ex-post evaluations

With the three existing manuals on (i) project formulation, (ii) project monitoring, reporting, review and evaluation, and (iii) standard operating procedures, an adequate general framework for the ex-post evaluation activity exists in ITTO. Guidance on evaluation is generic but rather detailed, which has sometimes diverted evaluators' attention from examination of key issues. In addition, there have been weak systemic links between evaluation and strategy design, project formulation and sharing of lessons learned. Careful drafting of the TOR is critical to guide evaluators for appropriate focusing of their work. There are a number of minor inconsistencies in the ITTO manuals concerning evaluation which should be addressed when these are revised next time.

Evaluation teams and evaluators

Most of the evaluations have been carried out by two consultants (one from consuming and the other from producing country), due to formal requirements for the team size and origin of members. However, the size of the team should be established based on the nature, complexity and size of the project(s) to be evaluated as well as the competence of evaluators. The professional qualifications of consultants are more important than their countries of origin but it is also crucial for the team to have good knowledge on local/country conditions. In addition, evaluation teams should have adequate expertise on social aspects and the private sector when the project scope calls for such expertise.

Timing of ex-post evaluations

One third of evaluations have been carried out two years after the project completion but lapses of several years have also been common. The longer the time lapse, the more difficult to assess efficiency and effectiveness, but the more information can be obtained on long-term impacts and sustainability. A fixed (minimum or maximum) period for the lapse between the completion and ex-post evaluation is not useful as timing should depend on the nature and size of the project, and the specific focus of evaluation. Too long lags (beyond four years) should, however, be avoided.

Evaluation missions

Ex-post evaluation assignments are usually one-month contracts, of which one week is spent for the fieldwork in the country. In view of the tasks identified in the TOR as well as the need for site visits and stakeholder consultations, this is not always sufficient. The scope of work and the nature of the project(s) should be duly considered in resource allocation. Combining project evaluations thematically is a good practice allowing relevant analysis of differences for learning.

Management response

It is vital to have a timely formal management response (positive or negative) by the Executing Agency to evaluation results, particularly in projects implemented by a partnership of different organizations. The present debriefing meetings at the end of missions are important but cannot be considered an adequate practice. In addition, ITTO has presently no mechanism to pursue implementation of the recommendations of ex-post evaluations, which undermines their usefulness.

Dissemination

Effectiveness of the learning function of ex-post evaluation depends on dissemination and other knowledge management. It is necessary to capitalize the significant investment made by ITTO in ex-post evaluations so that there is an operational feedback loop through various institutionalized ways for learning. The current dissemination mechanisms are all useful and highly appreciated but need strengthening in some areas. Dissemination strategy should be based on diverse needs of various target groups.

Committee presentations on ex-post evaluation results have been appreciated by participating members but if the time constraints continue to limit their future usefulness and cost-efficiency. While thematic summaries of ex-post evaluation results are highly valued by all target groups, there is a need for synthesizing the results so that they become easily accessible for practitioners, policy makers and donors. There is a need to integrate the lessons learned in relevant technical meetings and other events. Special thematic workshops on carefully selected strategically important topics would be useful.

Few producing member countries have established mechanisms for sharing knowledge of ex-post evaluation reports. This is obviously a cause of concern, as most of the contents of ex-post evaluation reports are country specific, with potentially valuable lessons learned and recommendations for other national stakeholders.

Feedback to project design and appraisal

One of the purposes of ex-post evaluation is to improve the quality of project proposals submitted to the ITTO but the feedback loop has not been strong enough; increased ex-post evaluation activity has had no apparent correlation with the quality of project formulation. There is no requirement for project formulators to look into the lessons learned from the previous projects. The Expert Panel on Project Appraisal has considered the results of ex-post evaluation reports on an ad hoc basis. The ITTO Manual on project formulation does not contain specific guidance for benefiting from earlier lessons learned. The programmes of training courses on project formulation organized during the last 10 years have not included consideration of lessons learned from evaluations. There is a need to establish stronger systemic links between evaluation and the other elements of the project cycle.

Monitoring and continual improvement

Effective proactive monitoring reduces the need for ex-post evaluations, particularly for accountability. The present system is considered mostly robust and the quality of monitoring has generally been satisfactory. The new On-line Monitoring System will improve communication between the Secretariat and Executing Agencies. However, there is scope for simplification of reporting formats to avoid unnecessary repetition.

The format of summary reports on completed projects prepared by the Secretariat to the Committees varies. The reports do not include any assessment on the project's overall performance. The meta-evaluation deems it useful to standardize the format of these reports and to include Secretariat's own assessment on project performance in terms of relevance, effectiveness, impacts, expected sustainability, performance of actors, as well as contribution to the ITTO objectives. Such an addition to the existing system would enable the Organization to periodically monitor the continual improvement of its project work as the information could be annually/biennially analyzed for reporting to the Council and the Committees. The results would also guide the Committees in the selection of projects to be ex-post evaluated towards a more strategic and cost-effective approach.

Organization of the monitoring and evaluation function

The recent establishment of a new post of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Officer (PMEO), directly under the Executive Director, with a responsibility for development of the monitoring and evaluation system, is a positive development, which is in line with the principles of good governance in international organizations. Project Managers should not be responsible for organization of ex-post evaluations, as this may create a conflict of interest. The tasks listed in the PMEO job description are straddling and there is a need for clarification in some areas. It is apparent that the identified tasks cannot presently be properly implemented by one person alone.

Future of ex-post evaluation in ITTO

The meta-evaluation has revealed that ex-post evaluation is an important tool for ITTO's accountability and learning. It has generally been practised in a satisfactory manner but its potential is not fully utilized. Ex-post evaluation has often been perceived more as a formal requirement than a management tool for continual improvement. There are major possibilities to enhance the contribution of evaluations to accountability and learning by targeting project selection more strategically, strengthening the systemic links of ex-post evaluation in the project cycle, enhancing dissemination, broadening the pool of expertise, and exploiting various possibilities to improve impacts, sustainability and cost-efficiency.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on its findings and conclusions, the meta-evaluation recommends ITTO to continue with ex-post evaluation of projects and makes the following recommendations to strengthen the current monitoring and evaluation practice as a strategic tool for learning and accountability:

8.1 ITTC

The Council should consider a new Decision to update Decision 3(XXVIII) in order to improve guidance on monitoring and evaluation in the Organization. The following elements are proposed to be part of the operative section of the Decision:

Evaluation

1. The selection criteria of projects for ex-post evaluations should be

    (a) To assess if a project requires ex-post evaluation, the Committee(s) should take into account the nature of the project, its strategic importance to the achievement of the objectives of the Organization, its potential for learning, replication, innovation and impacts, as well as wider application of its outputs and lessons learned;

(b) Other factors as considered appropriate by the Committees.

2. Grouping of projects for ex-post evaluation as a cost-effective measure to enhance the value of learning can include the following approaches:

(a) Group evaluation by substantive themes to identify common problems and opportunities associated with implementation of projects related to a defined theme, and to produce lessons learned to assist in the formulation and implementation of future projects in the same field.
(b) Other group evaluation. (i) Grouping of multiple projects by country to identify common lessons learned applicable to projects and their broader impacts on policy development and capacity building as well as the impacts and sustainability of ITTO activities to improve the methods employed in formulation and implementation of future projects in that country. (ii) Other group evaluation can be carried out based on specific relevant criteria.

3. Timing of ex-post evaluation should be decided by taking into account the nature of the project and the specific objectives of evaluation, and it should normally be at least one year after the completion of project activities.

4. Mid-term evaluation as a tool to assess the achievements of the project towards attaining its objectives should be applied (i) in phased projects before the end of the on-going phase to facilitate formulation of, and decision-making on, the subsequent phase, and (ii) in large projects. Respective costs should be included in project budgets. In addition, (iii) mid-term evaluation can be selectively used in specific situations in which it can proactively improve project performance or a need for revision of the project design or improvement of performance has been identified.

5. The selection of consultants should be based on their specific competence relevant to the project(s) and the region/country to be evaluated according to the Guidelines for selection and employment of consultants, procurements and payments of goods and services. The number of evaluation team members should be decided based on the extent and nature of the project(s) to be evaluated, and the competence of evaluators. In team composition, a balance between producing and consuming countries can be considered, as appropriate.

6. The ITTO Secretariat should provide a management response to ex-post evaluation reports, including on their recommendations for ITTO.

7. Project evaluation reports should be prepared in the official communication language of the country in question and executive summaries in all the three languages of the Organization.

8. In project agreements with Executing Agencies, a specific clause should be included to establish an obligation for

(a) Reporting on the follow-up activities taken after the project completion upon request by the Secretariat within a defined time limit
(b) Submitting a written management response to evaluation reports

Knowledge management

9. Secretariat reports on completed projects should be presented in a standardized format including a summary of lessons learned and Secretariat assessment on relevance, effectiveness, impacts, sustainability, efficiency and contribution to the achievement of SFM and the ITTO's objectives (to be presented in a condensed manner by means of rating of project quality and implementation performance).

10. In order to strengthen the utilization of lessons learned from evaluation and monitoring, project proponents should be required to consider lessons learned as an input into formulation of new projects, and to demonstrate this in their project proposals.

11. Provide adequate resources for the implementation of improved dissemination of lessons learned from monitoring and evaluation for the preparation of communication products and organization of training events.

8.2 ITTO Secretariat

The Secretariat should

1. Ensure that TOR of ex-post evaluations explicitly address the specific characteristics of the project and key strategic issues on which lessons are needed, including those which have been weakly addressed in the past (such as gender, social capital and empowerment). The TOR should also include a provision to submit, together with the ex-post evaluation report, a short PowerPoint Presentation on the key findings, lessons learned and recommendations.
2. Elaborate additional guidance to evaluate impacts and sustainability of ITTO projects and for cost-efficient collection of data through stakeholder surveys, when appropriate
3. Expand the roster of consultants including specialists with multidisciplinary skills and in-depth knowledge on local conditions in ITTO member countries
4. Periodically monitor and report on the performance of the Organization's project work through analytical summaries based on, inter alia, Secretariat quality assessments of completed projects
5. Expand and strengthen dissemination mechanisms including

   (a) Posting on the website of all the ex-post evaluation reports and selected technical reports produced by the projects and providing of an appropriate search engine to facilitate access to them
   (b) Posting of PowerPoint presentations on the results of ex-post evaluations on the ITTO website
   (c) Producing brief summaries on lessons learned by thematic subject areas in three languages, targeted at practitioners and stakeholders for wide distribution electronically and in hard copies
   (d) Including in the website a special section on highly successful projects that can serve as examples for other countries
   (e) Integrating lessons learned from monitoring and evaluation in the programmes of the relevant ITTO technical meetings and workshops, including training courses on project formulation
   (f) Organize regional workshops for dissemination of lessons learned from ex-post evaluations
   (g) Rationalize presentations in the Committees on evaluation reports prioritizing group evaluations, lessons learned and good practices, and project evaluations which have strategic value for the Organization
   (h) Develop new communication products to inform potential donors and the international community at large on the outcomes of the Organization's project and other work to fill the existing gaps in the available information

6. Routinely provide information on lessons learned and recommendations to EP/TPAC members that is relevant for the projects to be appraised
7. Routinely request from Executing Agencies to report on post-project follow-up action (6-12 months after the project completion) and post-evaluation action after the submission of the final ex-post evaluation report
8. Establish a Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Unit with specific responsibilities related to monitoring and evaluation for

   (a) Continuous development of the monitoring and evaluation system of the Organization, including strengthening of staff capacity in proactive monitoring
   (b) Organization and supervision of mid-term and ex-post evaluations
   (c) Updating the guidance for monitoring and evaluation in the Organization
   (d) Analysis and systematization of monitoring and evaluation results for lessons learned in cooperation with the Divisions
   (e) Ensuring that the Expert Panels and TPACs are informed on the relevant lessons learned related to the project proposals subject to their appraisal

(f) Compiling periodic analytical reports on the performance of completed and on-going projects in cooperation with the Divisions

(g) Ensuring effective dissemination of lessons learned from monitoring and evaluation in cooperation with the Communication Unit

8.3 Expert Panel on Project Appraisal and Thematic Programme Advisory Groups

The Expert Panel and the TPACs should

1. Strengthen the appraisal of the substantive aspects of project design to minimize the risk for unsatisfactory project performance
2. Verify that the lessons from past ex-post evaluations have been considered in the formulation of project proposals in the same thematic area
3. In appraisal, pay special attention to (a) exit strategies to ensure sustainability, (b) baseline information to allow evaluation of impacts, and (c) the assessed track record of the performance of Executing Agencies in project implementation

8.4 Producing member countries

1. Executing Agencies should disseminate ex-post evaluation reports of ITTO-funded projects, including e.g. by posting them on their own websites or establishing a link with the respective webpage of the ITTO website.
2. Executing Agencies should strengthen their capacity in (i) project formulation and implementation by observing the lessons learned from monitoring and evaluation, and (ii) setting up an internal monitoring system to ensure efficient and successful implementation of ITTO-funded projects.
3. Executing Agencies should engage relevant stakeholders in the Project Steering Committees to strengthen ownership of project outputs and to improve impacts and sustainability of project activities. The Committees should assume a proactive role to strengthen performance of project implementation.
4. Focal Points in producing member countries should evaluate the performance of Executing Agencies in previous project implementation and consider their track record in the appraisal of their new project proposals.
5. Focal Points in producing member countries should (a) inform stakeholders through their own in-country distribution lists on the availability of new evaluation and other reports in the ITTO website, and (b) encourage stakeholders to consider lessons learned in formulation of new projects.

8.5 Consuming member countries

1. Donor agencies and other potential sources of financing should take full advantage of ITTO as an efficient, low transaction cost multilateral agency implementing country-driven projects, offering a unique service in promoting sustainable management of tropical forests and trade from sustainably managed sources, in channeling aid and other support in meeting their international commitments related to forests

2. Focal Points in consuming countries should inform stakeholders through their own in-country distribution lists on the availability of new evaluation and other relevant ITTO reports which can add value to various efforts towards promotion of sustainable management of tropical forests and timber trade from sustainably managed sources

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Appendix 1.1

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR A META-EVALUATION OF PREVIOUSLY EVALUATED ITTO PROJECTS

I. Background

Recalling 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 43rd 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 Committee requested the Secretariat to draft the current Terms of Reference (TOR) to assess the ex-post evaluation process of all ITTO projects.

II. Overall Objective/Purpose of the Meta-Evaluation

By means of the analysis, synthesis and careful evaluation of the findings, lessons learned and recommendations from a series of ITTO ex-post evaluations, the overall goal of the Meta-Evaluation is to assess the impact of the projects implemented on the field during the 25 years of existence of ITTO on the achievement of the ITTO´s 2000 objective, as well as to improve the efficiency, effectiveness and relevance of the future ITTO project evaluation process, by reviewing and analyzing the current methodology and results achieved to date, taking into account:

- the Objectives of ITTA including the Organization's "Objective 2000";
- the ITTO Action Plans;
- the Reports of the Expert Panel on Project Appraisals;
- the Terms of Reference for Ex-post Evaluations;
- 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
- the need to 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 and (b) generate a document that compiles lessons learned, good practices and recommendations of completed ex-post evaluations of ITTO projects, for dissemination and enhancement of 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:

- Determining the contribution of projects to the objectives of the ITTO and its Members;
- 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 also analyze 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.

IV. Approach

The Meta-Evaluation should consider international best practices (i.e. relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability) and involve the following approach:

- review and analyze completed ex-post evaluation reports and projects' related documents (including projects' progress/monitoring reports) to extract and categorize the key findings in terms of conclusions, recommendations and lessons learned;
- aggregate the findings and identify the Lessons Learned across geographic and sectoral areas and specific subjects or topics; and
- aggregate the recommendations by category and by entity (i.e. to whom they are addressed, the ITTO, Submitting Country, Executing Agency, and themes).

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, contribution and potential 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;
6. make recommendations on how to continually improve the ITTO's project evaluation, monitoring and assessment; and
7. the role of adaptive management and the value of project steering committees.

V. Reporting

- Preparation of a Meta-Evaluation Report covering contribution and impact of ITTO projects from all committees and geographic regions;
- preparation of a publication summarizing *inter alia* findings, lessons learnt and impact at national, regional and global levels including cross-cutting issues and covering the full range of

ITTO projects in Reforestation and Forest Management, Forest Industry and Economic Information and Market Intelligence;

- 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 learned;
    2. summary of recommendations aggregated by category and by entity (i.e. to whom they are addressed, the ITTO, Submitting Country, Executing Agency, and themes;
    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 or a set of articles within a special edition 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.

VI. Composition of the Team

The team shall be composed of 4 independent consultants, one being team leader and three regional experts (Africa, Asia and Latin America). Each expert 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 work, and fluency in English and at least one more of the ITTO languages are assets. Provision for editing and translation will also be needed.

VII. Duration of the Assignment

The task will be undertaken as an extended Expert Panel and should be completed over a 3 months period [two weeks in Yokohama followed by virtual communications to complete the report]. 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.

VIII. Tentative Budget

- Not to exceed USD 300,000 to be drawn from the Pooled Sub-Accounts for Ex-post Evaluation

Appendix 2.1

INDICATORS OF THE META-EVALUATION MATRIX OF QUALITY OF EVALUATION AND QUALITY OF PROJECTS

BASIC INFORMATION

- Meta-evaluator
- Project ITTO ID Code
- Project country:
- Project phase
- Ex post evaluators
- Type of evaluation
- Committee
- Project completion date (year)
- Duration, planned (months)
- Duration, actual (months)
- Evaluation date (year)
- Level or project intervention
- Existence of a pre-project/another preceding project

QUALITY OF EX-POST EVALUATION

- Scope of TOR tasks
- Overall quality of report format and contents.
- Data collection and methods
  - Questionnaires used and included
  - Field visit
  - Evaluation matrix
  - Interviews with beneficiaries
  - Other tools used
- Report contents
  - Context and rationale
  - Description of project goals and objectives
  - Description of project activities
  - Description of project outputs
  - Description of dissemination
  - Logical framework assessed
  - Assessment of exit strategy
- Identification of beneficiaries
- Judgment
  - Rigor of evaluation
  - Soundness of evaluation
  - Clarity of findings
  - Indicators of impact identified
  - Linkage of indicators with the logical framework
  - Explanation of analysis
  - Lessons learned section
  - Recommendations
- Evaluation quality of determinants
  - Performance of implementation
  - Impact of external risks on performance
  - Applicability and replicability
  - Relevance
  - Impacts (incl. effectiveness)

Efficiency
Sustainability
Contribution to ITTO objective 2000/ITTA

Follow-up and monitoring
Follow-up project/activity after completion
Monitoring and PCR

QUALITY OF PROJECT

Relevance
Beneficiary/target group needs
Policy compatibility
Realism (resources vs. outputs/impacts, time schedule)
Internal logic, consistency
Implementation arrangements
Capacity building
Participation, local opportunities
Innovation
Partner interest alignment of the project

Effectiveness
Impacts (intended and unintended)
Identification of baselines for impact assessment in the project
Effectiveness in achieving objectives of the project
Gender aspects
Environment
Capacity strengthening
Institutional strengthening
Social capital, empowerment of local communities and other stakeholders
Economic impact
Information and knowledge generated
Other/unintended impacts
Risk identification/materialization
Specific thematic areas covered by the project

Applicability and replicability
Applicability of key project products (technical reports) of the project
Applicability of lessons of the project
Applicability of recommendations of the project
Replicability of the project

Sustainability
Economic sustainability
Technical viability
Institutional sustainability
Social sustainability
Environmental sustainability

Efficiency
Resource allocation
Resource use efficiency
Delay in implementation of the project
Additional funding requested

Performance of implementation
EA performance

PSC performance
Partner performance
ITTO performance
Impact of external risks on performance

Contribution to ITTO objective 2000/ITTA
Consultation for policy development
Process of sustainable development
National policies
Forest land-use/tenure
Sustainable forest management
Reforestation and rehabilitation
Further processing
Industry efficiency
Marketing and distribution
Market intelligence
Trade promotion and diversification
Information sharing
R&D
Access to and transfer of technologies
Capacity building

Follow-up project/activity after completion
Recommended activities undertaken after the project
Policy adjustment
Follow-up project
Other

Quality of monitoring and PCR
Quality of monitoring
Reporting
Quality of PCR

Appendix 2.2

LIST OF EX-POST EVALUATED PROJECTS IN THE META-EVALUATION SAMPLE

Project code	Project title	Country
PD001/95 Rev.4 (M)	TRAINING DEVELOPMENT ON THE ASSESSMENT OF SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT IN INDONESIA	Indonesia
PD002/93 Rev.1 (F)	INTEGRATED PILOT MANAGEMENT OF THE NGUOA II FOREST NORTH - PHASE I: THE PREPARATION OF A MANAGEMENT PLAN	Rep. of Congo
PD003/95 Rev. 2 (F)	CONSERVATION AND PROVENANCE PLANTINGS AND INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT TO SUSTAIN IROKO PRODUCTION IN WEST AFRICA	Ghana
PD003/96 Rev.2 (I)	DEVELOPMENT AND EXTENSION OF RUBBERWOOD PROCESSING AND UTILIZATION TECHNOLOGY	China
PD004/00 Rev.1 (F)	BIODIVERSITY MANAGEMENT AND CONSERVATION IN A FOREST CONCESSION ADJACENT TO A TOTALLY PROTECTED AREA (NOUABALE-NDOKI NATIONAL PARK), NORTHERN CONGO	Rep. of Congo
PD005/94 Rev.3 (M)	DEVELOPMENT OF A COMPUTERIZED INFORMATION SYSTEM FOR THE FORESTRY COMMISSION OF GHANA	Ghana
PD007/94 Rev.3 (M,I)	INFORMATION AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FOR PRODUCTION AND TRADE ON TROPICAL TIMBER	Brazil
PD008/95 Rev.1 (F)	MULTIPLE RESOURCES STRATIFICATION, MAPPING AND INVENTORY FOR THE FIRST FOREST ZONE IN GABON - PHASE I	Gabon
PD009/99 Rev.2 (F)	SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF MISSAHOE RESERVED FOREST FORESTRY RESOURCE WITH THE PARTICIPATION OF THE LOCAL RURAL COMMUNITIES FOR AN OPTIMAL TIMBER PRODUCTION (KPALIME, TOGO)	Togo
PD010/00 Rev. 2 (I, F)	SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT AND UTILIZATION OF SYMPODIAL BAMBOOS IN SOUTH-CHINA	China
PD010/97 Rev.1 (F)	A SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT MODEL IN THE IWOKRAMA RAIN FOREST	Guyana
PD011/92 rev. 1 (F)	DEVELOPMENT AND DISSEMINATION OF RE-AFFORESTATION TECHNIQUES OF MANGROVE FORESTS	Thailand
PD013/95 Rev.3(I)	CAPACITY BUILDING IN TRAINING IN PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT OF FOREST INDUSTRIES IN ITTO PRODUCER MEMBER COUNTRIES	Finland
PD013/96 Rev. 1 (F)	MULTIPLE-USE MANAGEMENT IN THE MACAUA NATIONAL FOREST BASED ON RUBBER ESTATES - PHASE I: DEVELOPMENT OF MASTER PLAN TO SUPPORT COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION	Brazil

PD014/00 Rev.3 (F)	INTEGRATED PLAN FOR THE CONSOLIDATION OF THE BAGRE HIGHLANDS BIOLOGICAL CORRIDOR, PROVINCE OF DARIEN	Panama
PD014/92 Rev. 2 (F)	A DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM OF SUSTAINABLE UTILIZATION OF TROPICAL FORESTS BY MEANS OF DIFFERENTIATED MANAGEMENT IN HAINAN ISLAND, CHINA	China
PD014/95 Rev. 2 (F)	MODEL FOREST MANAGEMENT AREA - PHASE II	Malaysia
PD014/98 Rev.1 (F)	SUSTAINABLE USE AND REFORESTATION OF AMAZON FORESTS BY INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES	Peru
PD015/96 Rev. 2 (M,I)	UTILIZATION, COLLECTION AND TRADE OF TROPICAL NON-WOOD FOREST PRODUCTS IN THE PHILIPPINES	Philippines
PD016/96 Rev. 4 (F)	EX SITU CONSERVATION OF SHOREA LEPROSULA AND LOPHOPETALUM MULTINERVIUM AND THEIR USE IN FUTURE BREEDING AND BIOTECHNOLOGY	Indonesia
PD016/97 Rev. 3 (F)	INTEGRATED BUFFER ZONE DEVELOPMENT FOR SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF TROPICAL FOREST RESOURCES IN THAILAND	Thailand
PD017/00 Ver.3 (F)	CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE NATURAL PROTECTED AREAS SYSTEM OF TAMBOPATA (PERU) - MADIDI (BOLIVIA)	Peru
PD017/92 Ver.4 (I)	TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER/COMMERCIALIZATION OF SELECTED COCOWOOD UTILIZATION TECHNOLOGIES	Philippines
PD017/97 Rev.3 (F)	PILOT PROJECT FOR THE REFORESTATION AND REHABILITATION OF DEGRADED FOREST LANDS IN ECUADOR	Ecuador
PD018/94 Rev.1 (F)	PARTICIPATORY FOREST DEVELOPMENT IN THE ALTO MAYO REGION FOR THE SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF MOIST TROPICAL FORESTS - PHASE I	Peru
PD021/97 Rev.2 (F)	DEVELOPING TROPICAL FOREST RESOURCES THROUGH COMMUNITY-BASED FOREST MANAGEMENT, NUEVA VIZCAYA, PHILIPPINES	Philippines
PD023/00 Rev.4 (F)	PROMOTION AND TRANSFER OF KNOWLEDGE ON SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT MODELS TO TIMBER PRODUCERS	Peru
PD024/00 Rev.1 (I)	PROMOTION OF SUSTAINABLE UTILIZATION OF RATTAN FROM PLANTATION IN THAILAND	Thailand
PD024/95 Ver.1(I)	THE IDENTIFICATION, PROPERTIES AND USES OF THE TROPICAL TIMBER IMPORTED TO CHINA FROM LATIN AMERICA	China
PD025/96 Rev.2 (M)	CHINA'S CONSUMPTION OF FOREST PRODUCTS AND ITS DEMAND FOR THEM IN THE INTERNATIONAL MARKET BY THE YEAR 2010	China

PD026/92 Rev. 2 (F,I)	DEVELOPMENT OF METHODS AND STRATEGIES FOR SUSTAINED MANAGEMENT OF MOIST TROPICAL FORESTS IN CAMEROON	Cameroon
PD026/93 Rev. 1 (F)	DEVELOPMENT OF BENTUANG KARIMUN NATURE RESERVE AS A NATIONAL PARK - PHASE I	Indonesia
PD026/96 Rev. 4 (F)	STUDIES ON THE MANAGEMENT STANDARDS OF HILL DIPTEROCARP FORESTS IN SARAWAK FROM A WATERSHED MANAGEMENT POINT OF VIEW - PHASE II	Malaysia
PD027/95 Rev.3 (M)	ESTABLISHMENT AND OPERATION OF A FOREST STRATEGIC INFORMATION CENTER (CIEF)	Peru
PD029/96 Rev.1 (M)	REINFORCEMENT OF THE NATIONAL SYSTEM FOR THE COLLECTION AND PROCESSING OF FOREST STATISTICS AND SUPPORT FOR THE TRAINING OF FIELD UNITS	Gabon
PD030/97 Rev. 6 (F)	REHABILITATING DEGRADED FOREST THROUGH COLLABORATION WITH LOCAL COMMUNITIES	Ghana
PD033/93 Rev.1 (F)	CONSERVATION, MANAGEMENT, HARVESTING, AND INTEGRATED SUSTAINED USE OF FORESTS IN THE CHIMANES REGION, BENI, BOLIVIA	Bolivia
PD034/94 Ver.1 (M)	ESTABLISHMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF A FOREST STATISTICAL INFORMATION SYSTEM	Colombia
PD034/99 Rev.2(I)	DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF STRESS GRADING RULES FOR TROPICAL TIMBER IN THE PHILIPPINES	Philippines
PD035/94Rev.4 (M,I)	FOREST PRODUCTS MARKETING ORGANIZATION FEASIBILITY STUDY	Papua New Guinea
PD035/99 Rev.4 (I)	PERFORMANCE EVALUATION OF EXPORT WOOD FURNITURE IN RELATION TO STRENGTH AND END-USE APPLICATIONS USING ESTABLISHED TEST STANDARD	Philippines
PD037/95 Rev.2 (F)	MANAGEMENT OF CATIVO FORESTS AND NON-TIMBER PRODUCTS WITH THE PARTICIPATION OF RURAL AND INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES, DARIEN, PANAMA	Panama
PD038/00 Rev.1 (F)	MANAGEMENT OF KAYAN MENTARANG NATIONAL PARK (KMNP) TO PROMOTE TRANS-BOUNDARY CONSERVATION ALONG THE BORDER BETWEEN INDONESIA AND MALAYSIAN STATES OF SABAH AND SARAWAK (PHASE I)	Indonesia
PD038/99 Rev.1 (F,I)	DEMONSTRATION COMMUNITY FOREST MANAGEMENT IN THE NATURAL CLOUD FORESTS OF THE URUMBA BASIN, SAN IGNACIO	Peru
PD039/00 Rev. 3 (F)	SUSTAINABLE COLLABORATIVE FOREST MANAGEMENT: MEETING THE CHALLENGES OF DECENTRALIZATION IN THE BULUNGAN MODEL FOREST	Indonesia
PD041/00 Rev.3 (F,M)	MODEL DEVELOPMENT TO ESTABLISH COMMERCIAL PLANTATION OF DIPTEROCARPS	Indonesia

PD041/99 Rev.4 (M)	DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PILOT PROJECT OF THE FORESTRY STATISTICS INFORMATION SYSTEM (FSIS) - PHASE I	Philippines
PD042/00 Rev. 1 (F)	TRAINING OF TRAINERS FOR THE APPLICATION OF THE ITTO, AND THE NATIONAL CRITERIA AND INDICATORS OF SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT AT FOREST MANAGEMENT UNIT LEVEL	Indonesia
PD044/00 Rev. 3 (F)	THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A COMMUNITY-BASED TRANSBOUNDARY MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR THE BETUNG KERIHUN NATIONAL PARK, WEST KALIMANTAN, INDONESIA, PHASE II	Indonesia
PD044/99 Rev.2 (F)	IMPLEMENTATION OF A MANAGEMENT PLAN BY THE CHIQUIACA AND OROZAS COMMUNITIES IN TARIJA, BOLIVIA	Bolivia
PD045/97 Rev. 1 (F)	ON-SITE TRAINING FOR TROPICAL FORESTERS AND FORESTRY TRAINERS	Brazil
PD046/97 Rev.3 (I)	COMMUNITY FOREST PRODUCT PROCESSING IN THE PUERTO DIAS EXTRACTIVE RESERVE	Brazil
PD047/88Rev.3(I)	UTILIZATION OF LESSER USED SPECIES AS ALTERNATIVE RAW MATERIALS FOR FOREST-BASED INDUSTRIES	Philippines
PD047/94 Rer.3(I)	INDUSTRIAL UTILIZATION OF LESSER-KNOWN FOREST SPECIES IN SUSTAINABLY MANAGED FORESTS	Honduras
PD048/98 Rev. 1 (F)	REFORESTATION OF THE ABUTIA PLAINS BY INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES IN THE VOLTA BASIN	Ghana
PD048/99 Rev.1 (M,F)	SHARING OF INFORMATION AND EXPERIENCES ON PRIVATE SECTOR SUCCESS STORIES IN SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT	Malaysia
PD049/98 Rev. 1 (F)	PARTICIPATORY TROPICAL FOREST DEVELOPMENT BY WOMEN IN INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES	Ghana
PD049/99 Rev.2 (F)	PILOT PLAN FOR THE SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF 10,000 HECTARES OF SECONDARY FOREST IN SAN LORENZO, ESMERALDAS	Ecuador
PD051/00 Rev.2 (I, M)	IMPROVEMENT OF RUBBERWOOD UTILIZATION AND MARKETING IN THAILAND	Thailand
PD051/99 Rev.2 (F)	SUPPORT TO GRASSROOT FORESTRY PROMOTION INITIATIVES IN THE YOTO AREA	Togo
PD053/00 Rev.3 (F)	IMPLEMENTATION OF A PERMANENT NETWORK OF STANDS DYNAMICS MONITORING PLOTS FOR THE GAZETTED FORESTS OF COTE D'IVOIRE	Côte d'Ivoire
PD056/00 Rev.3 (M)	ENHANCEMENT OF THE FOREST STATISTICS INFORMATION & MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (STATFOR) THROUGH THE INTEGRATION OF TWO COMPUTER MODULES: 1) COMPILATION OF MANAGEMENT INVENTORY DATA; 2) MANAGEMENT OF EXPORT LOG	Gabon

	LUMBERYARDS	
PD056/99Rev.1 (I)	PROMOTION OF THE UTILIZATION OF BAMBOO FROM SUSTAINABLE SOURCES IN THAILAND	Thailand
PD058/99 Rev. 1 (I)	INTRODUCTION OF A VILLAGE INDUSTRY IN THE COMMUNITY AROUND AN INDUSTRIAL FOREST PLANTATION IN INDONESIA	Indonesia
PD063/89 Rer.1(I)	LOW-COST HOUSES FROM SMALL DIAMETER TREES	Philippines
PD063/97 Rev.3 (F)	SPECIALIZATION PROGRAM FOR FOREST TECHNICIANS ON SUSTAINABLE TROPICAL FOREST MANAGEMENT IN BOLIVIA	Bolivia
PD068/01 Rer.2 (I)	TRAINING IN REDUCED-IMPACT LOGGING IN GUYANA	Guyana
PD069/01 Rev. 2 (I)	IMPROVED AND DIVERSIFIED USE OF TROPICAL PLANTATION TIMBER IN CHINA TO SUPPLEMENT DIMINISHING SUPPLIES FROM NATURAL FORESTS	China
PD080/01 Rev.6 (M)	CONSOLIDATING SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT CERTIFICATION IN INDONESIA	Indonesia
PD085/01 Rer.2(I)	STRATEGIES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF SUSTAINABLE WOOD-BASED INDUSTRIES IN INDONESIA	Indonesia
PD089/90 (F) III	SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT AND HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT IN INDONESIA - PHASE I	Indonesia
PD107/90(I)	STRATEGIES FOR SUSTAINABLE WOOD INDUSTRIES IN SARAWAK	Malaysia
PD108/01 Rev.3 (I)	DEVELOPMENT OF SUSTAINABLE RATTAN PRODUCTION AND UTILIZATION THROUGH PARTICIPATION OF RATTAN SMALL HOLDERS AND INDUSTRY IN INDONESIA	Indonesia
PD109/90 Rev.4 (I)	ASSISTANCE TO MODERNIZATION, RESTRUCTURING AND DEVELOPMENT OF WOOD-BASED INDUSTRIES IN COTE D'IVOIRE	Côte d'Ivoire
PD128/91 Rev.2 (F)	MANAGEMENT, CONSERVATION, AND DEVELOPMENT OF MANGROVE FORESTS IN PANAMA	Panama
PD133/02 Rev 3 (M)	TIMBER AND TIMBER PRODUCTS TRADE FLOW STUDY IN THE PHILIPPINES	Philippines
PD146 / 02 Rev. 1 (I)	PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE UTILIZATION OF BAMBOO THROUGH COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT	Myanmar

PD157/91 Rev. 2 (F)	ESTABLISHMENT OF AN INTERNATIONAL NETWORK FOR THE CONSERVATION AND SUSTAINABLE UTILIZATION OF MANGROVE FOREST GENETIC RESOURCES	India
PD167/91 Rev. 1 (M)	DIAGNOSIS AND EVALUATION OF THE BRAZILIAN FORESTRY SECTOR	Brazil
PD171/91 Rev.2 (F) I,II	CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT FOR MULTIPLE USE AND DEVELOPMENT OF COLOMBIAN MANGROVE SWAMPS	Colombia
PD185/91 Rev. 2 (F) II	SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT IN PENINSULAR MALAYSIA - PHASE II	Malaysia
PD195/03 Rev.2 (F)	TO ESTABLISH A NATIONAL MONITORING INFORMATION SYSTEM FOR THE EFFECTIVE CONSERVATION AND SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF THAILAND'S FOREST RESOURCES	Thailand
PD224/03 Rev.1 (F)	TRANSBOUNDARY BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION: THE PULONG TAU NATIONAL PARK, SARAWAK STATE, MALAYSIA	Malaysia
PD225/03 Rev. (F)	ADOPTION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF AN APPROPRIATE SYSTEM OF CRITERIA AND INDICATORS FOR THE PHILIPPINES	Philippines
PD277/04 Ver.3(I)	PROMOTING SELECTED NON-TIMBER FOREST PRODUCTS BASED ON COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION APPROACH TO SUPPORT SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT IN EAST KALIMANTAN	Indonesia
PD286/04 Ver.1(I)	STRENGTHENING THE CAPACITY TO PROMOTE EFFICIENT WOOD PROCESSING TECHNOLOGIES IN INDONESIA	Indonesia
PD289/04 Rev.1 (F)	MANAGEMENT OF THE EMERALD TRIANGLE PROTECTED FORESTS COMPLEX TO PROMOTE COOPERATION FOR TRANSBOUNDARY BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION BETWEEN THAILAND, CAMBODIA AND LAOS (PHASE II)	Regional/Sub regional
PD389/05 Rev.2 (F)	APPLICATION OF THE INTERNAL MONITORING OF SFM PERFORMANCE AT FOREST MANAGEMENT UNIT LEVEL	Indonesia

Appendix 2.3

STAKEHOLDER SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRES

EXECUTING AGENCY QUESTIONNAIRE

BASIC INFORMATION:

Country:
Name of the executing agency: Name of the respondent:
Title(s) of the project(s):

QUESTIONS:

1. Have you (or your predecessor) received the ex-post evaluation report(s) of ITTO funded project(s)? *Yes / No*
2. Was the timing of the ex-post evaluation appropriate in your opinion? *Too soon / Appropriate / Too late / No opinion*
3. Did you consider the quality of expertise of the evaluation team adequate? *Yes / No / No opinion*
4. Was the evaluation properly conducted? *Yes / No , If "No" please identify below why: **
5. Did you have an opportunity to learn about the preliminary findings and recommendations of the ex-post evaluation before the mission's departure from the country? *Yes / No*
6. How would you rate the overall quality of the ex-post evaluation report (s) of ITTO's project(s) implemented by your organization?

   Excellent / Good / Acceptable / Poor / No opinion
7. Did the Executing Agency provide the management response of the preliminary findings and recommendations of ex post evaluation?

   Yes / No, If "Yes"; was it duly considered by the evaluator(s) in the final report? Yes / No / No opinion
8. Were the main findings and lessons learned of the evaluation report useful for your organization? *Yes / No, If "Yes", could you give examples? **
9. Have the recommendations of ex-post evaluations of ITTO projects been considered for implementation by the Executing Agency? *Yes / No, If "Yes", please provide examples of actions that have been taken: **, *If "No" could you explain why? **
10. Has the ex post evaluation report(s) been disseminated to other parties by the Executing Agency in the country? *Yes / No , If "Yes"; please indicate to whom: **
11. Have you or your organization benefited from lessons learned from ex post evaluations of ITTO's other projects in your country or elsewhere? *Yes / No , If "Yes"; please indicate how you obtained information on such lessons: Presentations during the ITTO Council sessions / Evaluation reports downloaded from ITTO's website / Articles in Tropical Forest Update / Other means, please specify below: **
12. How could the dissemination of the results of ITTO's projects be improved? *
13. Did the Project Steering Committee work effectively in monitoring of the project? *Yes / No / No opinion*
14. Would a mid-term review have been useful in this project? *Yes / No*
15. Have you used ITTO's On-Line Monitoring System (OLMS)? *Yes / No / Not familiar to me, If yes, What is your view of its usefulness? **
16. How should ITTO improve monitoring and evaluation of their projects? *

PRODUCER COUNTRY FOCAL POINT QUESTIONNAIRE

BASIC INFORMATION:
Country:
Name of the organization: Name of the respondent:

QUESTIONS:

1. What are the roles of the ITTO focal point in the project cycle in your country?

   Table: with columns (Regularly, Often, Sometimes, Never) and rows (a) Approval of project proposals to be submitted, b) Active role in the design of the project proposals, c) Participation in the coordination and monitoring of executing agencies, d) Review of progress reports and ex post evaluation reports, e) Participation in the ex-post evaluation, f) Pursuing the implementation of the recommendations for follow-up action)

2. How do you obtain information on the progress and performance of ITTO projects in your country? *

3. a) Have you (or your predecessor) been informed in advance on ITTO's ex-post evaluation(s)? *Yes / No*

   b) Have you participated in the preparation of evaluation missions? *Yes / No*

4. Which individual ITTO projects have been particularly successful in your country and why?

5. Which ITTO projects have had only marginal or no positive impact in your country and why? *

6. In which areas ITTO's projects in your country have provided contribution to the achievement of the following objectives: *Table: with columns (Significant / Moderate / Minor / Not relevant in my country) and rows (sustainable forest management, conservation, plantation, development, further processing, industry efficiency, trade development, market transparency, *others (please specify in the text box below));* *If "others", please specify: *

7. a) Have you reviewed ex-post evaluation reports of completed ITTO projects? *Yes / No*

   b) If "Yes"; have their results contributed to new project design in your country? *Yes / No*

8. How useful have the presentations and discussions on the results of ex-post evaluations in ITTO's Committees been? *Very useful / Useful / Of limited value / Not relevant/do not know*

9. How useful have the thematic synthesis reports of ex-post evaluations of individual projects been in your opinion? *Very useful / Useful / Of limited value / Not relevant/do not know*

10. In order to disseminate generated knowledge, the technical and other reports of the projects can be obtained from the ITTO Secretariat upon request. For this purpose ITTO maintains an updated List of Publications in their website. In addition, publications are distributed during ITTC Sessions and short summaries published in Tropical Forest Update. How useful these means of dissemination of ex post evaluations have been for you? *Table: with columns (Very useful, Useful, Of limited value, Not useful, Do not know/ Not used) and rows (Copies of reports requested from the Secretariat based on the Publication List, Copies of reports received during ITTC session, Summaries in TFU)*

11. How could the dissemination of project results be improved by ITTO? *

12. In your country are there mechanisms to disseminate:

    a) the results of ITTO project work? *Yes / No*
    b) the ex-post evaluation reports? *Yes / No*

    If you ticked "Yes" in either a) or b), please describe the mechanism(s): *

13. If there are no established mechanisms, what kind of specific action has been taken to disseminate the results of evaluations to relevant stakeholders? *

14. What aspects should the on-going meta-evaluation focus on? *

CONSUMER COUNTRY FOCAL POINT QUESTIONNAIRE

BASIC INFORMATION:
Country:
Name of the organization: Name of the respondent:

QUESTIONS:

1. ITTO has produced about 80 ex post evaluation reports since 2001. Are you familiar with their existence?
   Reviewed reports / Aware of reports, but not used / Unaware of reports

2. How useful have the presentations and discussions on the results of ex post evaluations in ITTO's Committees been?
   Very useful / Useful / Of limited value / Not relevant/do not know

3. In order to disseminate generated knowledge, the technical and other reports of the projects can be obtained from the ITTO Secretariat upon request. For this purpose ITTO maintains an updated List of Publications in their website. In addition, publications are distributed during ITTC Sessions and short summaries have been published in the Tropical Forest Update. How useful these means of dissemination of ex post evaluation reports have been for you?

   Table: with columns (Very useful, Useful, of limited value, Not useful, Do not know/ Not used) and rows (Copies of reports requested from the Secretariat based on the Publication List, Copies of reports received during ITTC session, Summaries in TFU)

4. How useful have the thematic synthesis of ex post evaluations of individual projects been? *Very useful / Useful / Of limited value / Not relevant/do not know*

5. How could dissemination of the evaluation results (lessons learned, recommendations, etc.) be improved to make good use of the evaluation investment? *

6. What is your view on the relevance, effectiveness and efficiency of the project evaluation process of ITTO? *

7. a) What are your expectations on the results of the on-going meta-evaluation of ITTO's project work? *
   b) Which areas or issues should merit a focus? *

8. As a past or potential donor to ITTO's project work, what other information on the outcomes and impacts is of critical importance to you? *

9. Are there gaps in the available information on the ITTO project work or other activities which could help you identify areas to be supported by your country? *Yes / No*;
   If "Yes" please identify below: *

EVALUATORS' QUESTIONNAIRE

BASIC INFORMATION:
Name of the evaluator
Name of the project(s) evaluated

QUESTIONS:

1. a) Was the Terms-of-Reference of your evaluation assignment appropriate and realistic? *Yes / No; Comment* *

   b) Did the TOR provide adequate guidance for your work? *Yes / No; Comment* *
2. Did you use the ITTO Manual for Project Monitoring, Review, Reporting and Evaluation as guidance? *Yes / No*
   If "Yes", did you find the Manual useful? *Yes / No; Comment* *
3. Was the chosen project relevant from ex post evaluation perspective? *Yes / No*
4. Was the timing of the evaluation appropriate for assessing impacts and sustainability of the project? *Too soon / Appropriate / Too late / No opinion*
5. Were the organization and support of your assignment satisfactory? *Yes / No; Comment* *
6. Was the methodology of evaluation appropriate? *Yes / No; Comment* *
7. Was the time in the field sufficient?
   Sufficient / Somewhat more field time needed / Much more field time needed
8. Were you able to consult with all the necessary parties in your own view (including project beneficiaries, collaborating agencies, other stakeholders, etc.)? *Yes / No; Comment* *
9. What was the quality of the logframe of the project in view of evaluation and monitoring of the project? *Excellent / Satisfactory / Poor / No opinion*
10. Did the observations you made based on the documentation generally correspond to the observations made in the field?
    Yes / No; If "No", could you provide examples or reasons? *
11. How would you rate the monitoring function in the project (monitoring missions, Project Steering Committee, progress reports, etc.)?
    Table: with columns (Excellent, Satisfactory, Weak, No opinion) and rows (Executing Agency, ITTO Secretariat)
12. Do you think a mid-term review would have been useful to improve the performance of project implementation? *Yes / No; Comment* *
13. a) Did the Executing Agency provide management response and concur with your findings and recommendations? *Yes / No; Comment* *

    b) Did the management response lead to substantive revisions? *Yes / No; Comment* *
14. a) How useful was the discussion on your report in the Committee session in your opinion?
    Very useful / Useful / of limited value / No opinion; Comment

    b) Were there issues which you could clarify in the oral presentation? *Yes / No; Comment* *
15. Who should be the users of your evaluation report and how the results should be communicated to them? *
16. How useful have the thematic synthesis reports of ex post evaluations of individual ITTO projects been? *Very useful / Useful / Of limited value / No opinion*
17. In retrospective, do you have any suggestions for improving the monitoring and evaluation in ITTO? *Yes / No*; If "Yes", please specify *
18. Do you have any suggestions on which issues the meta-evaluation should focus? *

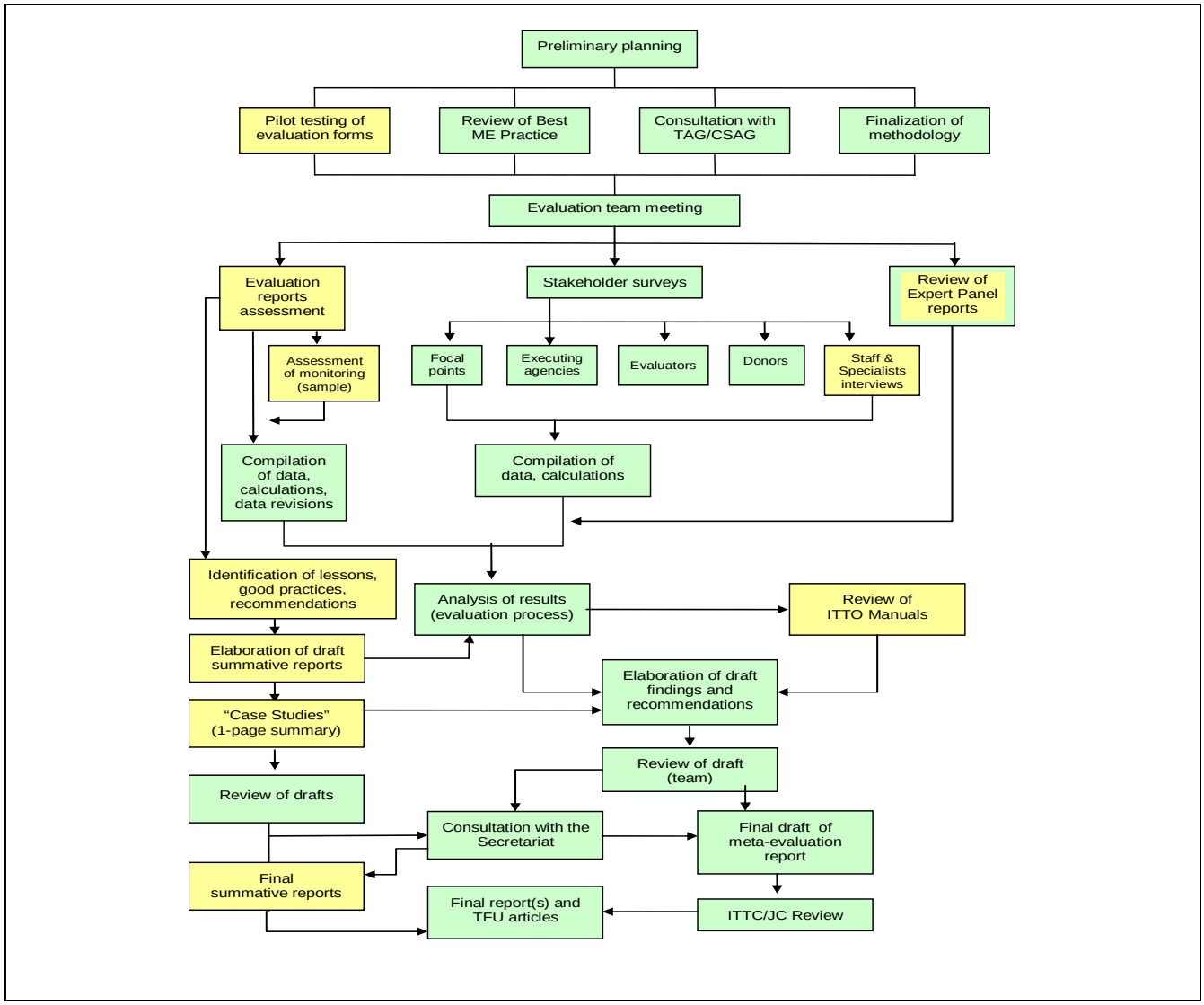
Appendix 2.4

LIST OF PEOPLE PROVIDING INPUTS TO THE META-EVALUATION

Jon Heikki Aas	Felix Magallón
Jan Abrahamsen	Henri-Félix Maitre
Chantal Adingra	Jorge Maluenda
Hilman Affandi	Antonio C. Manila
Collins Ahadome	Eduardo Mansur
Alhassan Attah	Polycarpe Masupa
Rosven Arévalo	Charas Mayura
Kwame Asumadu	Khanita Meedej
Shigeyuki Baba	Martial Me Kouame
Jean Bakouma	Björn Merkell
Enzo Barattini	Augusta Molnar
Lilibeth Barba	Josué Iván Morales Dardón
Bipin Behari	Eva Mueller
Peter Besseau	Manoj Nadkarni
Joachim Bile Allogho	Walter Nalvarte Armas
Amha bin Buang	Annapurna Nand Das
Dominic Blay	David W. Oliver
Monica Borner	Floriano Pastore Jr.
Gerhard Breulmann	Li Qiang
Neil Byron	Francisco Antonia Quiroga Zea
Ramón Carillo Arellano	Teguh Rahardjo
Barney Chan	Valéria Cristina Rigueira
H.K. Chen	Kenneth P. Rodney
Joseph Cobbinah	Carlos Rodríguez Chang
João César Dotto	Edgar Rosero
Marc J. Dourojeanni	Tara Rukmantara
Dennis Dykstra	Elena Ruiz
Gbadoe Edjidomele	Xiomara Lucia Sanclemente Manrique
Henrietta Enyan	Jean-Marie Samyn
Keister Evans	Takuo Sato
Ernest G. Foli	Jeffrey Sayer
B. C. Y. Freezailah	Suminar Setiati Achmadi
Benedict Akem Fultang	Hiras P. Sidabutar
James Gasana	Jan Siemonsma
Alfredo Gaviria	Paul Smith
André Gomes	Manoel Sobral Filho
Carlos Enrique Gonzalez Vicente	Olli Salo
Takeshi Goto	James C. Sorenson
Alicia Grimes	Florence Soriano
P. D. Hardcastle	Hideaki Takai
Mahboob Hasan	Felix B. Tamolang
Allanah Irvine	Ricardo M. Umali
Steven Johnson	Julio Orlando Vargas Muñoz
Suchat Kalyawongsa	Bill Whelan
Peter Kanowski	Andy White
G. Garvoie Kardoh	Don Wijewardana
Dike Kari	Patrick Wylie
Aulikki Kauppila	Hou Yuanzhao
Kokou Kouami	Ling Yun Yang
Muhammad Kuswanda	Tetra Yanuariadi
Erik Lammerts van Bueren	Emmanuel Ze Meka
John J. Leigh	
Hwan Ma	

Appendix 2.5

META-EVALUATION PROCESS



Appendix 3.1

STATISTICAL TABLES OF THE PROJECT PORTFOLIO ANALYSIS

ITTO project funding of all projects, USD 1000					
Division	Africa	Asia	Latin America	Other	Total
RFM	64184	97276	119878	18411	299749
FI	16742	29055	24937	22565	93299
EIMI	7907	10418	11345	23433	53103
Total	88833	136749	156160	64410	446151
ITTO project funding of ex-post evaluated projects, USD 1000					
Division	Africa	Asia	Latin America	Other	Total
RFM	14210	31302	23094	2149	70755
FI	680	10002	5795	912	17390
EIMI	1314	3429	5670	485	10898
Total	16204	44733	34560	3546	99043

Share of ex-post evaluated projects in total ITTO project funding by region and division (%)					
Division	Africa	Asia	Latin America	Other	Total
RFM	22.14	32.18	19.26	11.67	23.60
FI	4.06	34.43	23.24	4.04	18.64
EIMI	16.61	32.91	49.98	2.07	20.52
Total	18.24	32.71	22.13	5.51	22.20

Number of all ITTO projects					
Division	Africa	Asia	Latin America	Other	Total
RFM	148	179	201	59	587
FI	48	102	72	43	265
EIMI	27	36	37	71	171
Total	223	317	310	173	1023
Number of ex-post evaluated projects					
Division	Africa	Asia	Latin America	Other	Total
RFM	19	33	30	3	85
FI	1	23	8	2	34
EIMI	4	8	8	1	21
Total	24	64	46	6	140

Share of ex-post evaluated projects of the total number of projects by region and division (%)					
Division	Africa	Asia	Latin America	Other	Total
RFM	12.84	18.44	14.93	5.08	14.48
FI	2.08	22.55	11.11	4.65	12.83
EIMI	14.81	22.22	21.62	1.41	12.28
Total	10.76	20.19	14.84	3.47	13.69

Appendix 3.1 (cont'd**)**

Share of all and ex-post evaluated projects by region and country

Share of all and ex-post evaluated projects by region and country	Number of all projects					Number of ex-post evaluated projects								
	Total	*% of all*	*Division*			*Total*	*% of all ex-post*	*% of all projects*	*Division*			*Type of EA*		
			RFM	*FI*	*EIMI*				*RFM*	*FI*	*EIMI*	*Gov.*	*Mixed*	*Non-gov.*
Africa	**223**	**21,84**	**148**	**48**	**27**	**24**	**17,14**	**10,76**	**19**	**1**	**4**	**20**	**4**	**0**
Cameroon	39	3,82	25	9	5	2	1,43	5,13	2	0	0	2	0	0
Central African Republic	3	0,29	2	1	0									
Cote d'Ivoire	25	2,45	20	4	1	3	2,14	12,00	2	1	0	3	0	0
Dem. rep. of Congo	6	0,59	1	4	1									
Egypt	8	0,78	7	0	1	2	1,43	25,00	2	0	0	2	0	0
Gabon	27	2,64	16	6	5	4	2,86	14,81	2	0	2	4	0	0
Ghana	57	5,58	32	16	9	7	5,00	12,28	5	0	2	4	3	0
Liberia	4	0,39	3	1	0									
Nigeria	1	0,10	1	0	0									
Rep. of Congo	25	2,45	16	7	2	2	1,43	8,00	2	0	0	1	1	0
Togo	28	2,74	25	0	3	4	2,86	14,29	4	0	0	4	0	0
Asia	**316**	**30,95**	**179**	**102**	**35**	**64**	**45,71**	**20,25**	**34**	**23**	**7**	**56**	**5**	**3**
Cambodia	12	1,18	6	6	0									
China	53	5,19	23	18	12	10	7,14	18,87	3	6	1	10	0	0
Fiji	3	0,29	1	1	1									
India	14	1,37	7	6	1	1	0,71	7,14	1	0	0	0	1	0
Indonesia	83	8,13	57	20	6	25	17,86	30,12	17	5	3	19	3	3
Malaysia	51	5,00	35	13	3	9	6,43	17,65	7	1	1	9	0	0
Myanmar	10	0,98	4	6	0	1	0,71	10,00	0	1	0	1	0	0
Nepal	3	0,29	2	1	0									
Papua New Guinea	15	1,47	8	2	5	2	1,43	13,33	1	1	0	2	0	0
Philippines	42	4,11	17	21	4	10	7,14	23,81	2	6	2	10	0	0
Thailand	29	2,84	19	7	3	6	4,29	20,69	3	3	0	5	1	0
Vanuatu	1	0,10	0	1	0									
Latin America	**308**	**30,17**	**199**	**72**	**37**	**46**	**32,86**	**14,94**	**30**	**8**	**8**	**30**	**11**	**5**
Bolivia	22	2,15	17	2	3	6	4,29	27,27	4	0	2	5	1	0
Brazil	64	6,27	38	24	2	7	5,00	10,94	3	3	1	3	1	3
Colombia	38	3,72	31	2	5	4	2,86	10,53	3	0	1	3	1	0

Share of all and ex-post evaluated projects by region and country	Number of all projects					Number of ex-post evaluated projects								
	Total	% of all	Division			Total	% of all ex-post	% of all projects	Division			Type of EA		
			RFM	FI	EIMI				RFM	FI	EIMI	Gov.	Mixed	Non-gov.
Ecuador	33	3,23	19	11	3	4	2,86	12,12	4	0	0	0	3	1
Guatemala	17	1,67	7	4	6									
Guyana	12	1,18	3	6	3	2	1,43	16,67	1	1	0	1	1	0
Honduras	13	1,27	8	1	4	1	0,71	7,69	0	1	0	1	0	0
Mexico	7	0,69	4	3	0									
Panama	27	2,64	23	2	2	5	3,57	18,52	4	0	1	2	2	1
Peru	66	6,46	43	15	8	17	12,14	25,76	11	3	3	15	2	0
Suriname	1	0,10	0	1	0									
Trinidad and Tobago	2	0,20	1	1	0									
Venezuela	6	0,59	5	0	1									
Other	**74**	**8,03**	**39**	**15**	**20**	**6**	**4,29**	**8,11**	**3**	**2**	**1**	**1**	**5**	**0**
Australia	1	0,10	0	1	0									
Canada	1	0,10	0	0	1									
FAO	1	0,10	1	0	0									
Finland	3	0,29	0	3	0	2	1,43	66,67	0	2	0	0	2	0
France	2	0,20	0	2	0									
Germany	2	0,20	2	0	0	1	0,71	50,00	1	0	0	1	0	0
Japan	45	4,41	33	4	8	3	2,14	6,67	2	0	1	0	3	0
Netherlands	8	0,78	0	2	6									
Republic of Korea	3	0,29	0	3	0									
Switzerland	1	0,10	1	0	0									
United Kingdom	5	0,49	0	0	5									
United States of America	2	0,20	2	0	0									
ITTO	**100**	**10,86**	**20**	**28**	**52**									
Grand Total	**1021**	**100,00**	**585**	**265**	**171**	**140**	**100,00**	**13,71**	**86**	**34**	**20**	**107**	**25**	**8**

Appendix 3.1 (cont'd)

Number of ex-post evaluated projects by type of executing agency and division				
Type of EA	**RFM**	**FI**	**EIMI**	**Total**
Gov.	62	30	16	108
Mixed	18	2	3	23
Non-gov.	5	2	2	9
Total	85	34	21	140

Share of divisions in ex-post evaluated projects by type of executing agency and Division (%)			
Type of EA	**RFM**	**FI**	**EIMI**
Gov.	72.94	88.24	76.19
Mixed	21.18	5.88	14.29
Non-gov.	5.88	5.88	9.52
Total	100	100	100

Note: Mixed refers to projects which were implemented in partnership between government agencies and non-government bodies

Source: ITTO project data base and the meta-evaluation worksheets

Appendix 4.1

FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTIONS OF THE EVALUATION QUALITY MATRIX OF THE SAMPLED EX-POST EVALUATED PROJECTS

Part 1. Indicators assessed based on the quality rating

Quality of evaluation indicator	Percent of scores						Not assessed %
	1	2	3	4	5	Total	
Quality of TOR	2,17	3,26	42,39	46,74	5,43	100	0,00
Scope of TOR tasks	1,09	4,35	38,04	50,00	6,52	100	0,00
Report format	0,00	4,35	43,48	38,04	14,13	100	0,00
Data collection and methods	0,00	3,26	43,48	52,17	1,09	100	0,00
Report contents	0,00	5,43	25,00	53,26	16,30	100	0,00
Context and rationale	1,09	9,78	34,78	42,39	11,96	100	0,00
Description of project goals and objectives	1,09	4,35	28,26	41,30	25,00	100	0,00
Description of project activities	2,17	6,52	29,35	45,65	16,30	100	0,00
Description of project outputs	2,17	4,35	23,91	56,52	13,04	100	0,00
Description of dissemination	2,17	18,48	39,13	36,96	3,26	100	0,00
Logical framework assessed	8,70	18,84	34,78	27,54	10,14	100	25,00
Assessment of exit strategy	7,78	7,78	32,22	43,33	8,89	100	2,17
Beneficiaries identified	2,17	2,17	30,43	61,96	3,26	100	0,00
Impact of external risks on performance	3,53	17,65	34,12	44,71	0,00	100	7,61
Judgment	0,00	4,35	30,43	54,35	10,87	100	0,00
Rigor of evaluation	2,17	8,70	35,87	41,30	11,96	100	0,00
Soundness of evaluation	1,09	3,26	32,61	43,48	19,57	100	0,00
Clarity of findings	0,00	8,70	31,52	40,22	19,57	100	0,00
Indicators of impact identified	3,26	18,48	38,04	38,04	2,17	100	0,00
Linkage of indicators with the logical framework	6,78	20,34	33,90	30,51	8,47	100	35,87
Explanation of analysis	2,17	9,78	28,26	54,35	5,43	100	0,00
Lessons learned section	3,26	9,78	36,96	44,57	5,43	100	0,00
Recommendations	1,09	9,78	28,26	52,17	8,70	100	0,00
Applicability	3,30	12,09	40,66	42,86	1,10	100	1,09
Replicability of project	1,15	17,24	43,68	36,78	1,15	100	5,43
Relevance	0,00	2,17	43,48	51,09	3,26	100	0,00
Impacts	0,00	7,61	39,13	46,74	6,52	100	0,00
Efficiency	0,00	10,99	34,07	49,45	5,49	100	1,09
Sustainability	2,22	12,22	35,56	44,44	5,56	100	2,17
Contribution to ITTO objective 2000/ITTA	7,87	12,36	32,58	40,45	6,74	100	3,26
Follow-up project/activity after completion	4,65	8,14	37,21	44,19	5,81	100	6,52
Evaluation of monitoring and PCR	11,63	15,12	32,56	38,37	2,33	100	6,52

Notes: Rating of evaluation quality: 0 – not assessed in the ex-post evaluation report, 1- unsatisfactory, 2 – moderately unsatisfactory, 3 – moderately satisfactory, 4 – satisfactory, 5- excellent
The share of *not assessed* is calculated based on the total number of projects in the sample. The distribution of observation in each indicator is calculated based on the number of projects with information on that component (total - not assessed).

Appendix 4.1 (cont'd)

FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTIONS OF THE EVALUATION QUALITY MATRIX OF THE SAMPLED EX-POST EVALUATED PROJECTS

Part 2 Additional quality indicators on the ex-post evaluation methodology

Additional quality indicators on evaluation methods	Percent of scores	
	0 - No	1 - Yes
Questionnaires used and included	86,96	13,04
Field visit	6,52	93,48
Evaluation matrix	67,39	32,61
Interviews with beneficiaries	3,26	96,74
Other tools used	32,61	67,39

Source: Meta-evaluators' worksheets on individual project evaluations

Appendix 5.1

FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTIONS OF THE PROJECT QUALITY EVALUATION MATRIX OF THE SAMPLED EX-POST EVALUATED PROJECTS

Part 1. Indicators assessed based on the quality rating

Project quality indicator	Percent of scores						Not assessed %
	1	2	3	4	5	Total	
Performance							
EA performance	3,30	17,58	29,67	43,96	5,49	100	1,09
PSC performance	6,94	13,89	44,44	31,94	2,78	100	21,74
Partner performance	2,99	16,42	43,28	35,82	1,49	100	27,17
ITTO performance	1,19	10,71	38,10	42,86	7,14	100	8,70
Impact of external risks on performance	13,10	42,86	27,38	15,48	1,19	100	8,70
Applicability & replicability							
Applicability of key project products	10,87	21,74	44,57	22,83	0,00	100	0,00
Applicability of lessons	7,69	25,27	41,76	23,08	2,20	100	1,09
Applicability of recommendations	11,96	31,52	35,87	18,48	2,17	100	0,00
Replicability of the project	6,59	15,38	42,86	34,07	1,10	100	1,09
Relevance							
Beneficiary/target group needs	1,09	13,04	36,96	46,74	2,17	100	0,00
Policy compatibility	5,62	17,98	32,58	25,84	17,98	100	3,26
Realism	8,70	25,00	34,78	30,43	1,09	100	0,00
Internal logic, consistency	7,69	24,18	40,66	24,18	3,30	100	1,09
Implementation arrangements	4,35	14,13	45,65	32,61	3,26	100	0,00
Economic impact	4,44	21,11	38,89	28,89	6,67	100	2,17
Participation, local opportunities	5,75	28,74	28,74	29,89	6,90	100	5,43
Innovation	5,43	29,35	35,87	25,00	4,35	100	0,00
Partner interest alignment	11,11	17,78	37,78	26,67	6,67	100	2,17
Effectiveness							
Effectiveness in achieving objectives	4,35	7,61	45,65	36,96	5,43	100	0,00
Impacts							
Gender	0,00	38,89	33,33	27,78	0,00	100	80,43
Environment	4,82	25,30	50,60	18,07	1,20	100	9,78
Capacity strengthening	1,11	13,33	45,56	35,56	4,44	100	2,17
Institutional strengthening	1,09	23,91	47,83	26,09	1,09	100	0,00
Social capital, empowerment	10,26	43,59	35,90	8,97	1,28	100	15,22
Economic impact	5,62	34,83	31,46	25,84	2,25	100	3,26
Information and knowledge	2,17	13,04	50,00	32,61	2,17	100	0,00
Other/unintended impacts	5,81	26,74	52,33	12,79	2,33	100	6,52
Efficiency							
Resource allocation	7,69	19,78	27,47	37,36	7,69	100	1,09
Efficiency	2,17	19,57	39,13	36,96	2,17	100	0,00
Delay in implementation	23,08	27,47	25,27	15,38	8,79	100	1,09
Additional funding requested	5,81	2,33	3,49	12,79	75,58	100	6,52

Appendix 5.1 (cont'd)

Project quality indicator	Percent of scores						Not assessed %
	1	2	3	4	5	Total	
Sustainability							
Economic sustainability	11,36	27,27	34,09	26,14	1,14	100	4,35
Technical viability	6,67	14,44	32,22	41,11	5,56	100	2,17
Institutional sustainability	8,99	24,72	44,94	20,22	1,12	100	3,26
Social sustainability	11,59	36,23	37,68	11,59	2,90	100	25,00
Environmental sustainability	4,05	21,62	48,65	21,62	4,05	100	19,57
Quality of monitoring and PCR							
Quality of monitoring as assessed	4,76	25,00	44,05	22,62	3,57	100	8,70
Quality of PCR	1,54	20,00	41,54	32,31	4,62	100	29,35

Notes: Rating of evaluation quality: 0 – not assessed in the ex-post evaluation report, 1- unsatisfactory, 2 – moderately unsatisfactory, 3 – moderately satisfactory, 4 – satisfactory, 5- excellent.
The share of *not assessed* is calculated based on the total number of projects in the sample. The distribution of observation in each component is calculated based on the number of projects with information on that component (=total – not assessed).

Part 2 Additional project quality indicators

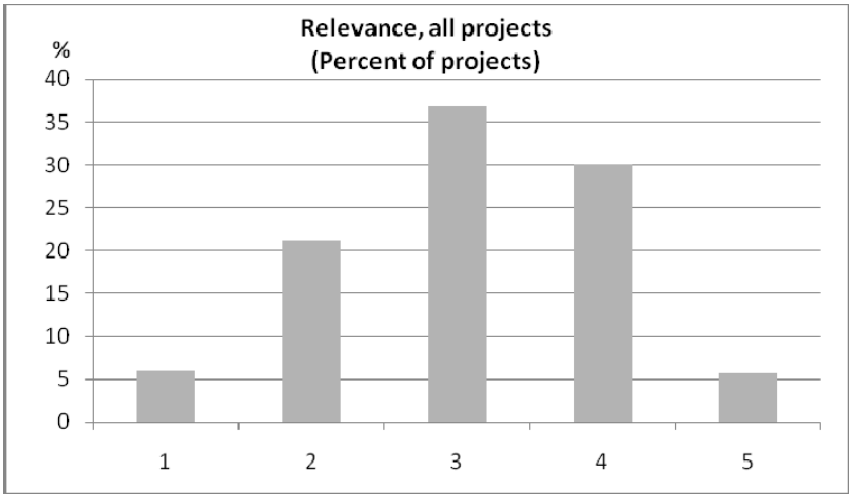
Contribution to ITTO objective 2000/ITTA (%)	Percent of scores				
	No link identified	Local level link	National level link	Regional / international level link	Total
Consultation for policy development	32,61	8,70	46,74	11,96	100
Process of sustainable development	9,78	16,30	55,43	18,48	100
National policies	6,52	2,17	81,52	9,78	100
Forest land-use/tenure	52,17	22,83	23,91	1,09	100
Sustainable forest management	8,70	15,22	55,43	20,65	100
Reforestation and rehabilitation	48,91	17,39	29,35	4,35	100
Further processing	61,96	5,43	31,52	1,09	100
Industry efficiency	65,22	6,52	28,26	0,00	100
Marketing and distribution	54,35	8,70	28,26	8,70	100
Market intelligence	78,26	2,17	17,39	2,17	100
Trade promotion and diversification	51,09	6,52	29,35	13,04	100
Information sharing	25,00	4,35	42,39	28,26	100
R&D	33,70	7,61	51,09	7,61	100
Access to and transfer of technologies	26,09	18,48	46,74	8,70	100
Capacity building	4,35	31,52	56,52	7,61	100
Investment promotion	57,61	7,61	30,43	4,35	100

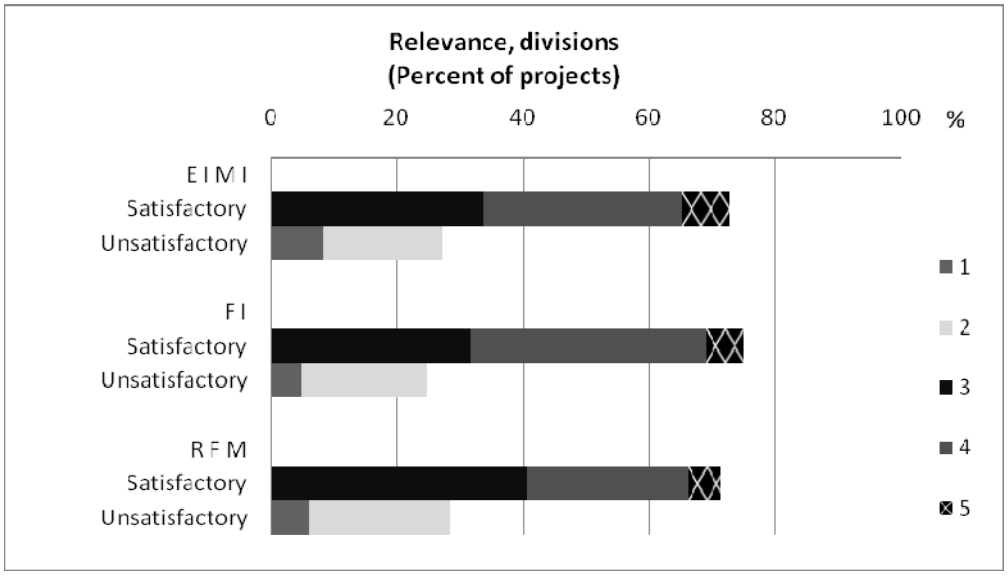
Follow-up project/activity after completion	Percent of scores	
	No	Yes
Recommended activities undertaken	50,00	50,00
Policy adjustment	68,48	31,52
Follow-up project	45,65	54,35
Other	54,35	45,65

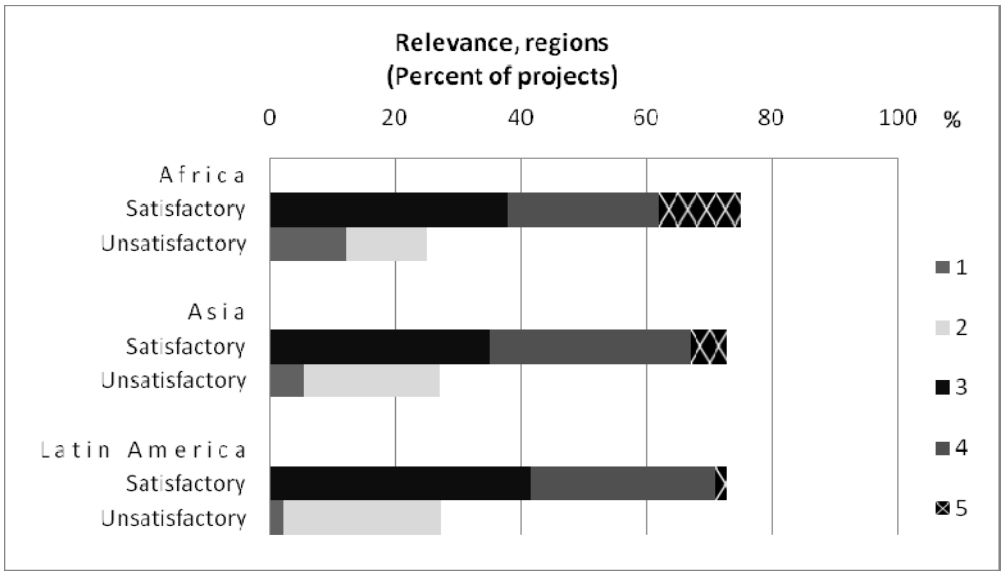
Source: Meta-evaluators' worksheets on individual project evaluations

Appendix 5.2

PROJECT QUALITY RATINGS OF RELEVANCE BY DIVISION AND REGION

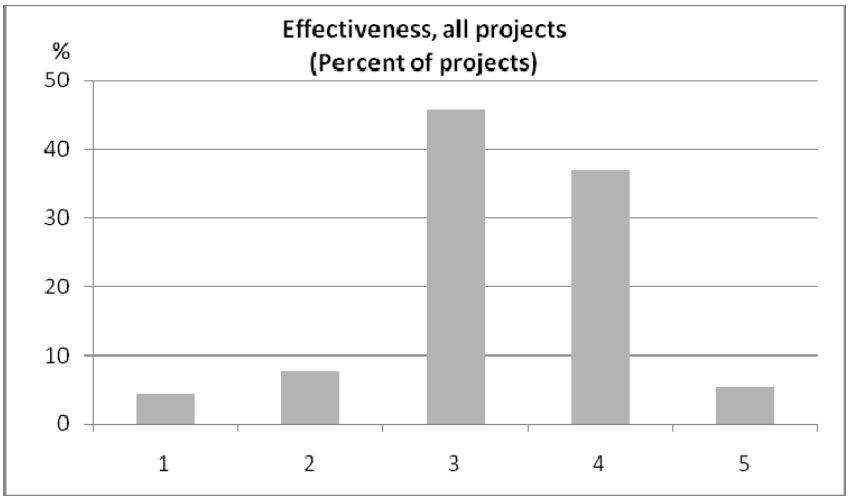


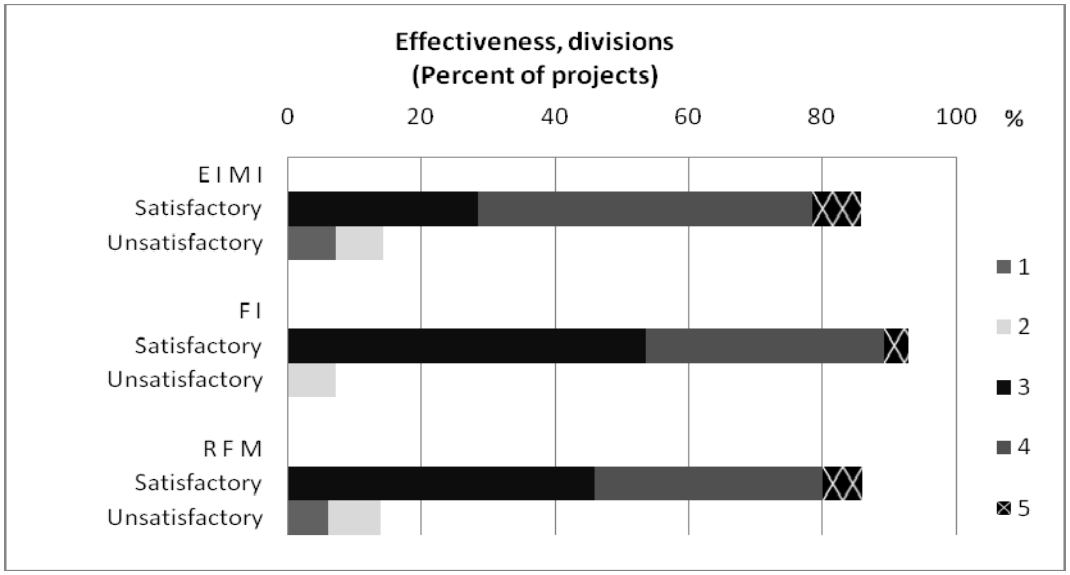


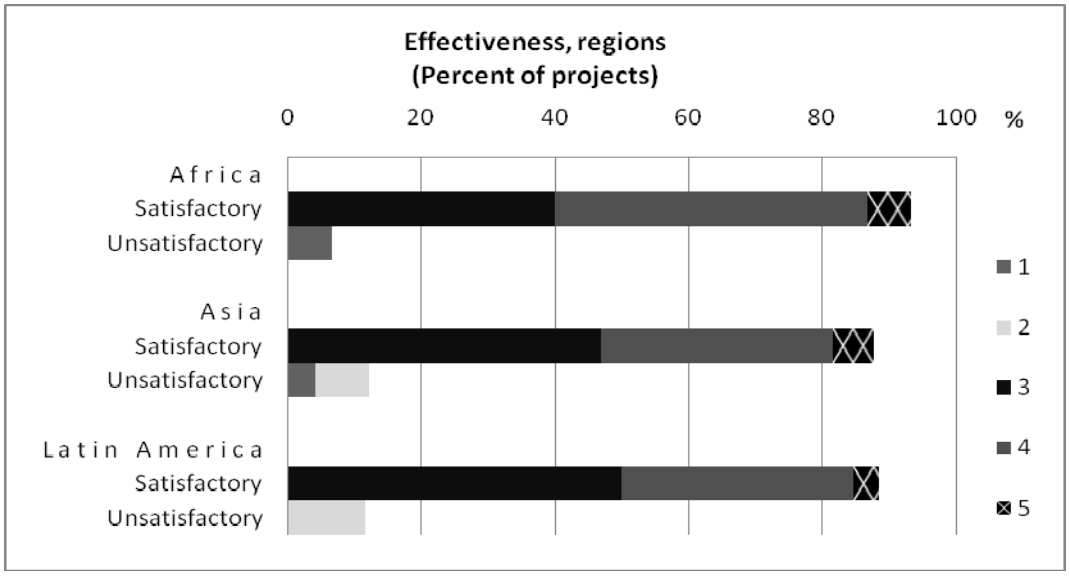


Appendix 5.3

PROJECT QUALITY RATINGS OF EFFECTIVENESS BY DIVISION AND REGION

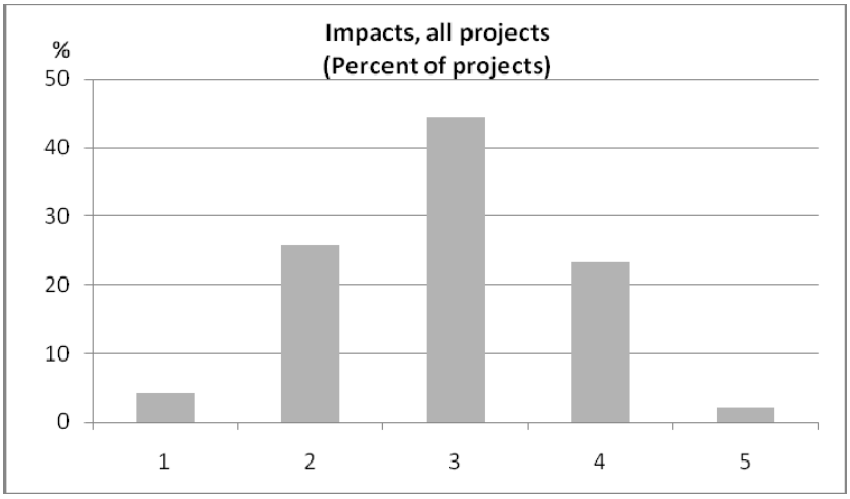


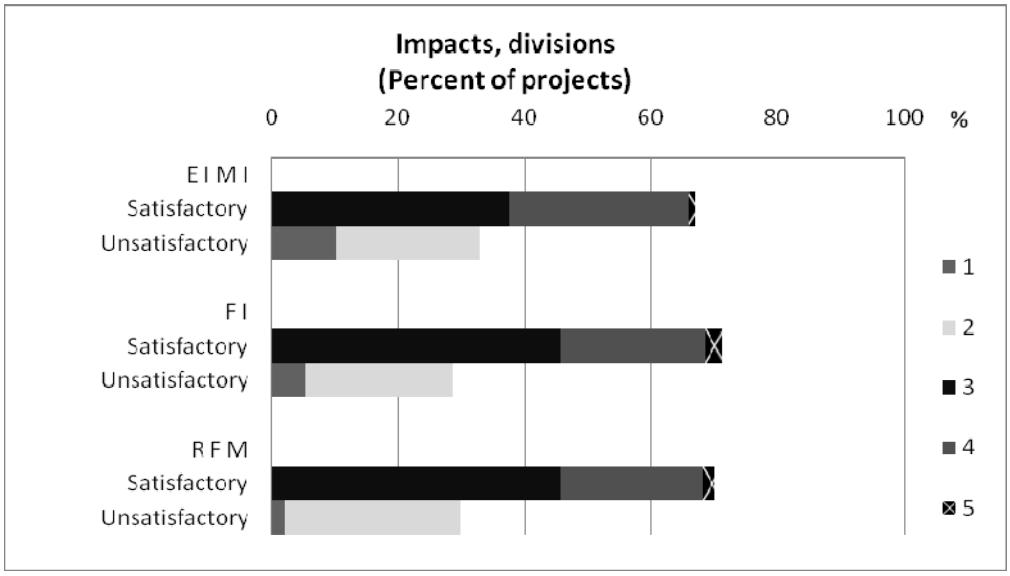


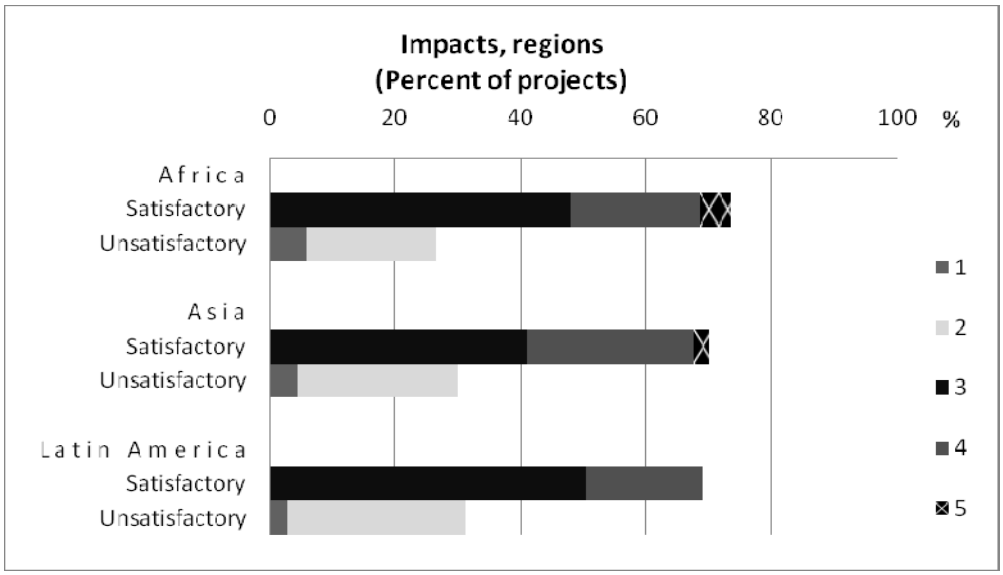


Appendix 5.4

PROJECT QUALITY RATINGS OF IMPACTS BY DIVISION AND REGION

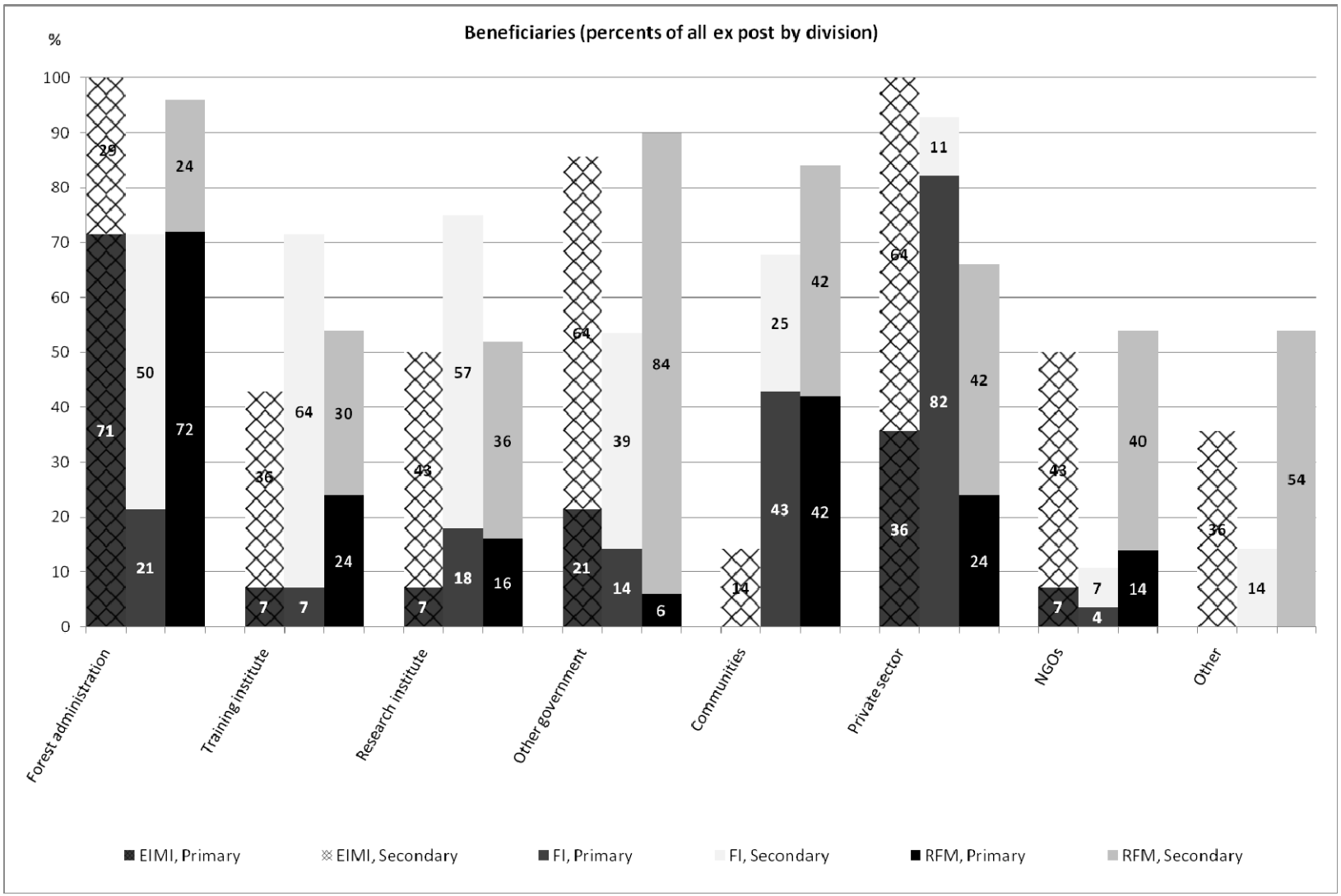






Appendix 5.5

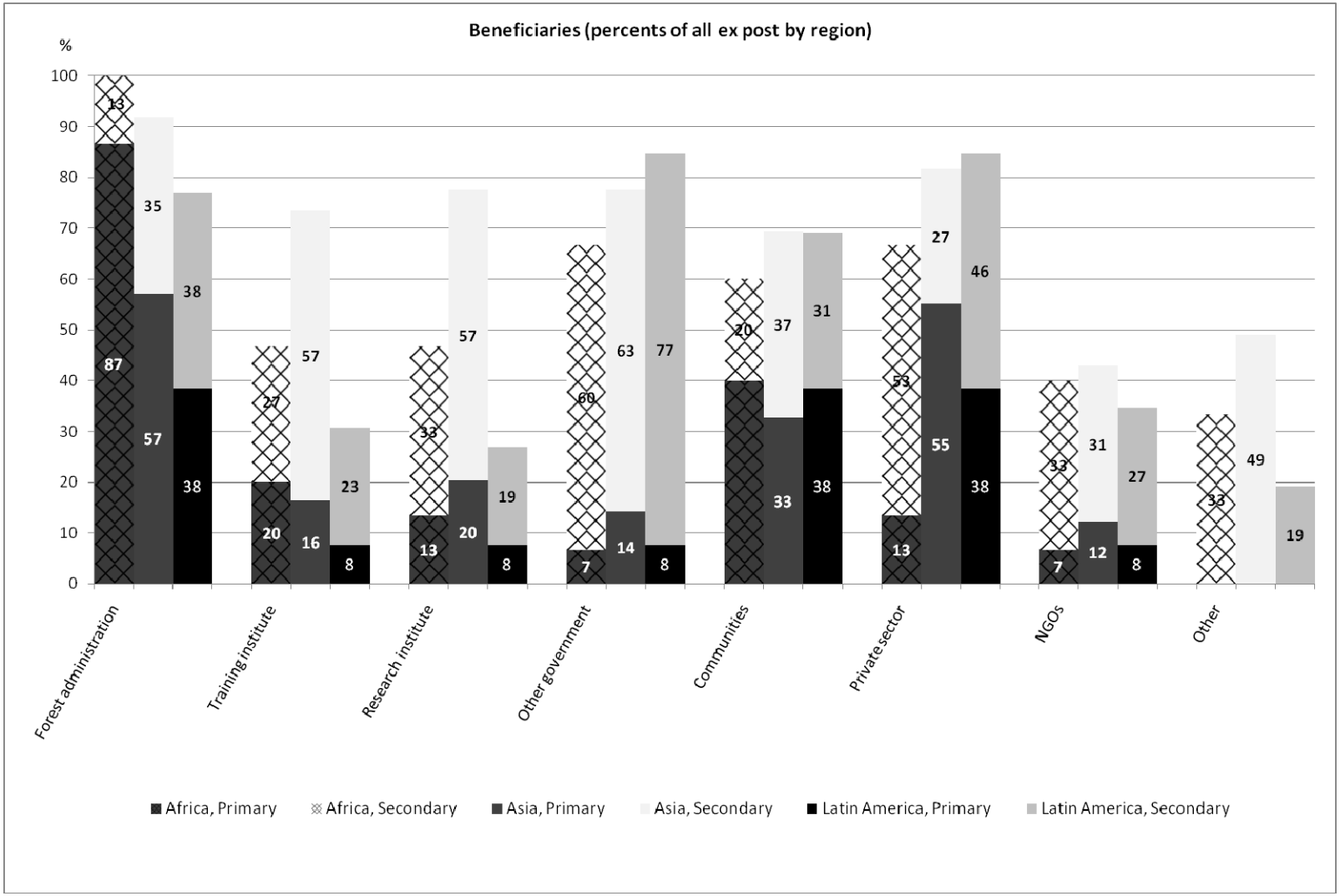
BENEFICIARIES OF THE SAMPLED EX-POST EVALUATED PROJECTS BY DIVISION



Source: Meta-evaluation project assessment worksheets

Appendix 5.6

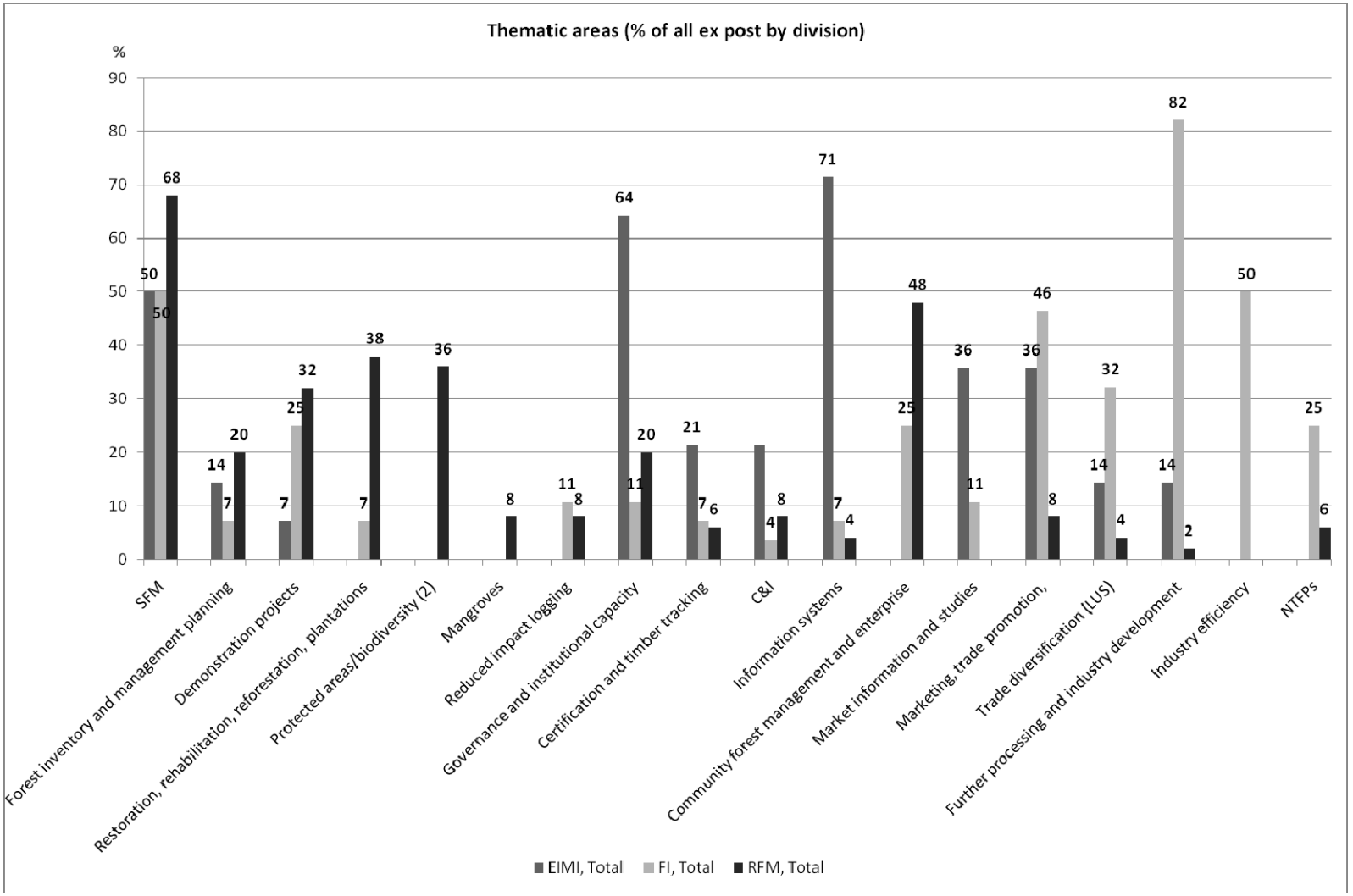
BENEFICIARIES OF THE SAMPLED EX-POST EVALUATED PROJECTS BY REGION



Source: Meta-evaluation project assessment worksheets

Appendix 5.7

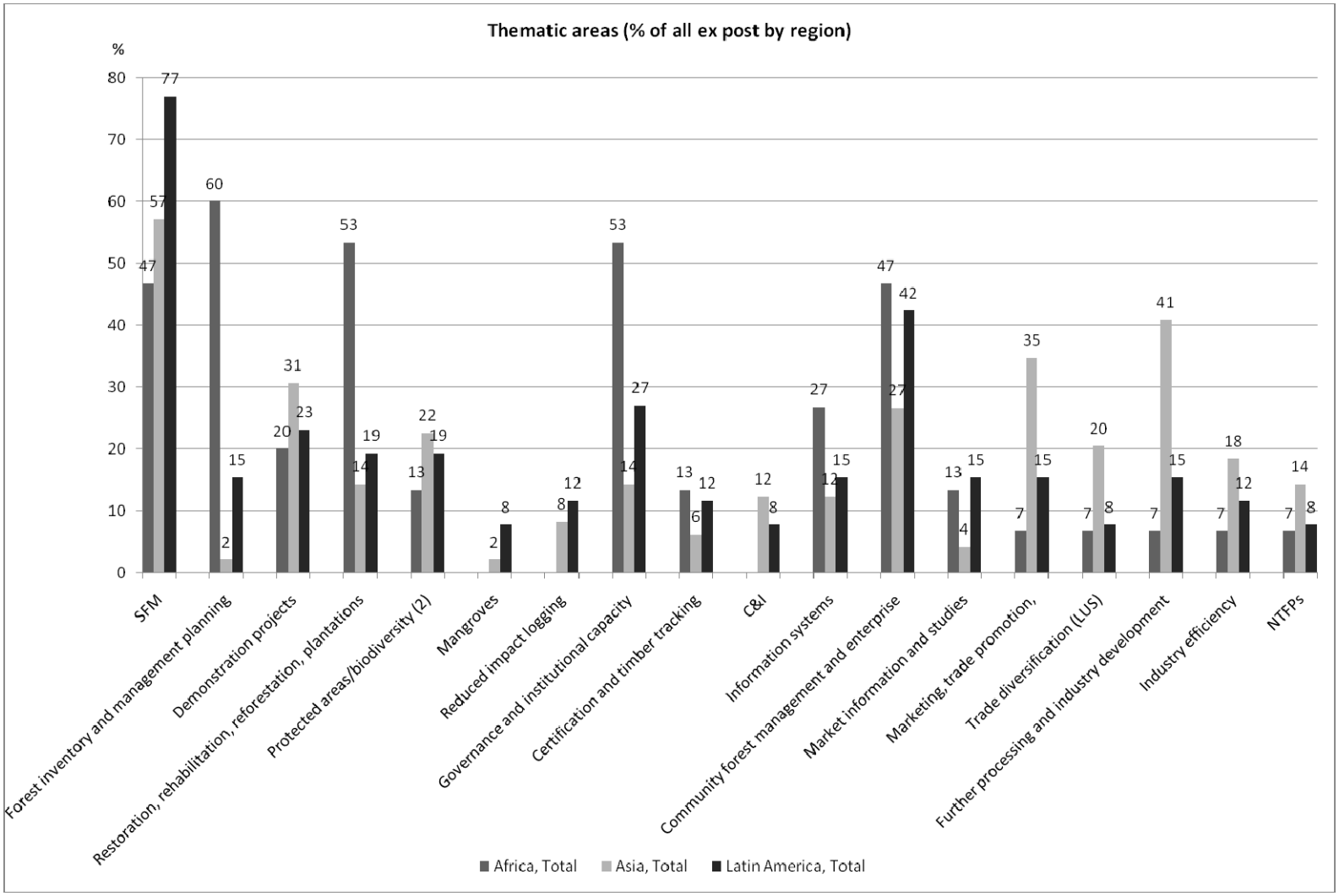
SUBSTANTIVE THEMATIC AREAS OF THE SAMPLED EX-POST EVALUATED PROJECTS BY DIVISION



Source: Meta-evaluation project assessment worksheets

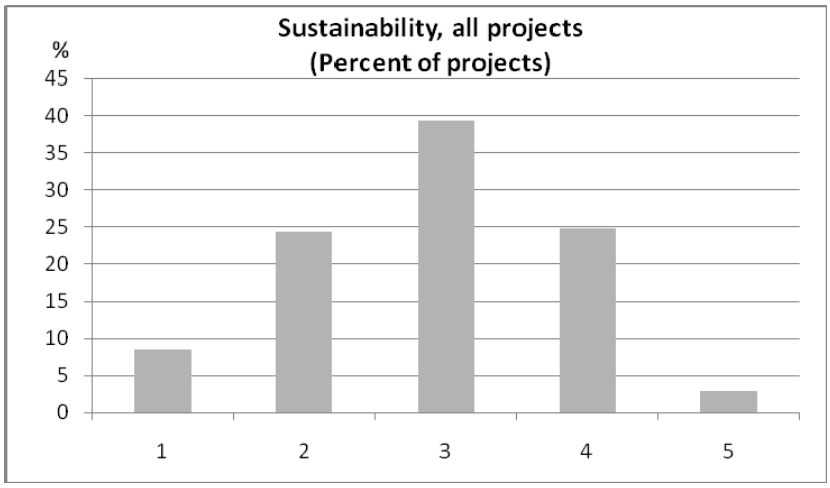
Appendix 5.8

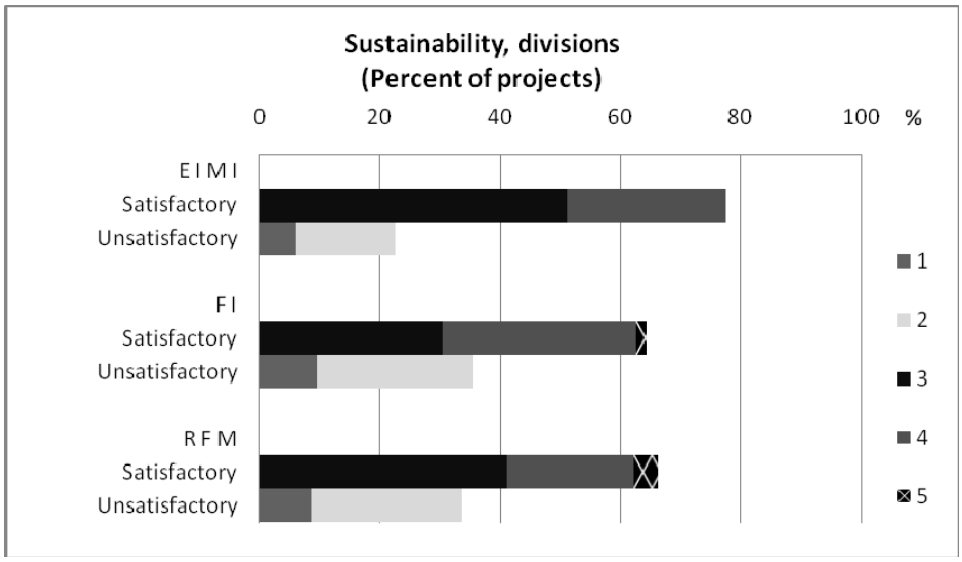
SUBSTANTIVE THEMATIC AREAS OF THE SAMPLED EX-POST EVALUATED PROJECTS BY REGION

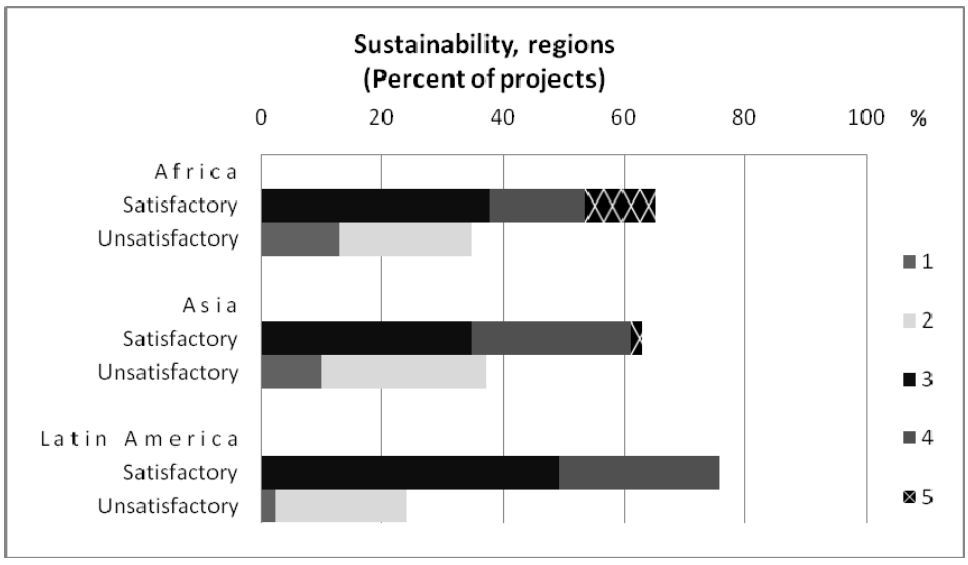


Source: Meta-evaluation project assessment worksheets

PROJECT QUALITY RATINGS OF SUSTAINABILITY BY DIVISION AND REGION

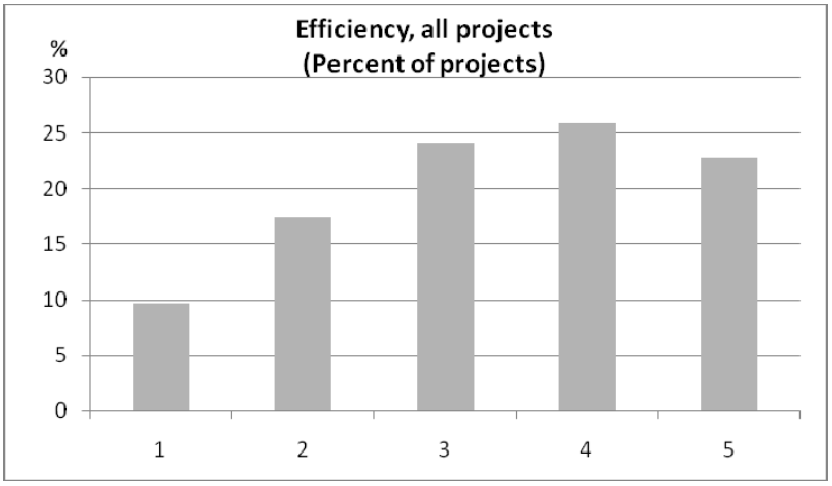


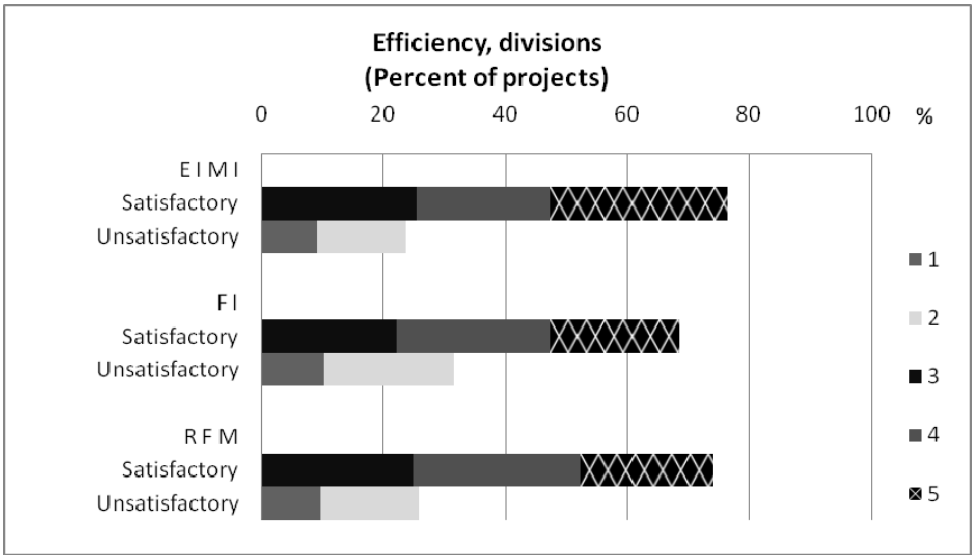


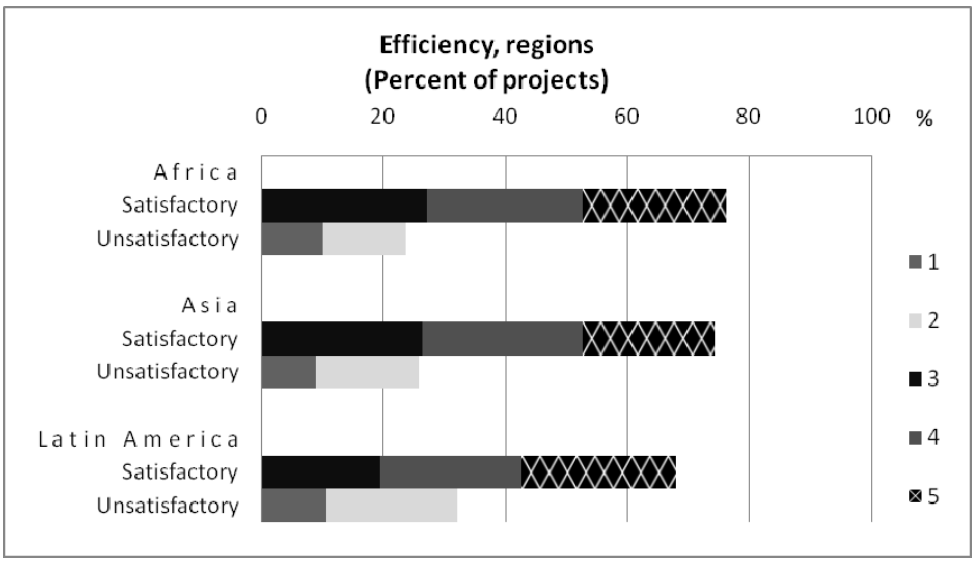


Appendix 5.10

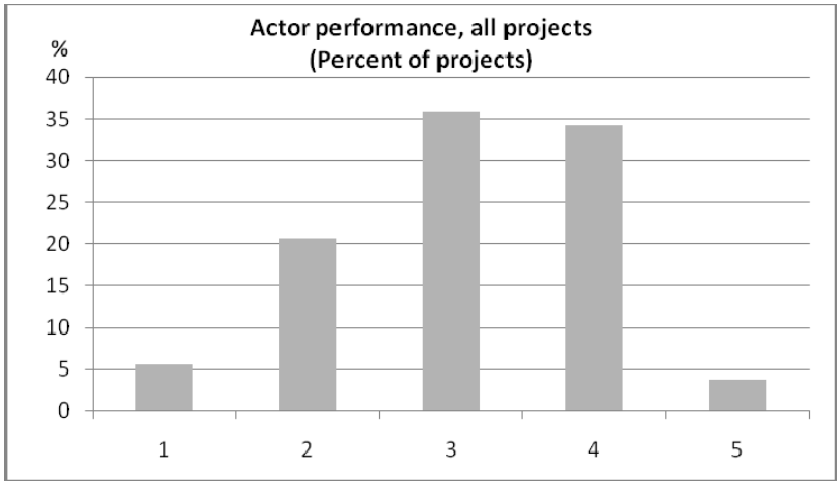
PROJECT QUALITY RATINGS OF EFFICIENCY BY DIVISION AND REGION

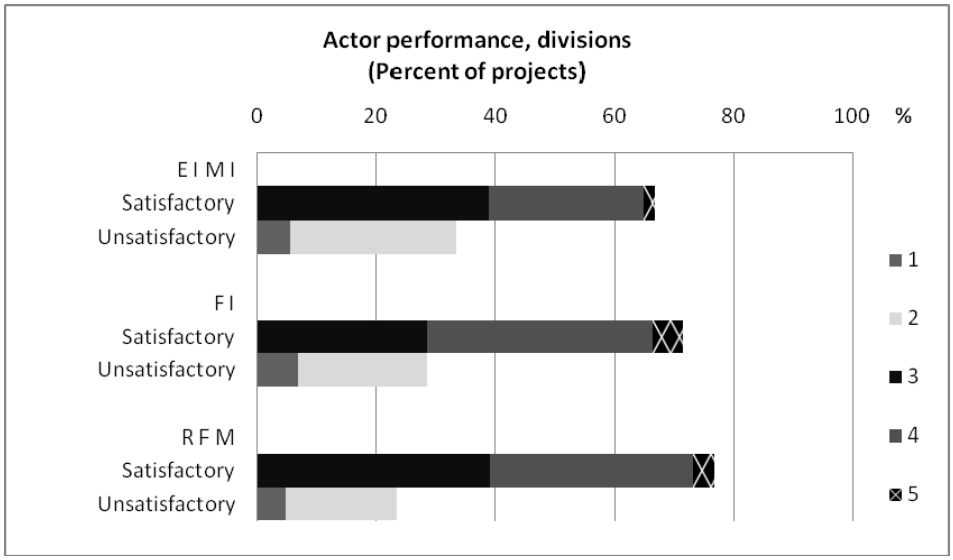


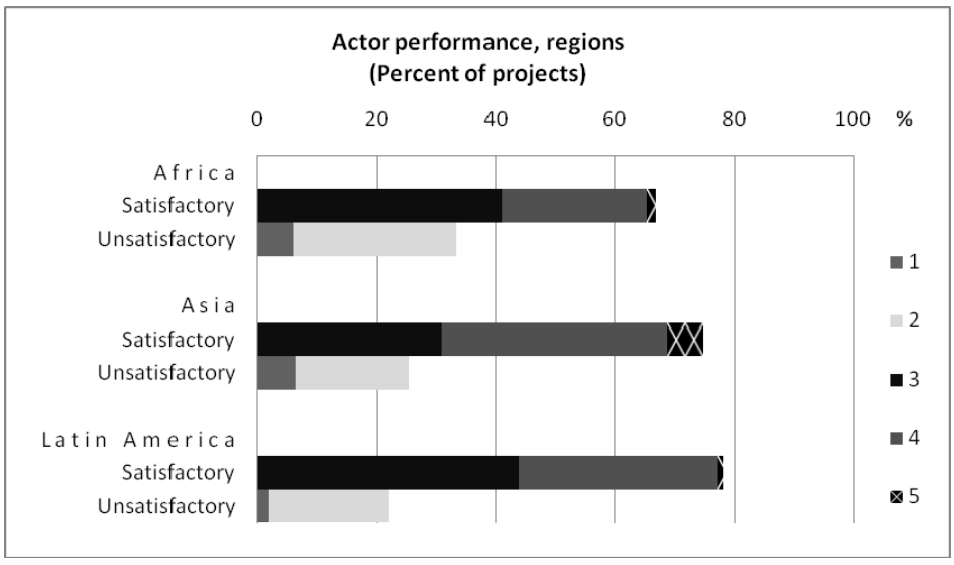




PROJECT QUALITY RATINGS OF ACTOR PERFORMANCE BY DIVISION AND REGION







Appendix 6.1

ITTC DECISION 3(XXVIII) EX-POST EVALUATION OF PROJECTS

The International Tropical Timber Council,

Recalling Decision 7(XXVII), which requested the Executive Director to review Section 7 in Annex 2 of Decision 2(X) on ex-post evaluations with a view to defining a simple procedure for identifying projects or groups of projects requiring ex-post evaluations and defining a simple and cost effective procedure to carry out ex-post evaluations, including alternative ways for financing ex-post evaluation work,

Further recalling Annex 2 of Decision 2(X), which defined the content and composition of ex-post evaluation missions,

Taking note of the Secretariat document ITTC(XXVIII)/12, presenting options for selection and funding of ex-post evaluations,

Considering that all completed projects are potential candidates for ex-post evaluation, and the importance of identifying and disseminating lessons learned,

Decides to:

1. Request Committees to consider as candidates for ex-post evaluation all individual projects or groups of projects based on the criteria contained under the “Procedures to Identify Projects/Groups of Projects for Ex-post Evaluation” contained in Annex I of this Decision; based on experience with these draft procedures, the Committees may wish to propose final procedures to the Council at a future Session;

2. Authorize the Executive Director to seek agreement from the contributor(s) in accordance with Article 20, paragraph 11 of ITTA, 1994 and to create a separate pool of funds within each Committee for financing ex-post evaluations using the remaining ITTO monitoring and evaluation funds. Funds will be transferred to the pooled sub-accounts from completed, audited and closed projects. Financial procedures are given in Annex II to this Decision;

3. Request that the proponents for project proposals include a budget provision for possible ex-post evaluation as part of project formulation and request the Expert Panel for Technical Evaluation of Project and Pre-project Proposals to consider such provisions;

4. Change the requirement for three independent consultants to carry out ex-post evaluations as spelled out in Decision 2(X) to a requirement of from one to three independent consultants, depending on the size and nature of the evaluation;

5. Request the Executive Director to ensure that the Terms of Reference for the work of the evaluation missions includes consultation with project stakeholders;

6. Request 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 project(s) broadly available to stakeholders and the interested public; and

7. Request 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 accordingly.

ANNEX I

Ex-post Evaluation of Projects

Procedures to Identify Projects/Groups of Projects for Ex-Post Evaluation

1. Procedure to Identify Projects for Ex-Post Evaluation

(i) Decisions on whether a project or group of projects should be submitted to ex-post evaluation should be taken by the Committee(s) overseeing implementation of the project(s);

(ii) The decision by the Committee of whether an ex-post evaluation is needed, will normally be taken at the Session at which the project is reported as completed. The decision will propose a time schedule and budget for implementation of the ex-post evaluation work;

(iii) To assess if a project requires ex-post evaluation, the Committee(s) should take into account the nature of the project (ex-post evaluation is particularly important for human resources and institutional/infrastructure development projects). A short-list of projects whose ex-post evaluations would be beneficial should be prepared by selecting those meeting the following requirements:

(a) ITTO budget of individual projects or groups of projects above an appropriate level (e.g. US$400,000);

(b) Clear benefits to be derived from learning more about facts, achievements and difficulties during project implementation and completion, including information and data on:
- whether the expected outputs were achieved;
- whether the project achieved its specific objective(s);
- whether there were unexpected results and impacts, either harmful or beneficial;
- who benefited from the project;
- what were the key lessons learned from the project;
- what direct recommendations have arisen for future projects; and
- whether the project activities are sustainable.

(c) The potential for wider application of lessons learned;

(d) Other factors as considered appropriate by the Committees.

(Note: The list above could form a part of the Terms of Reference for ex-post evaluation missions.)

2. Identifying Groups of Projects to be Evaluated

Ex-post evaluations should normally be performed after at least one year has passed following the completion of activities and the presentation of the completion report to the respective Committee. Ex-post evaluations to be performed on a group of projects must, therefore, collectively require that this interval has elapsed following the reported completion of all projects to be included in the evaluation. The following are possible approaches for grouping projects for ex-post evaluation.

(i) Phased project evaluation. Several ITTO projects have been implemented over several years in two or more phases. Due to the length, budgets, and general complexity of such phased projects, they generally fit the criteria for ex-post evaluation and could be considered as a whole for evaluation following completion of the final phase.

(ii) Country-group evaluation. The evaluation of multiple projects at the country level would determine the impacts of ITTO activities in the country. The findings of this grouping approach could be utilized to improve the methods employed in formulation and implementation of future projects in that country.

(iii) Thematic group evaluation. This grouping approach would take a broad perspective on a category of project work (e.g. secondary processing of forest products, lesser-used species, etc.). This type of thematic grouping for ex-post evaluations could identify common problems associated with implementation of projects related to a defined theme. These findings could assist in the formulation and implementation of future projects.

(iv) ITTO goal evaluation. There is a need for ITTO to evaluate how its project work is contributing to the organization's goals as spelled out in the Action Plan. The work currently being carried out by Council to assess progress towards the Year 2000 Objective should provide useful groupings of projects to be considered for evaluation in this regard.

ANNEX II

Financial Procedures

(i) Within the Special Account, three sub-accounts will be created, one for each Committee (CEM, CFI and CRF) to fund ex-post evaluations carried out under the supervision of the respective Committee, in accordance with the decision of the Council. Committees shall specify the source of funds to be used for the ex-post evaluation work such as remaining ITTO Monitoring and Evaluation funds, specially budgeted Ex-post evaluation funds or the funds placed in the sub-account of the Special Account for ex-post evaluations.

(ii) The budget prepared for the ex-post evaluation should include the fee and travel costs of the mission, preparation of the report, translation costs and costs associated with the dissemination of the results and any other costs as required.

(iii) Funds remaining in completed projects, under ITTO's budget item for monitoring and evaluation, and for ex-post evaluation, will be transferred to the appropriate sub-account of the Special Account after receipt and acceptance of the project's audited financial report and after the project has been declared closed according to the Organizations financial procedures and after agreement by the contributor(s) to transfer funds in accordance with Article 20, paragraph 11 of ITTA (1994).

* * *

LIST OF SYNTHESIS REPORTS OF EX-POST EVALUATIONS

RFM projects

1. Synthesis Report on the Ex-Post Evaluation of Three ITTO Completed Projects on Criteria and Indicators of Sustainable Forest Management - PD 389/05 Rev.2 (F); PD 225/03 Rev.1 (F); PD 195/03 Rev.2 (F) January 2011

2. Synthesis Report on Ex-Post Evaluations of ITTO Biodiversity Conservation Projects in Indonesia, Malaysia, Peru, Bolivia and Panama - PD 14/00 Rev.5 (F); PD 17/00 Rev.3 (F); PD 44/00 Rev.3 (F); PD 224/03 Rev.1 (F) January 2011

3. Synthesis Report on Ex-Post Evaluation of Four ITTO Completed Projects on Forest Plantations/Growth and Yield - PD 22/89 Rev.1 (F); PD 41/00 Rev.3 (F,M); PD 53/00 Rev.3 (F); PD 386/05 Rev.1 (F) January 2011

4. Summary report on ex-post evaluations of forest plantation projects - PD 16/96 Rev.4 (F); PD 4/97 Rev.3 (F); PD 3/95 Rev.2 (F); PD 17/9 Rev.3 (F); PD 30/96 Rev.3 (F) October 2004

5. Summary Report of the Ex-post Evaluation of 6 Projects in the Field of Forest Management/Inventory - PD 68/89 Rev.1 (F); PD 185/91 Rev.2 (F); PD 2/93 Rev.1 (F); PD 23/00 Rev.4 (F); PD 39/00 Rev.3 (F); PD 178/02 Rev.1 (F) December 2009

6. Overall Evaluation of ITTO Projects on Community Participation in Sustainable Forest Management (Bolivia, Ghana, Panama, Peru, Philippines and Togo) - PD 44/99 Rev.2 (F); PD 48/98 Rev.1 (F); PD 49/98 Rev.1 (F); PD 37/95 Rev.2 (F); PD 38/99 Rev.1 (F); PD 21/97 Rev.2 (F); PD 9/99 Rev.2 (F) 5 February 2009

7. Overall evaluation of ITTO transboundary community participation projects (Ecuador, Indonesia, Peru and Thailand) in biodiversity conservation - PD 16/97 Rev.3 (F); PD 2/00 Rev.2 (F); PD 3/00 Rev.2 (F); PD 38/00 Rev.1 (F) May 2005

8. Summary Report of the Ex-post Evaluation of 5 Projects in the Field of Rehabilitation and Management of Degraded and Secondary Forests - PD 30/97 Rev.6 (F); PD 14/98 Rev.1; PD 49/99 Rev.2 (F); PD 51/99 Rev.2 (F); PD 122/01 Rev.1 (F) 4 December 2008

9. Synthesis report on ex-post evaluations of projects related to mangrove conservation, management and rehabilitation - PD 128/91 Rev. 2 (F); PD 157/91 Rev. 2 (F); PD 171/91 Rev. 2 (F); PD 11/92 Rev. 1 (F); PD 6/93 Rev. 2 (F) April 2004

10. ITTO projects in the field of demonstration areas/model forest for sustainable forest management implemented in Asia September 2003

11. ITTO projects in the field of sustainable forest management implemented in Latin America - 1. PD 34/88 Rev.1 (F, I); PD 33/93 Rev.1 (F); PD 95/90 (F); PD 18/94 Rev.1 (F); PD 176/91 Rev.1 (F); PD 13/96 Rev.1 (F) April 2002

12. ITTO projects in the field of fire management implemented in Indonesia - PD 17/87 (F); PD 84/90 (F); PD 12/93 Rev.3 (F) April 2002

13. Synthesis Report on Synthesis Report on Ex-Post Evaluations of Reduced Impact Logging Projects - PD 74/90 Rev.1 (F,I); PD 104/90 Rev.2 (F) and PD 26/96 Rev.4 (F); PD 45/97 Rev.1 (F) September 2003

EIMI projects

14. Development and Implementation of the Pilot Project of the Forestry Statistics Information System (FSIS) (Philippines) - PD 41/99 Rev.4 (M) and Timber and Timber Products Trade Flow Study in the Philippines (Philippines) - PD 133/02 Rev.3 (M) January 2011

15. ITTO projects in the field of statistical information systems implemented in Latin America - PD 1/97 Rev.1 (M); ITTO Project PD 34/94 Rev.1 (M); PD 44/96 Rev.2 (M); PD 27/95 Rev.3 (M) Phase I and Phase II Stage 1; PPD 5/94 (M) September 2002

Collection of executive summaries (not synthesis reports)

16. ITTO projects implemented in China - PD 20/95 Rev.2 (I); PD 21/95 Rev.2 (I); PD 24/95 Rev.1 (I); PD 3/96 Rev.2 (I); PD 25/96 Rev.2 (M) April 2001

17. Ex-Post Evaluation Reports - Executive Summaries - Economic Information and Market Intelligence and Forest Industry - PD 194/03 Rev.2 (M); PD 34/99 Rev.2 (I); PD 35/99 Rev.4 (I); PD 94/90 Rev.3 (I); PD 467/97 Rev.3 (I); PD 68/01 Rev.2 (I); PD 146/02 Rev.1 (I) December 2009

18. Ex-Post Evaluation Reports - Executive Summaries - Economic Information and Market Intelligence and Forest Industry - PD 41/99 Rev.4 (M); PD 133/02 Rev.3 (M); PD 264/04 Rev.3 (M,I); PD 108/01 Rev.3 (I); PD 277/04 Rev.3 (I); PD 286/04 Rev.1 (I) January 2011

DRAFT PROJECT COMPLETION FORM

The model below is attempted to provide a basis for detailed design of the form to be used for reporting to Committees on completed projects. The form would be pre-filled by linking it with the Project Database and completed by Project Managers electronically using pull-down menus, as appropriate. The data could be used for compiling analytical summaries on beneficiaries, contributions to ITTO's objectives and project quality.

<table>
<tr><td>Project ID</td><td rowspan="3">Project title</td><td>Budget</td></tr>
<tr><td>Submitting country</td><td>Total</td></tr>
<tr><td>Executing agency</td><td>ITTO</td></tr>
<tr><td>Approval date</td><td>Planned duration</td><td>- Donors</td></tr>
<tr><td>Starting date</td><td>Actual duration</td><td>Counterpart</td></tr>
<tr><td>Completion date</td><td>Financial audit</td><td>Other</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Objectives</td><td>Beneficiaries
(pull-down menu to select from the list; direct and indirect beneficiaries separately)</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Main outputs</td><td>Contribution to ITTA objectives (1-5)
(pull-down menu to select from the list; rating of contribution to relevant objectives)</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Lessons learned</td><td rowspan="2">Project quality (0-5)
Relevance
Effectiveness
Impacts
• SFM
• Poverty
• Economic
• Stakeholders
• Gender
• Policy
• Governance
Sustainability
• Environmental
• Social
• Economic
• Institutional
Technical viability
Efficiency
Replicability
EA performance
Partner performance</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Remarks</td></tr>
</table>

Rating guide: 5 – highly significant/satisfactory, 4 - significant/satisfactory, 3 – moderately significant/satisfactory, 2 – marginal/moderately unsatisfactory, 1 – insignificant/unsatisfactory, 0 – not relevant

ANNEX I

RESULTS OF STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATIONS

Table of contents

This Annex reports on the detailed results of meta-evaluation consultations with six stakeholder groups (i) executing agencies, (ii) producing country focal points, (iii) consuming country focal points, (iv) evaluators, (v) ITTO Secretariat staff and (vi) the Civil Society Advisory Groups and the Trade Advisory Group. The methodology of data collection is explained in section 2.6 of the main report and the questionnaires used in the surveys are given in Appendix 2.3.

1. Executing agencies

As a total of 16 acceptable responses only were received from executing agencies (out of 71 sent), we are focusing in this section on the overall results of the survey. Information on differences between regions and type of executing agency is inadequate for proper assessment and therefore only general exploratory comments can be made (Box 1-1).

Only two thirds of the respondents or their predecessors stated that they had received ex post evaluation reports of ITTO funded projects which further reduces the analytical possibilities of this component of the stakeholder survey. As pointed out in section 2.6 several reasons can partly explain the low response rate. Executing agencies of new projects are the main target group of this meta-evaluation and therefore the low response rate may also indicate lack of interest in continuing to work with ITTO.

Box 1-1 Regional differences in executing agency replies

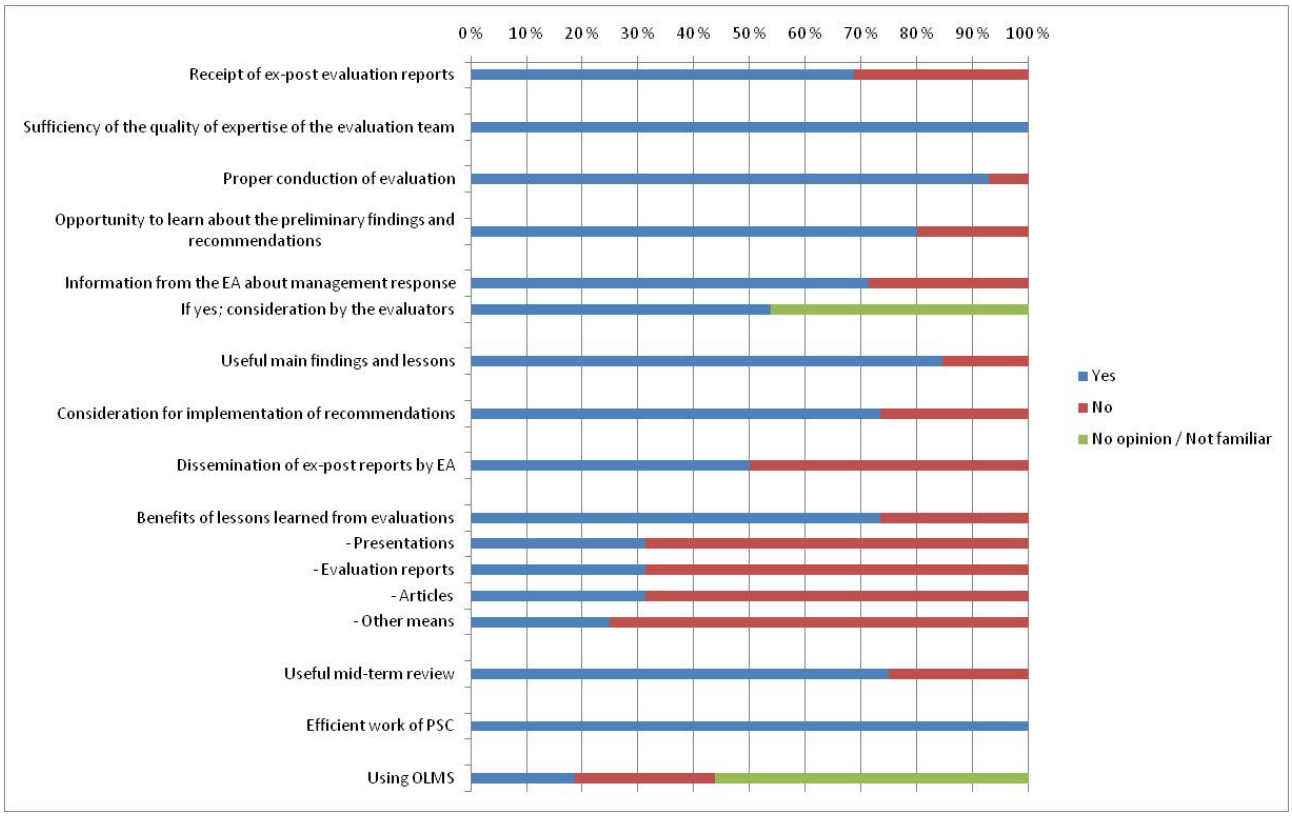
Africa: Only one of the two respondents had received the ex-post evaluation report. There was somewhat less satisfaction in the conduct of evaluation missions compared to the other regions. It also appears that, in relative terms, the quality of ex post evaluation reports received was perceived as of somewhat lower quality (67% considered it good and 33% acceptable) than elsewhere. Only one third of executing agencies had disseminated the ex post evaluation report to other parties in the country compared to the average of 44% in all the regions. Only in one case a mid-term review was deemed useful.

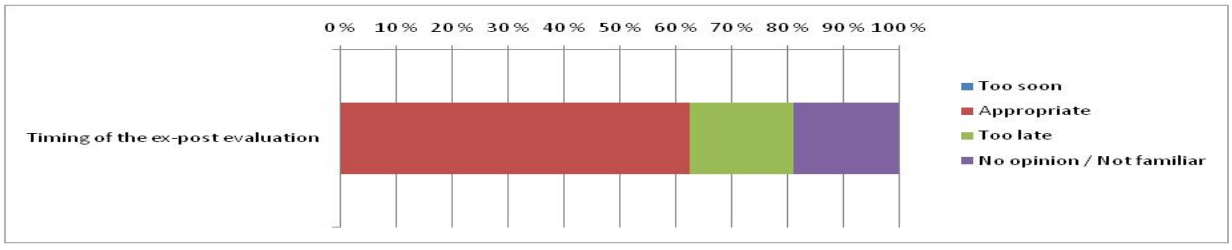
Asia: Out of the six respondents, four had received ex post evaluation reports. Timing was considered in one third of the cases too late while in the other regions all evaluations were mostly appropriately scheduled. There was also less satisfaction with the quality of the evaluation team than elsewhere (adequate 67%). Executing agencies were relatively somewhat more active in providing management response than elsewhere but thought more often that it was not duly considered in the final report. On the other hand, the Asian respondent considered the reports more useful than elsewhere but only a third had considered their recommendations for implementation. Only a half of the executing agencies had disseminated the reports to other parties. Mid-term review was considered more often useful (83%) than in the other regions.

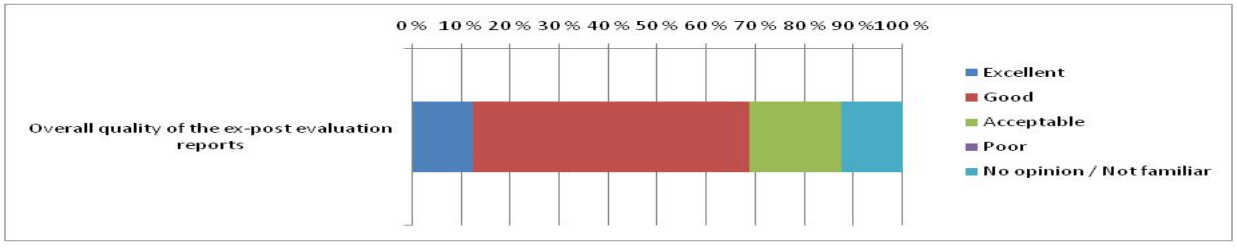
Latin America: Out of the seven respondents, six had received ex post evaluation reports. They were in general more satisfied with the expertise of the team, the quality of the reports, and how the mission was conducted compared to the other regions. However, the respondents thought that the findings and lessons were somewhat less useful for their organization than elsewhere. Only in a half of the cases had the ex post evaluation report been disseminated to other parties. There was somewhat less frequency in the use of current dissemination mechanism of ITTO than in the other regions. Also in Latin America, a clear majority (86%) would have appreciated a mid-term review of their project.

In general, executing agencies considered the timing of ex post evaluations appropriate but almost a fifth (19%) thought it came too late to be useful (Figure 1-1). The agencies considered the quality of expertise of the evaluation teams adequate with a couple of exceptions. Also it appeared that evaluations had almost invariably been appropriately conducted.

Figure 1-1 Results of the executing agency survey







A majority considered the quality of ex post evaluation reports either good (56%) or excellent (12%). Most of the other (18%) thought the reports were acceptable and the rest (12%) had no opinion. None of the respondents considered the evaluation reports of poor quality. The results indicate however that there is scope for improvement.

Three quarters of executing agencies reported that they had an opportunity to learn about the preliminary findings and recommendations before the mission left the country. Almost two thirds of executing agencies provided a management response to the preliminary findings but only 44% thought that it was duly considered in the evaluators' final report. The others (38%) had no opinion or knowledge whether this had happened.

More than two thirds (69%) of the respondents found the main findings and lessons learned useful for their organization and they had also considered the implementation of the recommendations made. However, a quarter stated that they have not considered the recommendations of the ex post evaluation for implementation which raises the question of their relevance and feasibility. Three quarters thought that a mid-term review would have been useful in their project.

Only in about a half of the agencies which responded on the question of dissemination explained that they had disseminated the results of the ex post evaluation reports to other parties in the country while the other half had not done so. This is obviously a cause of concern as most of the contents of ex post evaluation reports is country specific with potentially valuable lessons learned and recommendation for other stakeholders.

More than two thirds of executing agency representatives thought that they have benefited from ex post evaluations of other ITTO projects carried out in their country or elsewhere but a quarter replied negatively. Almost a third reported that ITTC presentations, reports downloaded from ITTO website and summary articles in TFU have been used but the others (69%) did not mention these sources of information at all. It appears that the present dissemination means of ex post evaluation results do not reach most of the executing agency target group and the situation calls for other complementary methods to improve effectiveness.

All the respondents thought that the Project Steering Committee of their projects had worked effectively in monitoring. Less than a fifth had used the On-line Monitoring System (OLMS) and found it a useful communication mechanism with the Secretariat.

Executing agencies were also asked for examples on recommendations which were implemented as a result of ex post evaluation reports which are summarized below:

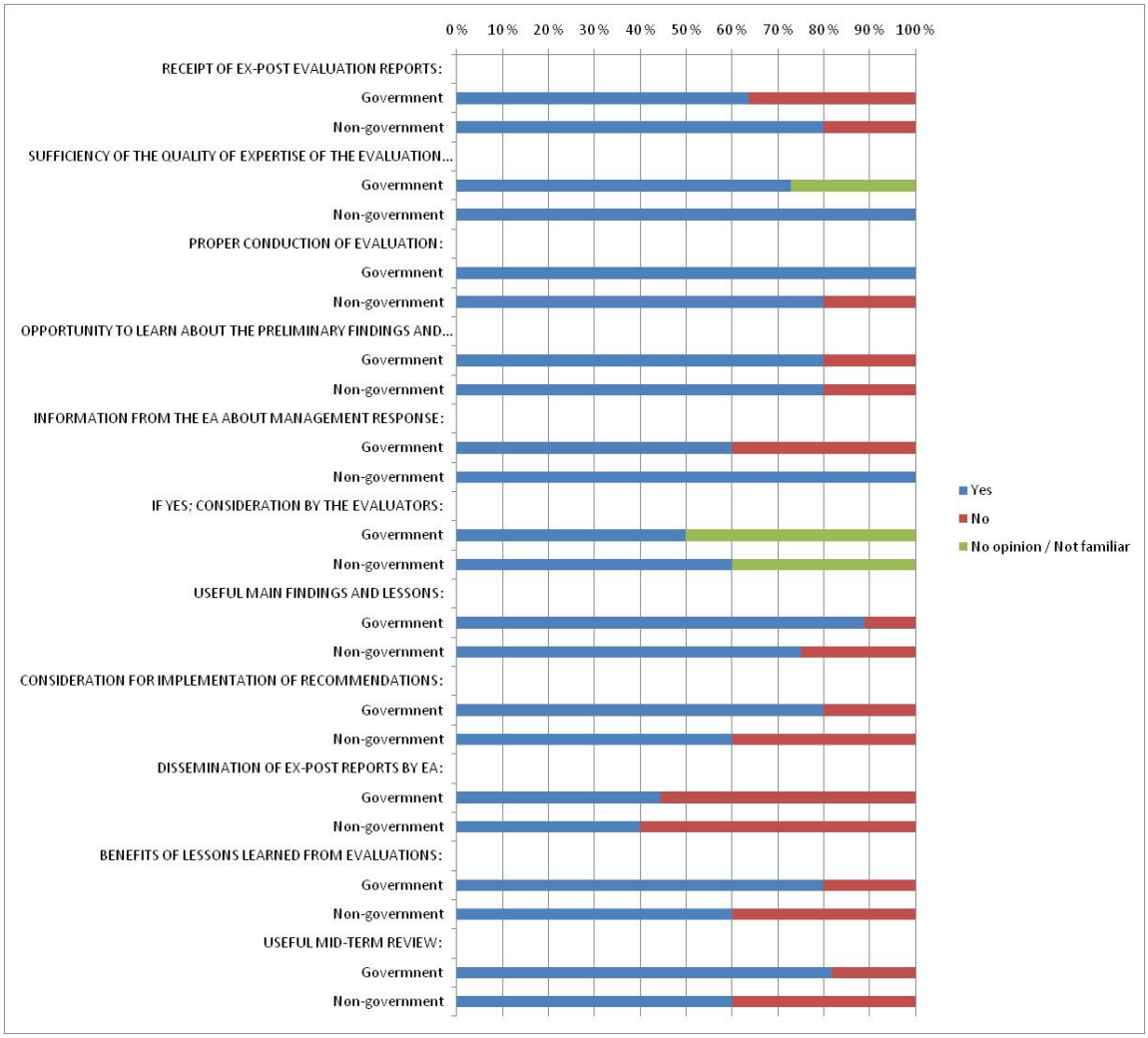
- Use of indigenous tree species in rehabilitation of all degraded forests in the country
- Improved cloning practice for teak seedlings for plantation establishment and exclusive use of improved genetic material
- Inclusion of socio-economic baseline studies in project formulation/inception phases
- Linking socio-economic data with the biophysical forestry data in resource assessment and forest management planning
- Consideration of cultural identity of adjacent communities and arranging complementary support to them to avoid rivalries and other adverse impacts of imbalanced development efforts
- Increase in the value added of timber products as a result of improved business plans prepared
- Diversification of species utilized by the industry
- Expansion of a wood technology laboratory and establishment of national quality standards for wood products
- Expansion of production of non-timber forest products
- Establishment of a revolving fund to address financial sustainability of reforestation activities among the forest-surrounding communities
- Ensuring sustainable financing of maintenance of forest sector databases built up during the project
- Engagement of the national research institute, a industrial forest company and the community members both in the research and field activities

- Understanding of the importance of technical assistance to communities and farmers as their training is not sufficient.
- Continuation of training of communities after the project's completion
- In forestry training the process of changing the mentality of both instructors and students to reflect full understanding of the needs of communities and farmers
- Actions taken to improve dissemination of project results and knowledge through publication of results, distribution of information, and education and training activities.
- Establishment of a requirement to respect of all the provisions of ITTO Manuals on Project Formulation, Monitoring and Evaluation for all the new projects in the country

In addition, several ex post evaluations suggested a follow-up phase which was taken up by various executing agencies which submitted respective proposals to ITTO. Several executing agencies also reported improved formulation of new projects thanks to the evaluation mission which improved their understanding of how good logical frameworks can be elaborated in practice, how to ensure that the objectives are realistic and that the outputs are verifiable.

An analysis of the response differences was made by type of executing agency (Figure 1-2). Non-government agencies had a better institutional memory than government agencies (including forest departments, research and educational institutions and others). Four fifths of non-government agencies

Figure 1-2 Results of the executing agency survey by type of agency



had received ex post evaluation reports while only two thirds of government agencies reported to have received them.

Non-government agencies also thought the timing to have been appropriate and the expertise of the evaluation team fully adequate while in most government agencies thought evaluations were carried out too late and 74% considered the team expertise adequate. Majority of both groups had an opportunity to learn about the preliminary findings of the missions before their departure from the country but non-government agencies were clearly more active in providing a management response to the preliminary results (80%) than government agencies (55%). They also thought more frequently (60%) that the management response was duly considered in the final evaluation report while only about a third (36%) of government agencies thought so.

On the other hand, government agencies considered more often that the main findings and lessons were useful for them and they had also frequently (72%) considered implementation of recommendations made in the evaluation reports. 60% of non-government executing agencies had disseminated the results to other parties but only 36% of government agencies had done so. On the other hand, the latter had benefited more from ex post evaluations of other ITTO projects being therefore better addressed by ITTO's dissemination activities than non-government agencies. While the majority in both groups thought that a mid-term review would have been useful, the share was higher among government agencies (82%) than non-government agencies (60%).

Executing agencies were also asked for suggestions for how to improve ITTO's dissemination of ex post evaluation results which are summarized below:

- Provisions for the dissemination of results should be specified in more detail in the project document to ensure that activities are also always implemented. Project budgets should include necessary allocations for dissemination.
- Key project results and lessons learned should be published before the project is completed.
- Thematic conferences/meetings should be organized to share experience on successful projects internationally, regionally or nationally, depending on the subject.
- Dissemination workshops and meetings should be organized to project beneficiaries, not only at technical level.
- The section on ex post evaluations in the ITTO website should be improved for easier accessibility and facilitated search by topics.
- The Secretariat should send update news to executing agencies on the available new ex post evaluations and related reports.
- ITTC meeting should have side events or pre/post-Council meetings to present ex post evaluation results to allow proper discussion on lessons learned.
- The practice of synthesized thematic summaries of key recommendations and lessons learned should be continued. The summaries could be complemented by simple brochures or leaflets.
- Ex post evaluation reports should be translated into the local language before dissemination.

Several executing agencies demonstrated that they consider ITTO' monitoring and evaluation well organized. However, several recommendations were made for improvements including:

- ITTO should have a more important say in funding priorities as it is better qualified to judge the quality of the executing agencies than donors.
- At least two recognized experts should be contracted for ex post evaluation work and they should preferably have knowledge on the local conditions.
- Simplification of report formats is needed, particularly unnecessary repetition should be avoided.
- Composition of Project Steering Committees should not be too extensive as it can be unhelpful for in-depth analysis of project implementation.

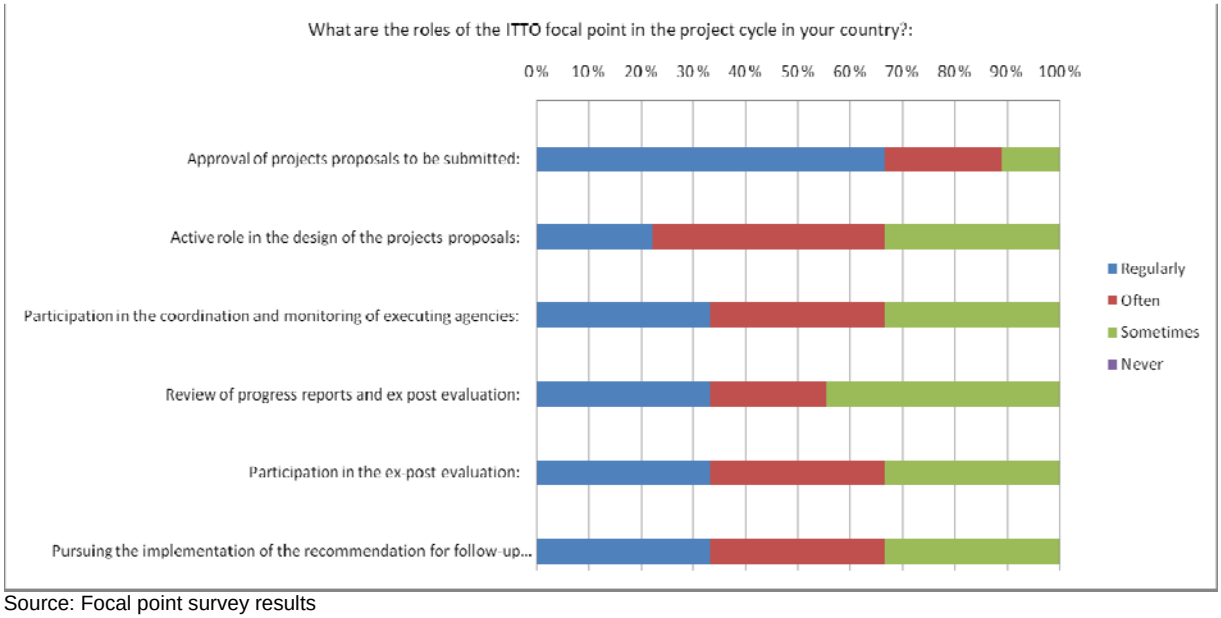
- Each project should have a designated person in the country who specifically monitors the project and reports to the PCS and the ITTO Secretariat. It would be important to carry out on-going verification of key activities.
- Sufficient time should be allotted to evaluation teams to permit thorough field inspection of the project's end-results
- Ex-post evaluations should be within three months of project closure and later evaluations could determine project sustainability.

Several respondents thought that the TFU is currently an excellent source of information for them, including on the results of ex post evaluations.

2. Producing country focal points

Focal points in producing countries participate mainly in the approval of project proposals to be submitted to ITTO financing (Figure 2-1). In almost a half of the cases focal points also actively participate in the design of project proposals and most also participate in the coordination and monitoring of executing agencies. They receive progress and ex post evaluation reports but do not always review them. Focal points considered progress reports the most important means to obtain information on the implementation of ITTO projects and in some cases participation in Project Steering Committees was also mentioned. One third of focal points regularly participates in ex-post evaluations and reported to have pursued the implementation of recommendations for follow-up action.

Figure 2-1 Role of producing country focal points in the ITTO project cycle



Source: Focal point survey results

There were a number of regional differences in the role of focal points. In Asia, all the focal points always approve the project proposals to be submitted to ITTO and in Latin America 80% reported to regularly do it. In Africa focal points appear to have a less active role in the approval and design of projects proposals and in monitoring and evaluation than in the other regions.

Most focal points were satisfied with the quality of ex-post evaluations. The others identified three main areas of improvements: (i) a standard practice for commenting draft reports, (ii) careful selection of competent consultants, and (iii) more field time during the missions to collect adequate information if necessary.

Focal points reported that the contribution of ITTO's projects has been significant particularly in promoting SFM, conservation and plantation development. However, in 22% of the countries the contribution has been minor in the two last mentioned areas. Only 11% reported significant contributions in further processing, trade development and market transparency. Surprisingly, improving market transparency was considered irrelevant by 44% of the respondents.

Several examples of successful projects were identified by the producing country focal points (Box 1.2). Only three countries mentioned examples of projects which had only a marginal or no positive impact but even in these cases valuable lessons were obtained for piloting new approaches, methods to engage indigenous peoples, institutional sustainability of projects supporting strengthening of forest information systems, and need to carry out feasibility analysis in all industrial projects.

In Asia all the focal points considered the contribution of ITTO's project to conservation significant while in the other areas the impact has been moderate. In Latin America moderate contributions were reported in further processing (60%), industry efficiency and trade development (40% each). In these areas the contribution of ITTO's projects in other regions has been less pronounced than in Latin America.

Significant ITTO contributions were mentioned for instance in Ecuador and Gabon to the development of forest statistical systems and in Columbia in the formulation of forest policy by using the Criteria & Indicators for SFM.

More than three quarters of all the focal points have reviewed ex-post evaluation reports and two thirds thought that their results have contributed to new project design in the country. While in Asia and Latin America focal points regularly review all ex-post evaluation reports in the country, in Africa this happens only in a third of cases. The African countries reported no feedback impact of ex-post evaluations for the formulation of new project proposals while in the other regions all countries reported to make use of ex-post evaluation reports for this purpose. This may be partly explained by the fact that there have been less ex-post evaluations in Africa compared to the other two regions (see section 3.1)

Two thirds of all the respondents thought that presentations and discussions on the results of ex-post evaluations in ITTO's Committees have been either very useful or useful but one third was either unaware of them or considered them not relevant. In Africa two thirds of the respondents belonged to this group while in Latin America their share was 20%. In Asia all focal points considered presentations either very useful or useful.

Two thirds of all the respondents found synthesis reports of ex-post evaluations either useful (56%) or useful (11%). This is mainly because of appreciation of these reports by Asian and Latin American focal points. In Africa two thirds were not aware of them or considered them not relevant for their situation. This may be explained by the fact that the synthesis reports have been only available in English.

On the other aspects of dissemination, the most important means for producing country focal points have been copies of reports received during ITTC sessions. Three quarters thought copies requested from the secretariat based on the Publications List and summaries published in TFU either very useful or useful. Copies distributed during the ITTC sessions and summaries in TFU were a particularly important means of dissemination for African focal points.

Box 2-1 Examples of successful ITTO projects as identified by country focal points

Gabon: Management of the Bokoué forest covering 100,000 ha for issuance for concessions under the Government guidelines and the formulation of the forest law.
The projects on strengthening of forest statistics allowed definition of government provisions for concessions and improved the tracing of exported products.

Ecuador: Development of forest industries within the Objective 2000 of the Andean Pact.
Common trade names of tropical timbers for marketing within the Andean Sub-region.

Sustainable management of secondary forests
Bi-national conservation project in the Condor Mountains with Ecuador and Peru (Phases I and II)

Panama: Strengthening of the national geographic forest information system for evaluation and monitoring of forest resources to facilitate their sustainable management. This system continues to be applied by the government and the data base developed facilitates regional administrations to collect statistical data.

Guatemala: Commercial promotion of certified timber and timber products which included support to forest communities in the El Petén region to help them to promote lesser used species and open up markets for their products (PD 33/05).
The national forest statistics system developed in the country facilitated issuance of permits for exports of forest products. The traders can now receive the necessary documentation from the government electronically.

Brazil: PD 206/03 Rev.1(F): "Development of human resources in sustainable forest management and reduced impact logging in the Brazilian Amazon", implemented by Fundação Floresta Tropical (FFT). 148 people were trained in 13 courses, during which RIL harvesting took place on 327 ha and plans were prepared for another 350 ha. Demonstration areas covering 150 ha were established and 11 workshops were organized for training of trainers.
PD 57/99 Rev. 2 (F): "Sustainable Management of Production Forests at the Commercial Scale in the Brazilian Amazon", also called "Bom Manejo (Good Management) Project", implemented by EMBRAPA and CIFOR. This demonstration project on sustainable forest management involved effective participation of two local timber enterprises as partners. As a result of the project over 150.000 ha of forests have been certified since 2001. More than 50 scientific publications were produced and used in outreach activities in the forest management units of the partner enterprises. The project provided training on silvicultural and managerial tools for SFM. Another result was effective networking between training centers and a wide range of relevant public and private sector stakeholders, NGOs, and research and academic centers for promoting SFM in Brazil and other Amazon countries.

Colombia: The mangrove conservation project resulted in adoption of sustainable management and utilization of this resource by local communities. Experience on replanting mangrove species was gained. The ecosystem management approach was adopted by integration of conservation of fauna with mangrove forest management. The project was successful in awareness raising and human resource development and it also lead to policy adjustment.
The project on sustainable management of San Nicolás forest promoted practical experience among farmers on establishment, management and conservation of forests. Effective community participation has ensured that skills and lessons learned continue to be adopted. The cooperative which create and offer carbon credits to the market is currently operating in the region working together with a company (MASBOSQUES) which is the regional promoter of harmonious social development.

Thailand: The transboundary conservation project between Thailand, Laos and Cambodia was successful and led to implementation through three successive stages.

Togo: PD 30/96 Rev.3 (F): Establishment of 2,500 ha of plantation de 2500 ha in the permanent forest estate of Haho-Baloe which initiated participative management of gazetted forest and securing its tenure. Participative management was successful in reforestation and the coaching strategy of rural communities was successful making them responsible forest managers.
PD 9/99 Rev.2 (F): Sustainable management of permanent forest estate of Missahoe through participation of adjacent village communities was successful in managing existing natural forest for industrial roundwood. At present, community organizations continue to be responsible for forest management. About 800 ha have been planted and women's groups are involved in production of seedlings.
PD 217/03 Rev. 2(F): Establishment of a cooperative framework between the forest agency (ODEF) and the neighboring communities for participative forest management in the Eto-Lilicopé forest area. The project developed consultation and conflict resolution mechanisms, established agreements and monitoring methods and trained local people in sustainable forest management and utilization.
PD51/ 99 Rev.2 (F): Support to mobilization of grassroot initiatives for promotion of silviculture in Yoto resulted in a successful model for partnerships between the government, NGOs and local populations and is being promoted as a model for the whole country.
PD197/03 Rev.2 (F): Support to monitoring of forest development master plan in the fourth ecozone in Togo resulted in studies which demonstrated how to minimize harmful environmental impacts and improve land tenure for effective reforestation.
PD 122/01 Rev.1 (F): Support to establish a production unit for samba and other local species which has allowed continuous adequate production of good quality tree seedlings for replanting by local populations using appropriate technology.

Source : Focal point survey results

Almost 90% of the countries have mechanisms to disseminate the results of ITTO project work but only in 22% of the cases such mechanisms exist for sharing knowledge of ex-post evaluation reports. Electronic means of disseminating the ex post evaluation reports were mentioned as the most typical tool for dissemination but in some less developed countries hard copies would be necessary. It appears that in most cases the results of ex-post evaluations have not been effectively disseminated and the reports tend to be just filed for eventual future use.

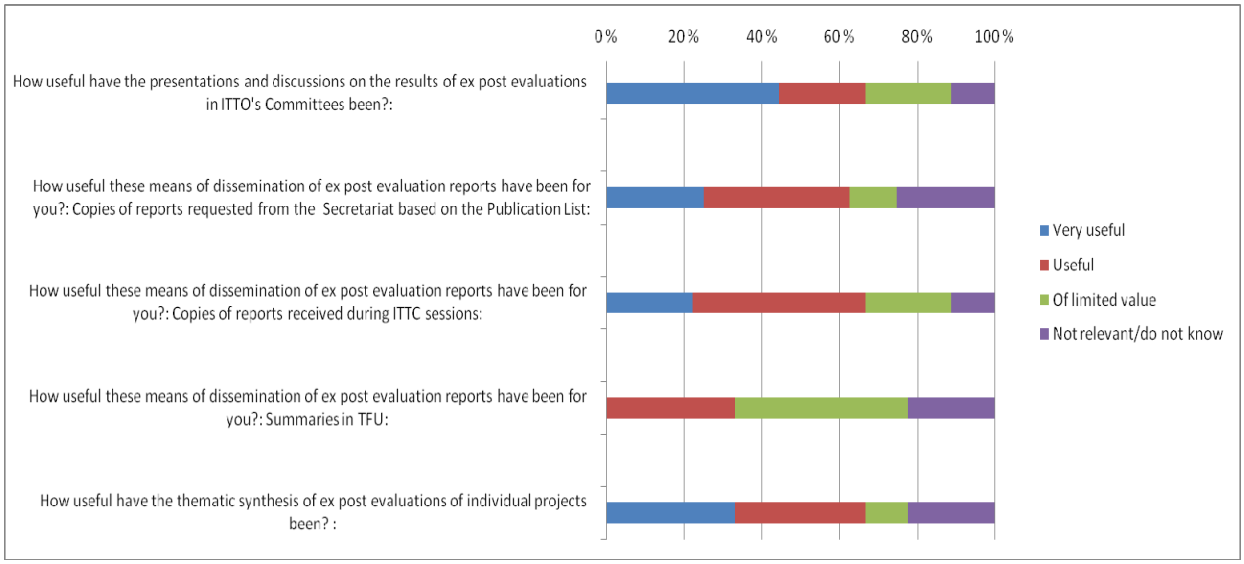
Producing country focal points called for improvements in the ITTO website for dissemination of ex post evaluation reports even though the executive summaries are already available there. It was also proposed that ITTO's website include a special section on highly successful projects which can serve as examples for other countries. In dissemination it would be important to provide information on the nature of problems and measures for how they could be resolved as well as other lessons learned. The French-speaking countries called for making all the documentation available in all the three languages of ITTO.

3. Consuming country focal points

Focal points in the responding consuming countries (9) are all aware of ex post evaluation reports and two thirds have also reviewed them. These countries also found presentations and discussions on the results of ex post evaluation reports in ITTO Committees very useful or useful and only 22% considered them of limited value. One focal point found presentations not relevant or did not have an opinion (Figure 3-1).

On the other dissemination means, two thirds of the focal points found copies received during ITTC sessions either useful (44%) or very useful (22%). The others thought this way of dissemination has been of limited value or they did not have an opinion. Somewhat less important for consuming country focal points have been copies of reports which are available from the Secretariat upon request. Only a third thought that summaries in TFU have been useful while most of the others considered them of limited value.

Figure 3-1 Consuming country focal points' views on dissemination of ex-post evaluation results



Source: Focal point survey results

Thematic synthesis reports of ex-post evaluations have been very useful or useful for two thirds of the consuming countries while the others considered them of limited value (11%) or had no opinion/considered them not relevant.

As a whole, the views of focal points in producing and consuming countries on the value of ex-post evaluations and various dissemination means are largely similar. However for consuming countries summaries in TFU and hard copies available from the Secretariat are less important than for producing countries.

Consuming country focal points made a number of suggestions to improve the current approaches to dissemination of ex-post evaluation results:

- Evaluations could be indexed and classified by keywords to facilitate for searching of the online list of project evaluations.
- Due to the time constraints in the Council and Committee sessions, other means of dissemination could include special workshops for increasing the level of participation of focal points and sharing summarized evaluation results.
- PowerPoint presentations used at Committee meetings should be provided to interested parties (e.g. through the ITTO website) because they are good and easily understood summaries and also useful for accountability.
- Valuable experience from past projects needs to get back to the field; i.e. to the executing agencies, communities, the Project Steering Committees and other stakeholders.
- The best value on the investment would be to specifically inform project design so that mistakes are not repeated and successful strategies are employed. Some information has been incorporated into the Project Formulation Manual but better use of the information is needed in providing technical assistance and oversight by ITTO.
- There were several calls for improving synthesizing the results so that they become easily accessible for target groups including project formulators, implementers and other practitioners. This was considered the main means to add value to the investment made in evaluation work. It was also suggested that syntheses of evaluation reports be written specifically to help project formulators strengthen their proposals by avoiding pitfalls and providing them with examples of what works and what does not in different situations.
- There may be alternative ways to disseminate information to practitioners, communities or beneficiaries such as through more basic summaries of lessons learned by types of project or theme; educational videos on key aspects such as stakeholder participation, financial planning, and sustainability.
- There is also a need and value for this information to be used at the policy making level by the Secretariat and most notably by Thematic Program Advisory Committees, the Expert Panel, and donors who are reviewing projects.
- The website is a good way to disseminate information, but ITTO should consider a variety of other cost-effective methods to reach different audiences.
- There should be a requirement for project proponents to take advantage of the evaluation results before formulation of a new project proposal and to demonstrate that this has also happened.

There are also two other important target groups for ex post evaluation results:

(a) Those who work in the international forests arena should be made fully aware of the work ITTO supports as a cutting edge organization which has a unique mandate and is responsive to new needs and delivering high quality results. Ex post evaluations provide ITTO with technical credibility to outside audiences including the Collaborative Partnership on Forests members as well as to ITTO member governments.

(b) Current and potential donors need adequate information so that they can demonstrate that funds given to ITTO have been well used and the work has been evaluated to high standards. Given the competition for funds, ITTO must also show its competitive advantage and its tight control of quality outputs and outcomes. Donors also need information on legality of traded tropical timber products,

impacts on poverty reduction and empowerment of marginalized groups, progress in SFM and increasingly climate change mitigation and adaptation. In addition, it is important to know how the individual projects have fed into national/sub-national forest policies and processes, i.e. scaling up of project work and/or contribution to a broader region than the projects' geographic scope.

A key issue to donors and other stakeholders is sustainability and viability of the started activities for continuation after formal project concludes. In addition, information on quantitative results would strongly support the fund-raising. It may be interesting to show common challenges and failures face by several projects for more efficient project formulation.

A number of views were expressed by consuming country focal points on the relevance, effectiveness and efficiency of the project evaluation process of ITTO. Ex post evaluation of ITTO projects was mainly seen to serve for project proponents, associated host governments and interested donor agencies. Some respondents pointed out that the evaluation process in ITTO appears to be quite detailed and micro management oriented. This may not be optimal considering costs, work load and dissemination. Therefore, a less detailed project evaluation process may be more effective than the present approach.

The selection of completed projects to be evaluated could be improved based on consistent selection criteria, which has not always been the case. For example, it may not be necessary to evaluate similar projects year after year which yield similar findings. A more strategic approach could be to select a set of different projects from the various Committees and focus only on one or two aspects of each, such as stakeholder participation and financial sustainability which are typical key cross-cutting issues. Effectiveness lies within the ultimate outcome desired from the evaluations. The evaluations that have taken place seem to have been sound, but their communication and use has been less effective. On the other hand, as some consuming country focal points observed, the Secretariat has aimed at efficiency in its use of consultants, combining several evaluations within a theme or a country.

By and large, consuming country focal points consider ex post evaluation highly important and largely well managed and most ITTO evaluation reports are considered of good standard. However - as one focal point observed – "*it should be ensured that evaluators have sufficient experience and expertise of the subject being evaluated and of evaluation processes. In some cases the selection process for consultants has not been adequately rigorous. This must be avoided at all costs as one weak evaluation undermines hard won credibility. ITTO evaluators must also have the diplomatic skills necessary to put their findings over without upsetting the individuals and institutions that were involved, otherwise the findings will simply be ignored.*"

ITTO needs to have a broader range of qualified experts in its roster, including social scientists and economists. Furthermore, the use of locally based professionals (such as e.g. those which have received Freezailah Fellowship grants) should join the teams to both build up country capacity and provide a local perspective.

Consuming countries were also asked about possible information gaps on ITTO's project work and other activities which could help donors identify areas to be supported. Two thirds of focal points appear to receive adequate information but one third indicated that there are some gaps. These include information on poverty and economic impacts, multiplier effects, contributions to climate change mitigation and green economy, allocation of funding by programmes and type of projects, as well as quantitative baseline and monitoring data, particularly with regard to the status of forests and forest enterprises.

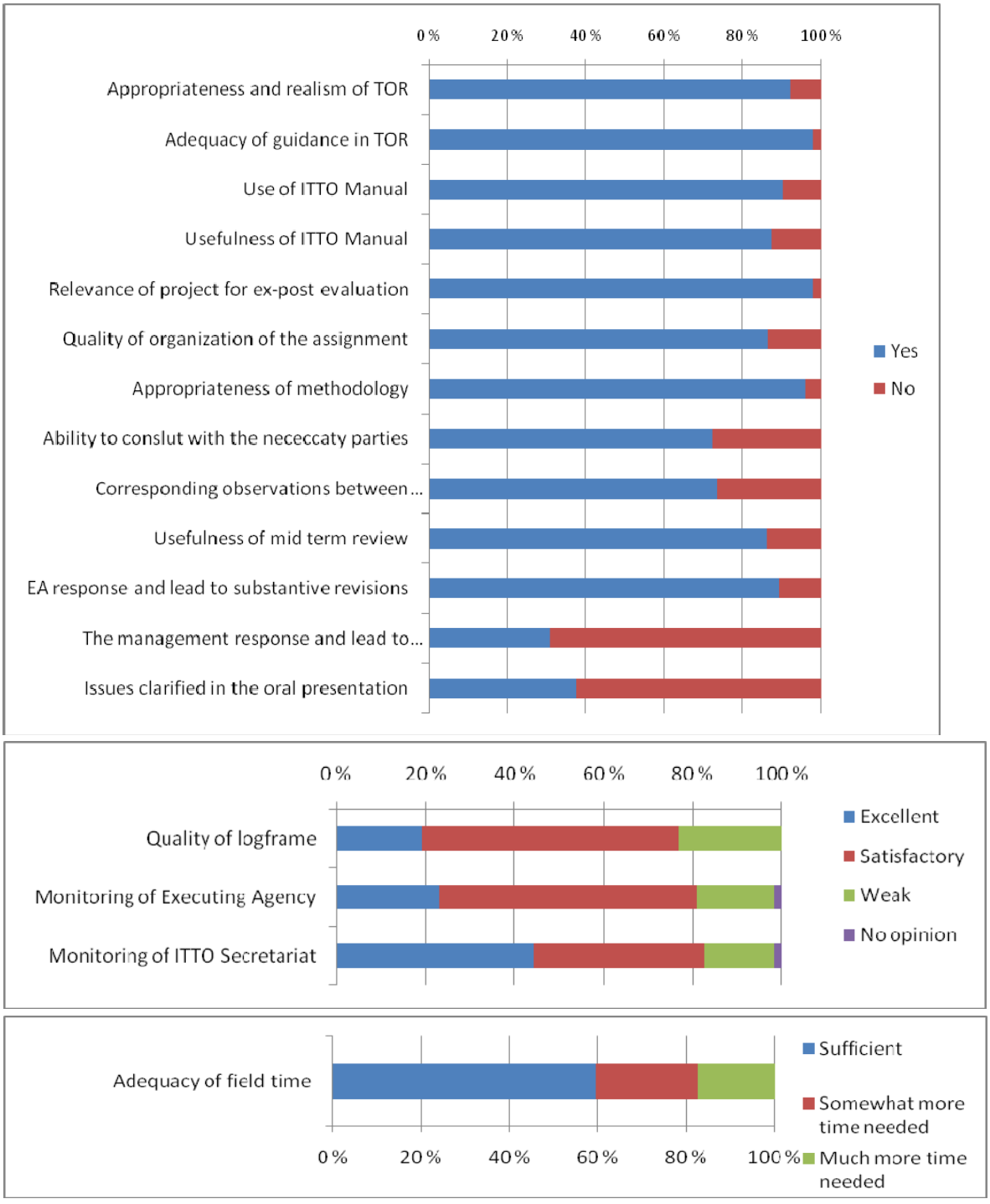
4. Evaluators

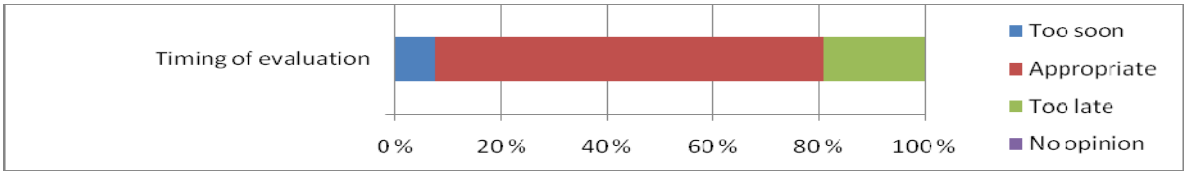
Survey feedback was received from 26 evaluators on 52 projects of which 41 were executed by government agencies. One project was implemented by a non-government body and six were implemented by a partnership between the two types of agency ("mixed projects" in the following).[71]

[71] On the others the type of executing agency was not identified.

More than 90% of the evaluators considered their Terms of Reference appropriate, realistic and that they provided adequate guidance for their assignment (Figure 4-1). However, some evaluators pointed out that TORs have been too long, reiterative, partly inconsistent and even confusing. Some evaluators also pointed out that the TORs were often too ambitious in view of the time and information available on the project. There were several calls for having the ex post evaluation tasks more focused on the critical

Figure 4-1 Evaluators' views on the evaluation process





Source: Evaluator survey results

aspects of the project. As one evaluator pointed out *"the TOR should have focused on assessing the project's achievement and impacts, success or failure, by using pre-defined logical framework as the main tool of assessment."* For instance, such a focus would have been necessary in transboundary conservation projects or projects which were implemented by several agencies in partnership.

Almost all evaluators (88%) had used the ITTO Manual for Project Monitoring, Reporting and Evaluation[72] and 81% found it useful for their work. In some cases, the Manual complemented otherwise weak TOR and its checklist was generally considered useful. On the other hand, it was pointed out that long check-lists easily divert the evaluator's attention from the critical big issues. In fact, several evaluators pointed out that the Manual was only partially useful for their work due to its generic nature and there should be more focus on aspects which represent comparative advantage of ITTO. For instance, in plantation and conservation projects it is critical to focus on sustainability after the project completion. This emphasizes the need to have additional specific guidance in TOR. Several evaluators also recognized the value of guidance provided by the Secretariat in addressing this issue.

Evaluators considered almost invariably (98%) that the chosen projects were relevant from the evaluation perspective. This was particularly the case of projects which needed (i) a mid-term review for adjusting the intervention strategy or (ii) a second follow-up phase, and (iii) projects which were not successful and therefore evaluation was able to avoid launching of an unnecessary second phase. There were also a few cases where the executing agency did not have competence to implement the activities (e.g. a forest agency implementing a scientific research project and an NGO implementing an extension service) and the evaluation helped direct the follow-up work to a competent executing agency.

Evaluators found it relevant to carry out several project-level evaluations on the same theme as a group as it provided a useful perspective to make proper judgments. It was also pointed out that evaluation would be needed of projects which are (i) strategically particularly relevant, (ii) projects on themes on which there are still few lessons learned (e.g. industrial development), or (iii) which were implemented by NGOs or in a partnership between different types of actor.

Almost three quarters (73%) of respondents found the timing appropriate but almost one fifth (19%) too late. In 8% of the cases evaluation was considered too soon to assess impacts and sustainability; all these projects were executed by government agencies. However, a number of evaluators pointed out that when a project has long delays in completion of its activities and obligations, there may be a need to intervene with an evaluation rather than wait until the formal completion has taken place (see also section 6.6).

Only with a few exceptions (13%), the organization of evaluation assignment was considered satisfactory and several respondents considered it excellent. In general, evaluators executing agencies were well prepared for the mission but there have been also a few exceptions due to breakdown of the preliminary information flow. In most cases the participation of the executing agency in the evaluation was substantial. Some evaluators mentioned the lack of time as a constraint in organizing field visits and consultations but these were exceptions.

Almost all evaluators (96%) thought that the methodology adopted, typically involving documentary review, stakeholder consultations and beneficiary interviews, was appropriate. A typical response on the methodology of the evaluation is quoted below:

[72] The replies referred to was the 1999 version and not the current ITTO Manual for Project Monitoring and Evaluation (2009).

> *"The entry-meeting at the beginning of the evaluation, followed by coordination and interviews of all relevant offices and stakeholders with respect to project inception and completion, fieldworks/cross-visits to project sites and finally, de-briefing or exit conference made the ex-post evaluation a participatory approach and process."*

Field time was sufficient for about 60% of evaluators but for the others more (23%) or much more time (17%) would have been needed. This was particularly the case when more than one field site should have been visited in projects with pilot or demonstration areas far from each other. In the case of mixed projects involving both government and non-government agencies much more field time would have been necessary as these often include a broader range of stakeholders and their activities focus on communities. Two thirds of evaluators were able to consult with all the necessary parties (project beneficiaries, collaborating agencies, and other stakeholders while one quarter thought that not all the relevant parties could be consulted. This is in line with the responses on adequacy of field time and several evaluators recognized the time constraint as a limiting factor for a desired coverage of beneficiary views while in the other stakeholder groups there were usually no problems. Other common reasons for limited consultations were distant location of project sites to reach beneficiaries and change of staff in the executing agency. Particularly in mixed projects there is need to have adequate provisions for consultation with all the relevant parties. However, some evaluators pointed out that additional consultation were unlikely to have changed their conclusions.

According to the evaluators the logical framework matrices of their projects were satisfactory (58%) or excellent (19%) but the rest (23%) were considered of poor quality. The quality of logframe was considered significantly weaker in mixed projects than those executed by government agencies.[73]

In almost 70% of cases the observations made based on the available documentation generally corresponded to those made in the field but in a quarter of projects this was not the case. For instance, in a community forest project in Latin America [in Panama] "*the documentation showed a wonderful successfully achieved project. However, it was a disaster in terms of social results and all scientific information was exclusively available in English".* Another example of problems in this respect was the transboundary project in Southeast Asia where in the project area forest protection was reported as strengthened, but illegal forest harvesting was detected in the field. Also in some industry projects and permanent sample plot projects, discrepancies were observed between what was documented and what could be verified. The results are a source of concern and emphasize the need to carry out adequate field level checks.

Evaluators found monitoring by executing agencies in most cases satisfactory (58%) or excellent (23%) but in the rest (17%) it was weak. In mixed projects executing agencies have had a somewhat better oversight in monitoring than in the case of government agencies. This calls for attention to carefully assess the capacity of executing agency before the project is approved.

Evaluators considered the performance of the ITTO secretariat either excellent (44%) or satisfactory (38%) and only in 15% of the evaluated it had been weak.

A large majority of evaluators (85%) thought that a mid-term review would have been useful to improve the performance of project implementation. As mid-term evaluation has been perceived as almost a punitive measure in the ITTO evaluation guidance, i.e. to be undertaken if the project risks a failure or there are other problems, [74] the result would call for a more proactive use of mid-term review/evaluation. As one evaluator pointed out *"in a dynamic country context, flexibility and project adjustments may be necessary. A mid-term assessment can provide valuable inputs for performance improvement."* Another evaluator observed that "*mid term reviews are essential and the best way to make good use of the cost of the reviews. Meaning it will be good timing to "save" the project redirecting it to meaningful results that very often are a consequence of very poor project design."* Particularly, if a project lasts more than two years a mid term evaluation is quite likely to be instrumental. Box 4-1 contains another example of the usefulness of mid-term reviews in the case of transboundary conservation projects.

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[73] The size of the sample is small and therefore the result may not be indicative.
[74] ITTO (200x; 2009)

In 81% of the evaluations the executing agency provided a management response and concurred with the findings and recommendations. However, only in 27% of the cases the management response led to substantive revisions of preliminary findings and recommendations of the evaluation team. In general, evaluators found discussions with the management useful but often these led only to minor adjustments in the mission's findings. In only a half of mixed projects evaluators received a management response of the executing agency and only in 17% of the cases it led to substantive revisions of the findings. This emphasizes the importance of having a timely management response to preliminary evaluation results, particularly in projects which are implemented by a partnership of different organizations.

Box 4-1 Transboundary project example: need for mid-term review

The mid-term review could have synchronized the two projects towards transboundary objectives and expected results. The limitations in the survey scope and results in Phase I, the data collected should have contributed to the knowledge on biodiversity and the ecosystem processes which are needed for long-term conservation and protection strategies. Commonalities in flora and fauna and forest types / habitats provide excellent opportunities for further collaboration on a trans-boundary basis as a single ecosystem or management unit. Unfortunately, the important aspect of trans-boundary conservation had been left out in the respective output management plans of the two adjacent units which could have been corrected in a revised project design and logframe. While future direction tends towards the formulation of a common biodiversity management plan for the two adjoining conservation areas, harmonizing of activities on both sides of the border should be an integral part of the project design.

Source: Evaluator statement

Several evaluators reported that there had been a close dialogue with the executing agency during the mission so that their views were already effectively considered by the evaluation team before presenting their preliminary findings. Only in rare cases there have been major disagreements on the main findings between the team and the executing agency when some of reported facts could not be verified by field observations.

Discussions on the ex post evaluation results in ITTO Committees were found of limited value by 42% of the evaluators. Only a minority found that they were very useful (27%) or useful (15%). In general, only a few comments were made by the Committee members. However, one third of evaluators reported that they could clarify issues in their oral presentation. Almost all comments on this issue mentioned too limited time available to present the findings and to properly discuss the lessons learned and recommendations. The results emphasize the value of good quality ex post evaluation reports but raise a question whether the current practice of Committee presentations is adequate, particularly with increased time pressure as the Committees have only one meeting a year.

Evaluators saw executing agencies as the main user group of their reports together with the ITTO staff, future project formulators on similar problems, and government agencies in producing member countries. Donor agencies, other international organizations, NGOs as well as professional consultants and experts in other countries were also mentioned as potential users of ex post evaluation results. In industry and market projects the private sector is an important target group.

A majority of evaluators thought that thematic synthesis reports of ex post evaluation of individual ITTO projects were useful (40%) or very useful (28%). One quarter (24%) had no opinion and 8% thought that such reports as they have been produced in the past were of limited value.

Evaluators were asked for suggestions for improving monitoring and evaluation in ITTO and these are summarized below:

- As mid-term reviews are often highly useful, they should be applied more frequently. A mid-term review could be carried out on all projects with duration of more than two years and it should be project focused.

- Ex-post evaluations can be fewer, done aiming at improving future project design and implementation, and be well chosen among apparent successes and apparent failures. They should be more strategic and fill information gaps and their lessons learned should be also applicable broadly in similar projects.
- The guidance to be given to evaluators should define the key strategic issues which underpin the ex post evaluation to ensure proper focus of the assessment.
- The real comparative advantage of the ITTO is not just providing local technical assistance but it also include linking the field-level lessons learned to policy and influencing that policy. Evaluations should take this aspect into account when judgments are made.
- Ideal evaluation teams would include a fully competent external evaluator supported by local/regional expertise.
- There should be measures to identify and mitigate the common risk of evaluators choosing not to be candid regarding poor results or even less when the projects are total failures and waste of money.
- More emphasis should be given to establishment of quality indicators in the project design in order to facilitate an objective and result-based project implementation and evaluation
- Comparative analyses between project-level ex post evaluation results could add value to lessons learned and should be part of synthesis reports.
- Questionnaires should be used as a cost-effective tool to consult with stakeholders that cannot be interviewed personally.
- To strengthen monitoring, attention should be given when selecting members of project steering committees so that there is adequate expertise and capacity to foresee obstacles in implementation by constantly questioning the delivery capacity of the executing agency.
- There should be a systemic improvement to strengthen monitoring and evaluation. The number of M&E missions can be reduced if there is more time to gain deep understanding and do necessary analysis. Sheer improvement of the communication flow between the Secretariat and the executing agency will not be enough. The ITTO's procedure should ensure that necessary changes are actually implemented and corrections in the project cycle system as a whole are pursued.
- Already during the project monitoring process assessment of impacts and sustainability should be considered including consultations with beneficiaries and other stakeholders.
- There is a need to complete the feedback loop by finding ways of institutionalizing the learning from past experience to improve future practice. The evaluation function should seek continual improvement of operations.
- Dissemination on successful projects to learn from their experience needs strengthening and it could also include workshops and conferences.
- The value added and cost-efficiency of oral presentations of ex post evaluations in ITTO Committees should be critically reconsidered due to their limited dissemination impact.
- Evaluators should be more active protagonists of their key findings to ensure knowledge is shared.

5. Staff interviews

Among the Secretariat staff, those responsible for project management and supervision are involved in ex-post evaluations and their tasks cover (i) preparation of TOR, (ii) identification and selection of consultants, (iii) work planning for evaluation missions, (iv) provision of logistic support, and (v) review of draft and final reports.

These staff members have usually a good knowledge on projects having monitored them during implementation by reviewing progress reports, field missions, participation in PCS meetings and day-to-day contacts with project coordinators. Technical reports are important for them to learn about project results but most staff members also consider ex-post evaluation reports useful sources of information.

The perception of the staff is that the evaluation system is well established and generally robust. Areas which were singled out for improvement include dissemination of lessons, identification and selection of

good consultants, consultations with countries on the evaluation results and follow-up of implementation of recommendations. The link with the appraisal work of the Expert Panel was also considered an area for improvement. Some staff members suggested that more standardized methods should be applied for ex-post evaluation and how the results are presented. Several staff members noted that there is presently no feedback system to take action on the recommendations made in the ex-post evaluation reports either with regard to executing agencies or the organization itself. Apart from the summary on project completion prepared by the Secretariat for Committees mostly based on the PCR, there is no formal review of the projects' achievements and lessons learned by the staff.

Mid-term reviews have rarely been used, mainly as a "punishment tool" to press the executing agency to make proper progress in implementation. This punitive view derives from the ITTO manuals (1999 and 2009) and is erroneous, as mid-term review can be a useful management tool for an efficient project cycle. The problem has been that there was not in the past any budget for mid-term review and therefore it was not used.

Also the monitoring system was generally considered well established but sometimes still inadequate. Great expectations were expressed on the On-Line Monitoring System (OLMS) being introduced. It will improve day-to-day communication with project staff but some concerns were expressed on the schematic approach to measure progress based on estimated percentage of implementation of various activities and production of outputs. There was a common view that OLMS cannot replace monitoring visits in the field to effectively monitor progress.

The main benefits of the current M&E system were deemed to be well established guidelines, flexibility to correct and adjust objectives and activities in case of changes in the project environment, and reduced bureaucracy.

The professional staff mostly agrees with the selection by Committees of projects for ex-post evaluation. However, the selection criteria[75] may however need revision to have a better strategic focus. It was pointed out that sometimes small projects have important impacts and useful lessons but they cannot be detected and systemized because small projects are not eligible for ex-post evaluation.

The views on the time lapse between project termination and ex post evaluation differed. Some felt that if evaluation is carried out 6-12 months after the project, the project staff can still be interviewed, implementation of recommendations made in the PCR can be easily verified and stakeholders can be effectively consulted. However, most staff members considered 2 (and sometimes up to 4) years a suitable period for measuring impacts and assessing sustainability of project results.

The main reasons for failures in implementation were considered to be (i) poor quality of project design, (ii) weak executing agencies and lack of top management commitment to achieve project objectives, (iii) frequent rotation of project coordinators and other key staff and their limited capacities, (iv) bureaucracy which often leads to delays in the availability of funds, (v) lack of information and linkage with other related activities, and (vi) poor oversight and lack of follow-up seeking remedial action. In monitoring, lack of capacity of the executing agency to prepare adequate progress reports was mentioned as sometimes a key constraint.

In project formulation the logical framework matrix (LFM) has proved to be both and advantage and a constraint. The main problem is that many (if not most) project formulators do not truly understand LFM which is elaborated more for meeting a formal requirement than as an effective tool for project design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. In particular, identification of practical measurable indicators for objectives and impacts is often problematic. While the LFM is useful for synthesizing the project design, its static nature makes it rigid for changes which may become necessary during the implementation. Hardly ever is the LFM revised if the project concept is adjusted due to changing conditions.

[75] ITTC 3(XXVIII)

The staff considers thematic synthesis evaluations useful for understanding the same problems in different conditions and disseminating the lessons learned from a large number of projects. However, there is a common view that the present dissemination tools for sharing knowledge (presentations in ITTC, report distribution, TFU articles and the ITTO website) need improvement. This is a pity as most ex post evaluation reports are good and would merit wide dissemination. In particular, formulators of new projects are difficult to reach as they are difficult to identify in advance. Regional workshops and technical meetings would be useful for effective dissemination but their organization would require staff time and funding. The target groups of such events should include project coordinators, potential formulators of new projects among key stakeholder groups, country focal points. At least there is a need for periodic review of lessons learned from ITTO's projects and their dissemination through the present channels.

Consideration of the results of ex post evaluations by the Expert Panel on Project Appraisal has been largely at the discretion of the co-chairs. As a minimum, the Secretariat could inform in advance the co-chairs and other members on the existence of relevant ex-post evaluation reports.

6. ITTO Advisory Groups

As part of the meta-evaluation stakeholder consultations, views were requested from CSAG and TAG. CSAG members are aware of ITTO's ex post evaluations and could identify some useful lessons learned.[76] However, effective use of the information has been limited due to cumbersome access to lessons learned and good practices as evaluation reports have not been prepared for field-level practitioners and they are generally available only in one language. While presentations are useful in the Committees, their value is limited due to lack of time for discussions. Ways to facilitate access to the relevant information could include (i) posting Committee presentations of ex post evaluation reports on the ITTO webpage, (ii) maintaining a keyword-based listing of ex post evaluation reports in the ITTO webpage, and (iii) producing key reports in other languages than English as well. For those working in rural areas, hard copies of relevant documentation is important. While TFU is a valuable information channel, its usefulness for disseminating practical lessons was considered somewhat limited by its global coverage.

CSAG members also felt that evaluation teams should have adequate expertise on social aspects and the private sector when the scope of projects calls for multiple perspectives to the information collected. It would also be important to have CSAG's input to ensure that measurable indicators are practical and incorporate social aspects.

The involvement of TAG members in ex post evaluation has been very limited, not least because very few ITTO projects have specific trade elements. This has also resulted in lack of awareness of relevant lessons learned from ex post evaluations for the private sector. Present dissemination does not appear to reach representatives of trade and industry. TAG also called for improvements in the access to data in the ITTO website so that relevant ex post evaluations for the Group's members could be easily located to ensure that they are downloaded and read.

Both CSAG and TAG called for involvement of civil society and private sector participants in future ex post evaluations through appropriate means (consultations with focus groups, email surveys, etc.) to ensure that key issues are duly considered by evaluators. In addition, members of both groups called for their increased involvement in project formulation and implementation.

[76] Achieving sustainability in community forestry projects, access of CFEs to markets and removal of regulatory barriers for CFEs.