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**Report on the Implementation of the
Joint ITTO – CBD Collaborative Initiative for
Tropical Forest Biodiversity
(Provisional Agenda Item 15)**

Joint ITTO – CBD Collaborative Initiative for Tropical Forest Biodiversity: Achievements to Date

Background

In the framework of the International Year of Biodiversity 2010 and the International Year of Forests 2011, the Secretariat of the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO) and the Secretariat of the Convention on Biodiversity (CBD) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on 2 March 2010 to strengthen collaboration in the pursuit of their common objectives of conserving and sustainably managing tropical forest resources. In October and December 2010, respectively, the governing bodies of CBD and ITTC adopted Decisions welcoming the ITTO/CBD collaboration [Decision X/36 and ITTC Decision 6 (XLVI)].

A key purpose of the MoU between the ITTO and CBD secretariats is to identify, develop and implement targeted joint activities on forests and biodiversity, with involvement of the other relevant organizations, including the development of an ITTO support programme for the implementation of the CBD programme of work on forest biodiversity in ITTO producer member countries (subsequently referred to as the Joint ITTO/CBD Collaborative Initiative for Tropical Forest Biodiversity).

The programme document that is the basis for concrete project activities under the Joint ITTO/CBD Collaborative Initiative for Tropical Forest Biodiversity is available in English, French and Spanish and can be downloaded from both the CBD and ITTO websites.¹

Objectives and outputs

The overall objective of the Joint ITTO/CBD Collaborative Initiative for Tropical Forest Biodiversity is to enhance biodiversity conservation in tropical forests with the direct participation of local stakeholders, addressing the main drivers of biodiversity loss in tropical forests: deforestation and forest degradation. More specifically, the Initiative provides support to ITTO producer member countries to reduce losses of biodiversity through the implementation of the CBD Programme of Work on Forest Biodiversity, focusing on the common objectives of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the ITTO Action Plan.

This Initiative aims to achieve four key outputs, with the assistance of donors and with the close collaboration of partners in producer member countries:

1. Enhanced local capacity for biodiversity conservation in production forests and for the rehabilitation of degraded and secondary forests;
2. Improved conservation and management of protected areas, especially in association with buffering protected areas, and transboundary conservation;
3. Safeguarding tropical forest biodiversity in forestry interventions, including in REDD+ related projects; and
4. Improved welfare of local communities and indigenous groups through biodiversity conservation and sustainable use of natural resources.

These expected outputs of the Initiative are to be achieved through the promotion of sustainable forest management (SFM), with a particular emphasis on biodiversity protection; forest monitoring and adaptive management to generate multiple benefits on a sustainable basis; protection against invasive species; and enhancing the value of natural tropical forests to avoid land use change.

Focus on production and protection forests

The Initiative focuses both on production and protection forests. Scientists estimate that tropical forests host about two thirds of all terrestrial species. Promoting the establishment of protected areas, especially in forests of high conservation value including transboundary areas, is still required to meet the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 global target for 17% of terrestrial areas protected. Considering that only 13% of

¹ CBD: <http://www.cbd.int/forest/doc/cbd-itto-initiative-programme-document.en.pdf>

ITTO: [http://www.itto.int/documents_detail/contents_type=598 ITTC\(XLVII\)/11 ITTO/CBD Collaborative Initiative to Conserve Tropical Forests](http://www.itto.int/documents_detail/contents_type=598_ITTC(XLVII)/11_ITTO/CBD_Collaborative_Initiative_to_Conserve_Tropical_Forests)

the world's forests are currently located in protected areas, it is essential to also promote the conservation and sustainable use of forest biodiversity outside of protected areas. The conservation and sustainable management of tropical forests in general, buffer zones of protected areas in particular, are necessary for improving livelihoods of local communities and avoid encroachment of the core conservation areas. The consumption of main timber products (roundwood, sawnwood, pulp, paper) is expected to increase over the next 30 years. The use of solid biofuels for electricity production could be three times larger by 2030 than current levels (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/13/3). Globally, by 2050, the demand for industrial roundwood is expected to increase by 50 to 75%. The **ITTO/IUCN Guidelines for the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biodiversity in Tropical Timber Production Forests (2009)** reflect the clear importance in promoting biodiversity conservation outside protected areas, through the long-term sustainable use of forest resources for the sustainable livelihoods of local communities. Also, the **ITTO Guidelines for the Restoration, Management and Rehabilitation of Degraded and Secondary Tropical Forests (2002)** provides the elements to recover the biodiversity conservation capacity of degraded forests in the tropics. These ITTO guidelines are complementary to, and entirely support the CBD forest programme of work, providing guidance for the field implementation of the Initiative.

Operational Procedures

ITTO leads the implementation of the Initiative in close consultation with the CBD Secretariat, donors, other partners and especially the beneficiary countries. Interested countries may submit a concept note to the ITTO Secretariat indicating their intention to develop a project or specific activity in the framework of this Initiative. The CBD Secretariat and ITTO Secretariat will assess the pertinence of the request together with the relevant stakeholders of the proposing country and will support the formulation of a full project proposal (if required) and fund raising. Donors may allocate funds to a specific project of the Initiative, or as an unearmarked contribution to the Initiative.

Budget

The Collaborative Initiative has an estimated budget of \$US15 million for the initial period of 4 years, covering the three tropical regions of ITTO. The implementation of the Initiative benefits from the experience ITTO has gained in implementing projects and programs in the tropics (over 1,000 projects, pre-projects and activities in the last 25 years, amounting to US\$400,000,000). Also, the ITTO/CBD Initiative benefits from the experience gained in ITTO Programme development, including the CITES/ITTO Programme since 2007; and the ITTO Thematic Programs being currently implemented on a pilot basis. The Initiative also builds on the experiences implementing the Programme of Work on Protected Areas.

Project applications

Government agencies in countries that are members of the International Tropical Timber Organization should direct inquiries to rfm@itto.int.

More information is also available at <http://www.itto.int>.

Funded projects

To date, eleven projects under this Initiative are being piloted for a total investment of over US\$ 15 million, of which donor governments such as Japan, Switzerland, Belgium, USA and the Republic of Korea have contributed a total of US\$ 12,527,309. An outline and the current status of these eleven projects are as follows:

1. Capacity Building for Sustainable Management of Tropical Rainforests and Biodiversity Conservation in the ITTO Congo Basin Countries

ITTO Ref. No.: PD 456/07 Rev.4 (F)

ITTO Budget: USD 3,890,681

Beneficiary countries: Cameroon, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Gabon & Republic of Congo

Executing Agency: Network of Central African Forestry and Environmental Training Institutions (*Réseau Régional des Institutions de Formation Forestière et Environnementale d'Afrique Centrale* - RIFFEAC)

Inception date: April 2012

Overall, this five-year project (April 2012 to April 2017) will contribute to building human resource capacity required to achieve sustainable forest ecosystem management in the Congo basin by reconciling socio-economic imperatives and the maintenance of ecological balances. More specifically, it aims to build the capacity for environmental and forestry training institutions in Central Africa to ensure that they are capable to train personnel to implement sustainable forest management, to ensure biodiversity conservation in the Congo Basin.

As there was no hope to get the outstanding balance of USD 517,875.31, from donors, it was suggested to the Executing Agency to revise the budget in order to get the expenses matching the ITTO funds already secured by the ITTO Secretariat, for the amount of US\$3,890,681.00 secured from donors (Belgium, Japan and Switzerland). The Addendum to the Agreement regulating the project implementation was duly signed by the Executing Agency (RIFFEAC Secretariat) on 21 July 2015 and the ITTO Secretariat on 29 July 2015 in order to formalize that ITTO budget revision.

Since the Fiftieth Session of the Council and in accordance with the project's most recent progress report and monthly highlights submitted through the project online monitoring system, progress in project implementation can be summarized as follows:

- The Executing Agency (RIFFEAC Secretariat) has started the dissemination of twelve (12) reference training modules/programmes and associated teaching methodologies [six (6) at university level and six (6) at college level], prepared and finalized by the University of Laval and CERFOR (Technical Forestry Centre) of Canada in consultation with RIFFEAC training institutions, to the seven RIFFEAC training institutions involved in the project implementation as well as to other RIFFEAC training institutions;
- Thematic Working Groups had been established for the follow-up of the operationalization/implementation of these twelve training modules/programmes and associated teaching methodologies in all RIFFEAC training institutions, including those not directly supported by the project PD 456/07 Rev.4 (F);
- The Executing Agency (RIFFEAC Secretariat) was obliged to consult again all seven RIFFEAC training institutions (CRESA-Yaounde in Cameroon, ENEF-Libreville in Gabon, ENEF-Mbalmayo in Cameroon, ERAIFT-Kinshasa in Democratic Republic of Congo, IDR-Brazzaville in Republic of Congo, ISDR-Mbaiki in Central African Republic and University of Dschang in Cameroon) in order to update/readjust their needs for building construction/rehabilitation, capital equipment and materials in correlation with with the ITTO funds of US\$3,890,681.00 secured from donors (Belgium, Japan and Switzerland); and
- For the maintenance of buildings to be constructed/rehabilitated, capital equipment and materials to be acquired, a consultation process has been undertaken with the key representatives of the seven RIFFEAC training institutions involved in the project implementation.

The project implementation has been disturbed during several weeks by the demise of the project coordinator, Dr. Souleimane IBRAHIM SAMBO, in March 2015. Dr. Claude KACHAKA SUDI KAIKO was elected as the new Regional Coordinator of the RIFFEAC Secretariat by the General Assembly of RIFFEAC in June 2015; and therefore he became the new project coordinator of PD 456/07 Rev.4 (F) on 01 July 2015.

2. Management of the Emerald Triangle Protected Forests Complex to Promote Cooperation for Transboundary Biodiversity Conservation Between Thailand, Cambodia and Lao People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR)

ITTO Ref. No.: PD 577/10 Rev.1 (F)

ITTO Budget: USD 2,051,039

Beneficiary countries: Cambodia & Thailand

Executing Agencies: The Forestry Administration of Cambodia together with Royal Forest Department of Thailand

Inception date: August 2012

Overall, this three-year project (2012-2015) envisages conserving forest biodiversity in the Emerald Triangle Protected Forests Complex situated between Thailand, Cambodia and Lao PDR, under the framework of a trans-boundary biodiversity conservation area (TBCA). The Emerald Triangle has some of the most extensive continuous natural forests in Southeast Asia containing large numbers of globally threatened species and is a last refuge for sixteen "Critically Endangered" and "Endangered" species from the IUCN Red List. Specifically, the project aims to strengthen the protection of trans-boundary habitats of the endangered wide-ranging wildlife species in the Emerald Triangle.

This project became operational in August 2012, and to date, both beneficiary countries are already collecting and exchanging information on wildlife distribution between them and are planning joint research activities on regional biodiversity. The 5th Project Steering Committee (PSC) meeting was organized on 22 February 2015 in Ubon Rachathani province, Thailand while the 6th PSC meeting was held in Phnom Penh, Cambodia on 24 July 2015. The meetings provided guidance to the refinement of the project activities in line with the common vision for long-term management of the Emerald Triangle Protected Forests Complex that was prepared by the project. The 6th PSC meeting endorsed the timing for organizing the regional conference on Biodiversity Conservation in Tropical Forests in the first quarter of 2016 during the 'no cost' extension of the project.

Since the Forty-eighth Session of the Committee and in accordance with the project's most recent progress report submitted in July 2015, progress in project implementation can be summarized as follows:

Cambodian component:

- An assessment of the 2014 forest cover in the Preah Vihear Protected Forest and distribution of wildlife and biodiversity is under way. A technical report and mapping of the distribution of landmark wildlife species is under review for a forthcoming ITTO-CBD technical publication on conserving transboundary biodiversity in the Emerald Triangle Protected Forests Complex.
- Botanical surveys have been conducted and 10 species of orchids have been collected from the Preah Vihear Protected Forest to assess the feasibility of breeding each of those species at the project's nursery.
- Law enforcement patrols to reduce incidences of illegal forest activities in target sites in the Preah Vihear Protected Forest were conducted on a regular basis in cooperation with military police and provincial military officers.
- Consultations on land use planning, forest management planning, wildlife protection and law enforcement were organized with local communities, commune councils and other local authorities.
- Trainings targeting local communities were conducted to improve tree planting skills, the establishment of home gardens and integrated agroforestry systems, as well as emerging opportunities for nature-based tourism development, especially at ancient temples located in and around the Preah Vihear Protected Forest, while awareness training meetings were organized to discuss forest fire prevention, climate change mitigation and adaptation, and REDD+.
- Ten financial assistantships were provided to students of the Forestry Faculty of the Royal University of Agriculture to prepare undergraduate theses required to obtain their bachelor degrees. The support extended to the mentoring of fieldwork in conducting studies of nature-based tourism, wildlife conservation, forest land use and community agroforestry practices in and around the Preah Vihear Protected Forest.

- Continued agroforestry demonstrations, including training and consultations on raising chickens and cows, as well as promotion of integrated agricultural systems, the production of compost fertilizers to improve agricultural yields and the provision of seeds for home gardens.

Thai component:

- Project outputs on wildlife resources, GIS modeling and research on the livelihood improvement of the communities were disseminated to key stakeholders on 23-24 April 2015 in Khong Cheam District, Ubon Ratchathani, Thailand.
- Continue updating and maintaining the information system and field data collection for GIS and wildlife research, and the assessment of the results of the integrated conservation development activities for the targeting communities.
- Trainings in cooperation with forest protection unit in the project area on forest protection and effective patrolling were organized regularly to prevent wildlife poaching, illegal logging, illegal trading and collection of wild plants.
- Meetings for livelihood improvement activities were organized during February - March 2015 in order to follow up the establishment of a nursery and a tissue culture lab.
- Training workshops on nursery seedling production and micro-techniques for multiplication of orchids and ornamental plants were organized five times during Feb-June 2015 in cooperation with Ubon Ratchathani University.
- Meetings with border patrol police were carried out continuously to follow up the outcome from the GIS trainings/workshops.
- Conservation awareness issues were presented in a monthly meeting of elementary schools boards in the project area. School drawing contests and exhibitions of conservation were organized.
- Two technical reports were uploaded on the ITTO website: "Land use change and wildlife distribution modeling in the Emerald Triangle Forest Complex" at http://www.itto.int/files/itto_project_db_input/2968/Technical/GIS%20Report%20ebook-Landuse%20change%20&%20Wiledlife%20Distribution%20modelling%20in%20the%20ETFC.pdf; and "Wildlife resources in the Emerald Triangle Protected Forest Complex between Thailand and Lao PDR" at http://www.itto.int/files/itto_project_db_input/2968/Technical/Wildlife%20Resources%20in%20ETFC%20between%20Thailand%20&%20LAO%20PDR.pdf.
- The Pha Taem Protected Forests Complex Management Plan has been revised by incorporating research outcome. This Revised Management Plan is under review by RFD.

3. Building Capacities of ACTO Member Countries in Ecologically Responsible Forest Management and Biodiversity Conservation in Managed Forests of the Amazon

ITTO Ref. No.:	PP-A/47-266
ITTO Budget:	USD 1,320,224
Beneficiary countries:	Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Peru, Suriname, Venezuela
Executing Agency:	Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization (ACTO)
Inception date:	July 2013

This three-year project aims to enhance biodiversity conservation and strengthen environmental guidelines in managed forests across the Amazon Region. Specifically, the project aims at establishing an interdisciplinary process for building and delivering the technical capacity necessary for implementing ecologically responsible forest management in public and private production forests of the Amazon region, favouring the sustainable use and conservation of forest biodiversity.

The main project outcomes expected to be achieved upon project completion are: 1) Detailed national assessments taking into account the ITTO/IUCN Guidelines for Conservation of Biodiversity in Tropical Timber Production Forests as well as national and regional forest management standards, to report on (a) the extent to which public and private production forests of ACTO nations currently consider and implement biodiversity concerns and guidelines; and (b) the national-level capacity for training and knowledge exchange

in ecologically responsible forest management; 2) At least three existing forest management centres are strengthened to become coordinating centres of excellence for training in ecologically responsible forest management for the Amazon region, supported by newly developed training materials and a strengthened network of professional trainers; and 3) A regional Knowledge Exchange Platform (KEP) on ecologically responsible forest management is established under the coordination of ACTO's wider regional cooperation platform to facilitate sharing of information and experiences regarding the opportunities and challenges for incorporating biodiversity conservation concerns into the management of public and private forests.

The Government of Japan, in November 2011, provided an amount of USD 1,320,224, to fund this Activity. The Memorandum of Understanding, which governs the implementation of this Activity, was signed by ACTO and ITTO in February 2013. The first installment of funds was transferred in August 2013.

In March 2014 delegates from the eight ACTO member countries gathered at the project's first Steering Committee meeting held at Puyo, Ecuador, and redefined the details of the project's activities and further finalized the project document. The project's first Yearly Plan of Operations was also developed and approved based on the final project document. The second Steering Committee meeting of this project was held at the National Agrarian University La Molina, in Lima, Peru on June 15th, 2015. At this meeting the Steering Committee reviewed the activities of the project and noted their slow implementation, due to the fact that each of the 8 ACTO member countries still had to nominate their national coordinators to the project. However, ACTO is already initiating some of the project's core activities.

4. Study for the Rehabilitation and Sustainable Management of Sacred Forests on Ramsar Sites 1017 and 1018 in Benin

ITTO Ref. No.: PPD 165/12 Rev.1 (F)

ITTO Budget: USD 79,380

Beneficiary countries: Benin

Executing Agency: Ce.Sa.Re.N

Inception date: 25 April 2013 (reported as completed at the 50th ITTC Session)

I. Introduction

The 8-month pre-project was approved under Autumn-2012 Project Cycle through the electronic approval system put in place, and the financing was made at the same Project Cycle by the Government of Japan, Korea and USA. This pre-project intended to contribute to the sustainable forest management and conservation of biodiversity in Benin by building the capacity of local communities to improve their living conditions, through the conservation of Sacred Forests (SFs) part of Ramsar Sites 1017 and 1018. It specifically intended to evaluate the potential of Sacred Forests located in the Ramsar Sites 1017 and 1018, in order to formulate a project aiming to support their rehabilitation and sustainable management.

II. Pre-project Achievements and Outputs

a) Achievement of outputs

Outputs	Level of achievement
1. Baseline information on the SFs of the target sites is available	Several technical reports providing updated and documented information and data on the Sacred Forests located in the Ramsar Sites 1017 and 1018, in Benin, were prepared by consultants and validated by key stakeholders through a participatory approach.

<p>2. A project proposal to support the rehabilitation and sustainable management of Sacred Forests within Ramsar Sites 1017 and 1018 in Benin is formulated and submitted to ITTO for approval.</p>	<p>A project proposal was formulated with the updated information and data gathered and analyzed through the implementation of this pre-project. It was validated by main stakeholders, and submitted to the ITTO regular project cycle. It was registered as PD754/14 (F) by the ITTO Secretariat with the following title: "<i>Rehabilitation and sustainable management of Sacred Forests on Ramsar Sites 1017 and 1018</i>".</p>
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b) Achievement of objectives

Objectives	Level of achievement
<p>Development Objective: To contribute to the conservation and sustainable management of biodiversity in Benin by building the capacity of local communities to improve their living conditions</p>	<p>Relevant information and data (forest inventory, socioeconomic, environmental, mapping aspects) required for the formulation of a full project proposal were gathered and analyzed during the pre-project implementation, through studies and surveys carried out in the target zone of the future project, with the collaboration of key stakeholders.</p>
<p>The Specific Objective of the preliminary draft is to evaluate the potential of 1017 and 1018 Ramsar sites sacred forests in order to formulate a project proposal for the rehabilitation and sustainable management of these forests</p>	<p>A project proposal was developed in a participatory process while taking into account the findings of studies carried out by consultants in the Sacred Forests part of Ramsar Sites 1017 and 1018, in Benin. It was appraised by the 48th Expert Panel in August 2014.</p>

5. Promoting Biodiversity Conservation in Betung Kerihun National Park (BKNP) as the Trans-boundary Ecosystem between Indonesia and State of Sarawak Malaysia - Phase III

ITTO Ref. No.: PD 617/11 Rev.4 (F)

ITTO Budget: USD 941,559

Beneficiary country: Indonesia

Executing Agency: Betung Kerihun National (BKNP), Directorate General of Forest Protection and Nature Conservation (PHKA), Ministry of Forestry (MOF)

Inception date: October 2013

Overall, this 4-year project (2013-2017) aims to promote sustainable conservation management of the Betung Kerihun National Park (BKNP) established in 1992 covering around 800,000 ha, as a transboundary ecosystem between Indonesia and Malaysia (Sarawak). The project will focus on strengthening transboundary cooperation with Sarawak so as to enhance commonly shared ecosystems and other conservation concerns.

The project's transboundary conservation cooperation is focused on the Lanjak Entimau Wildlife Sanctuary (LEWS) and the Batang Ai National Park (BANP) in Sarawak sites which are adjacent to BKNP in Indonesia. The project will be implemented by BKNP in collaboration with many stakeholders including WWF-Indonesia in order to ensure the conservation of the integrity of BKNP's biodiversity values. The project activities include establishing a joint task force for the efficient implementation of the transboundary conservation area (TBCA) with the participation of representatives from LEWS and BANP. The expected outputs of the project are: (1) cooperation between Indonesia and Malaysia for the conservation of transboundary ecosystem between BKNP and BANP/LEWS; (2) formulation of an operational work plan on biodiversity conservation for the transboundary ecosystems; and (3) Improving the sustainable livelihoods of the local communities within and surrounding BKNP.

Project activities commenced in October 2013. Since the Forty-eighth Session of the Committee and in accordance with the project's most recent progress reports, progress in project implementation can be summarized as follows:

- Technical Arrangement (TA) for the establishment of Joint Technical Task Force (JTTF) between Indonesia and Malaysia is currently under scrutiny of concerned Malaysia authority before officially signed by the parties; the TA was jointly formulated by BKNP, LEWS, and BANP officials.
- Intensive consultation with existing partners, i.e., ADB, TFCA, WWF Indonesia and GIZ, and with HOB Initiative has been carried out to strengthen partnership.
- Existing strategic plan for orangutan conservation is under review by BKNP, LEWS, and BANP professionals through exchange of information and visit as one of the activities to be jointly implemented by Indonesia and Malaysia.
- Technical reports on Activities 2.1, 2.2, 3.1, and 3.2 have been published in both Bahasa and English and uploaded to the web.
- Conduct of a feasibility study on development of REDD+ project has been postponed to Year 3 due mainly to on-going changes of policy direction on the management of climate change program by the Ministry of Environment and Forestry.
- Issue on community-based ecotourism development was deeply reviewed by the national consultant and key stakeholders. Ecotourism development requires long-term commitment by stakeholders of the Park with appropriate infrastructures.
- Forest patrolling is continuing. The Park authority and partners recognized a need to involve local communities in the task for which training of selected community leaders and members on forest patrolling is indispensable.
- Outreach program is progressing well through application of Web and Facebook, involvement of professional journalists and participation in domestic as well as international events in biodiversity conservation.

6. Buffer Zone Management for Pulong Tau National Park with Involvement of Local Communities in Management, Sarawak, Malaysia

ITTO Ref. No.:	PD 635/12 Rev.2 (F)
ITTO Budget:	USD 517,450
Beneficiary country:	Malaysia
Executing Agency:	Forest Department of Sarawak
Inception date:	August 2014

This project was approved under Autumn 2012 Project Cycle and financed at the Forty-eighth Session of the ITTC held in November 2012. The draft project agreement was sent to the Ministry of Primary Industries and Commodities of Malaysia in January 2013. The project agreement was duly signed in August 2014. The Executing Agency submitted the inception report with a yearly plan of operation (YPO) for the first year and started the implementation of project activities in August 2014.

The development objective of this project is to contribute to the integrated development of buffer zone for environmental conservation and uplifting the livelihoods of indigenous communities. The specific objective is to secure forests in the buffer zone for the use by indigenous communities and to strengthen the protection of Pulong Tau National Park (PTNP). These objectives will be achieved through the establishment of 6,000 ha of buffer zone and securing its forest resource base to meet the needs of indigenous communities. The project objectives and outputs will be met through the integrated buffer zone management, training, and active involvement of primary and secondary stakeholders, including indigenous communities. The project is being carried out by the Forest Department Sarawak (FDS) through its Community Service Initiative Unit (CSIU).

Since the Forty-eighth Session of the Committee, the project has been progressing in the following areas according to the progress reports, as well as the monthly highlights submitted through the on-line monitoring system (OLMS):

- The final gazette for the second extension of PTNP was processed by the Ministry of Resource Planning and Environment of the State of Sarawak;
- Ecological and flora survey was conducted to collect baseline data on forest types and biodiversity resources for conservation and local use;

- Faunal survey on ground mammals, birds and insects was conducted using line transects and camera traps to identify the species to be protected;
- Survey on communal forests was conducted to identify the forest areas to be claimed by the indigenous communities and to collect information on timber resource, NTFP and game animals;
- Visit to the successful tagang project, as well as the agricultural park and handicraft centre in Sabah, was carried out; and
- Preparatory work for the application of birth certificates and identity cards was conducted.

The activity to construct field centre cum rangers' station at Long Manau was withdrawn due to the unexpected land claim by indigenous families, and the budget was reallocated for the enhancement of trainings in accordance with the recommendations and endorsement from the Project Steering Committee at its first meeting held on 23 March 2015. Except for the withdrawal of this particular activity, the project has been making a steady progress with the support from stakeholders.

7. Integrated Management of Natural Resources and Biodiversity in the Tacaná Volcano and its Range of Influence in Mexico and Guatemala

ITTO Ref. No.:	PD 668/12 Rev.1 (F)
ITTO Budget:	USD 641,639
Beneficiary country:	Guatemala and Mexico
Executing Agency:	HELVETAS SWISS INTERCOOPERATION (HSI)
Inception date:	July 2014

Guatemala and Mexico share the Tacaná Volcano border area that straddles the Department of San Marcos and the State of Chiapas, an area in the Mesoamerican Biodiversity Corridor, featuring biological richness and ecotourism potential, but the area is affected by poverty and natural resources are used unsustainably. An initiative was developed for sustainable development in the protected areas of the Tacaná Volcano border area, based on coordinated actions, a study of the situation, and various exchanges between regional representatives of Mexican and Guatemalan Government institutions, civil society and the Swiss organization, HELVETAS Swiss Intercooperation.

The objective of this 2-year project is to contribute to improving the living standards of 28,000 people in both countries, based on the conservation and sustainable use of local natural resources. More specifically, it will launch a participatory process for natural resource and biodiversity management, conservation and use in the Tacaná Volcano and its range of influence in Guatemala and Mexico. The project begins with an initial two-year phase to establish the foundations of joint work with the community, men and women, with pilot activities, including forest management, diversification of economic opportunities, upgrading of the legal framework of protected areas and enhancement of collaboration between both countries.

Expected outputs are: i) Pilot areas for restoration or conservation have been established in a participatory manner; ii) Pilot projects are identified and established with the community, to enhance local livelihoods, including: ecotourism, agro-forestry and livestock-forestry systems; iii) The technical and legal framework for integrated management in Tacaná Volcano has been updated; and iv) Local communities, Municipal Councils and public bodies share information, take decisions by consensus and are actively involved in the Guatemala – Mexico Binational Cooperation.

The agreement for the implementation of the project was signed in December 2013. The yearly plan of operation for project implementation was approved in July 2014 and project activities commenced immediately after the disbursement of the first tranche of funds. The project's first Steering Committee meeting was held in San Marcos, Guatemala in early September 2014, and the second met at Tapachula, Mexico. Both meetings counted with the full participation of both Mexican and Guatemalan stakeholders, in particular CONAFOR, CONANP, CONAP, INAB, local governments and community representatives.

Since the Forty-eighth session of the Committee and in accordance with the project's most recent progress reports submitted in February and August 2015, and the second Project Steering Committee meeting held in September 2015, progress in project implementation can be summarized by major outputs as follows:

Output 1: Pilot areas for restoration or conservation have been established in a participatory manner.

- The mapping of restoration/conservation areas and environmental services in the Tacaná Volcano and its range of influence on the Guatemalan and Mexican sides has been completed;
- Priority areas for restoration and conservation have been selected;
- Several workshops have been held within the communities to socialize the restoration and conservation plans; and
- 4 nurseries are in the process of being established to produce seedlings of native species for the restoration areas.

Output 2: Local production and economic initiatives identified and established with the communities to enhance local livelihoods, including: ecotourism, agroforestry and silvo-pastoral systems.

- 12 forest goods and services production proposals to enhance livelihoods have been received from the communities, including ecotourism, Design and are in a process of being evaluated;
- Work has been initiated at the inter-institutional level for the improvement of the Binational Hiking Path;
- An meeting to interchange of experiences between tour operators experienced in volcanoes and the Tacana communities took place on the Guatemalan side

Output 3: The technical and legal framework for integrated management in Tacaná Volcano has been updated

- A technical study to reclassify the Tacaná Volcano in Guatemala in close coordination with CONAP has been initiated. Currently the volcanic cone is classified as "Permanent Prohibition Zone" and does not allow any intervention; the intention is to overcome this limitation directly from the regulations governing it.

Output 4: Local communities, Municipal Councils and public agencies share information, make decisions by consensus and are actively involved in the Guatemala – Mexico Binational Cooperation.

- The control and monitoring of areas through training and equipping the rangers has been initiated;
- Baseline and biological monitoring studies are underway; and
- Binational and international cooperation activities are being carried out to share knowledge and expertise among stakeholders.

8. Strengthening Mangrove Ecosystem Conservation in the Biosphere Reserve of Northwestern Peru

ITTO Ref. No.: PD 601/11 Rev.3 (F)

ITTO Budget: USD 496,290

Beneficiary country: Peru

Executing Agency: MDA

Inception date: August 2014

Mangrove forests constitute one of the most vulnerable ecosystems to climate change, while at the same time being an ecosystem that can sequester and store amongst the highest volumes of carbon. The National System for Natural Protected Areas (SINANPE) has contributed to the sustainability of mangrove ecosystems by establishing the National Sanctuary of Tumbes Mangroves (Santuario Nacional de los Manglares de Tumbes – SNLMT). However, there are insufficient participatory mechanisms for the overall conservation of mangrove forest ecosystems in the Piura and Tumbes regions. This in turn leads to low living standards for the communities living in degraded mangrove ecosystem areas, and the resultant loss of biodiversity.

To address this situation, this proposal envisages improving the standard of living of the population in mangrove ecosystem areas in the regions of Tumbes and Piura. More specifically, it will increase the number of participatory mechanisms for mangrove forest protection, conservation and rehabilitation in the regions of Tumbes and Piura through: (1) Adequate use of legal powers by regional and local governments for the conservation of mangrove forests; (2) Improving the level of forest administration and management so as to preserve mangrove ecosystems; and (3) Developing and implementing financial sustainability strategies for mangrove forests.

The main project outcomes that are expected to be achieved upon project completion are: (i) Strengthening the management capacity for the conservation of mangrove forests in two regional governments and two municipalities ; (ii) Establishing three protected areas: the Mangrove /Dry Forest Biological Corridor, the San Pedro de Vice Mangrove Forest and the New Vichayal Mangrove Forest; (iii) Improving the management efficiency of the National Sanctuary of Tumbes Mangroves (SNLMT); (iv) Promoting through the implementation of 10 sub-projects for sustainable economic activities the appropriate use of resources (forest and hydrobiological resources) in mangrove forests; and (v) Promoting financial mechanisms to contribute to the sustainability of mangrove forests. This project was approved under the Spring 2012 Project and was fully at the Forty-ninth Session in November 2013 at Libreville, Gabon. The final agreement regulating the implementation of the project was duly signed in September 2014. The first installment of funds was transferred in November 2014, after the submission, by the Executing Agency, of the first Yearly Plan of Operations, a request for the no-objection of the project's key personnel and a notification that implementation is about to begin, and the approval of the aforementioned by the Secretariat.

Since project inception in November 2014 and in accordance with the project's first recent progress report submitted in July 2015, progress in project implementation can be summarized by major outputs as follows:

Output 1: Adequate use of legal powers by regional and local governments for the conservation of mangrove forests

- Several inter-institutional meetings have been held between the regional and local governments, universities, SERNANP, PRONANP and MDA to discuss the training need of regional and local government officers in environmental standards and regulations. Based on these meetings, to date the National University of Tumbes has entered into an agreement to develop a post-graduate diploma in "Participatory Environmental Management for the Conservation of Mangroves and Dry Forests". The list of participants has already been drawn and it is expected to commence shortly;
- Coordination has been initiated with competent authorities for the legal recognition of 3 new protected areas in mangrove ecosystems: the Tumbes Mangrove Ecosystem – Dry Forest Biological Corridor, and the San Pedro de Vice Mangrove Forest and Mangrove Forest of Vichayal in the Department of Piura.

Output 2: Improved level of forest administration and management so as to preserve mangrove ecosystems

- The master plan for the management of the National Sanctuary of Tumbes Mangroves has been updated in a participatory manner via workshops with all stakeholders involved and a regional forum has been planned for the world environment day;
- Several coordination meetings with the local governments of Corrales, Zarumilla and Aguas Verdes in Tumbes and Vice in Piura have been initiated for the Implementation of participatory management mechanisms in the new protected mangrove areas to be created; and
- A work plan is being developed to train local communities in sustainable management and utilization techniques for the natural resources of mangrove ecosystems.

Output 3: Financial sustainability strategies for mangrove forests developed and under implementation

- Assistance is being provided to the local communities in developing revenue-raising mechanisms to contribute to mangrove forest sustainability via small business plans. 6 project profiles have already been developed to date.

9. Community Based Restoration and Sustainable Management of Vulnerable Forests of the Rewa Delta, Viti Levu

ITTO Ref. No.:	PD 696/13 Rev.2 (F)
ITTO Budget:	USD 310,576 .00
Beneficiary country:	Fiji
Executing Agency:	Department of Forest, Ministry of Fisheries and Forest, Republic of Fiji
Inception date:	October 2015 (expected)

The coastal and mangrove wetlands in the Rewa Delta (35,238 ha) of Fiji are undoubtedly a source of important marine and terrestrial resource for local communities in the area, but more importantly, these forests safeguard the entire coastal ecosystem that supports riparian flat lands. However, the wetlands have been affected by social and economic pressures, and policy is not aligned to a single Government Agency. Resource extraction has resulted in reduction in vegetated areas and habitat loss as well as declining quality in livelihood opportunities.

The development objective of the project is to contribute to the sustainable management of coastal and mangrove wetlands in the Rewa Delta, while improving the livelihoods of local communities. Specifically, the project proposes: restoration and management of at least 3,381 hectares as demonstration site; training of 17 communities involved in raising awareness on the importance of wetlands; and the development of alternative livelihood options to reduce overdependence on the coastal and mangrove wetland vegetation. The target community lies within the Tikina of Bau, Tailevu, a densely populated area in the Rewa Delta.

Expected outputs of the project include the collation of key issues on coastal and mangrove wetlands and the formulation of relevant policy framework. In addition, it is expected that communities will adopt alternative livelihoods that will reduce pressure from over-utilization of coastal and mangrove wetland resources; and by the end of the project, at least 500 ha of the degraded area in the selected demonstration site would be rehabilitated with appropriate coastal tree species to support ecosystem services and human wellbeing in the long term.

The project was approved under Autumn 2013 Project Cycle and its financing was made at ITTC 49 in November 2013. The project agreement regulating project implementation was finalized in June 2015. The Executing Agency is in the process of finalizing administrative arrangements including detailed yearly plans of operation to ensure the effective implementation of the project. It is expected that the project will commence in October.

10. Promoting Conservation of Selected High-value Indigenous Species of Sumatra

ITTO Ref. No.:	PD 710/13 Rev.1 (F)
ITTO Budget:	USD 479,976.00
Beneficiary country:	Indonesia
Executing Agency:	Forest Research Institute, Forestry Research and Development Agency (FORDA)
Inception date:	January 2015

Sumatra is the largest island in Indonesia and has abundant biological diversity, including many indigenous plant species. Some of the high-value indigenous species are Sumatran yew (*Taxus sumatrana*), Sumatran merbau (*Intsia palembanica*), and lesser-known non-timber forest products (NTFPs) producing species. However, over-exploitation, encroachment, and illegal activities have made many of the high-value species threatened with extinction. High commercially valuable timber species such as Sumatran merbau, kulim, andalás, and giam have been excessively and illegally logged for the past several decades. Lesser-known NTFPs producing species have also been illegally collected, whereas, endemic and relatively limited distribution and small population size, *T. sumatrana* has been threatened by habitat encroachment, population disruption and illegal logging.

The overall objective of this project is to contribute to the sustainable management of selected high-value indigenous plant species of Sumatra. The specific objective of the project is to enhance the achievement of conservation goals through revitalization of the existing conservation program, harvest control systems, and regeneration. The expected outputs are: (1) accelerated conservation of selected high-value indigenous species; (2) promotion of harvest control of those species; and (3) improving the regeneration capacity of those species. Primary beneficiaries of the project are local communities, local governments, Directorate of Biodiversity Conservation (MoF), Ministry of Environment, BAPPENAS, and Indonesian Institute of Science (LIPI). The benefits of the project range from updated data and information on distribution, conservation status and protection, and the regeneration of selected high-value indigenous species. This proposed project will also contribute to the socioeconomic improvement of the forest-dependent community.

The project was approved under Autumn 2013 Project Cycle and was financed at ITTC 49 in November 2013. The project agreement for regulating project implementation was finalized in July 2014. After completing administrative arrangements for the implementation of the project including the detailed yearly plans of operation, the project commenced in January 2015.

Since the commencement of the project in January 2015, progress in project implementation can be summarized as follows:

- Workshop on “Improving Awareness on Conservation of High Value Indigenous Wood Species of Sumatra” was held on April 27, 2015 at Forestry Education and Training Institution, Pekanbaru. It was attended by 60 participants including representatives from local governments, NGOs, universities and private companies. It raised the importance of promoting the conservation of selected high-value indigenous species of Sumatra either in natural habitat (in-situ) or in the ex-situ areas. The workshop report is under finalization.
- Collection and updating of data and information on distribution, population and conservation status of the selected high-value indigenous species is under way and an analysis on potential uses of chemical substance of Sumatran yew (*Taxus sumatrana*) is being carried out.
- A field survey for 15 ha of forest area at the conservation area of PT. Kojo, Duri, Bengkalis District, Riau Province was conducted on 12-15 June 2015 to find wildlings of giam (*Cotylelobium melanoxylon*). A total of 7 trees of giam and 11 trees of kulim (*Schorodocarpus borneensis*) were found and a total of 574 wildlings of giam were collected.

11. Building the Capacity for Biodiversity Conservation in Trans-boundary Conservation Areas (TBCAs) in the Congo Basin Countries through Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) Practices and the Use of Satellite and Radar Imagery (Phase 1)

ITTO Ref. No.:	PP-A/50-296
ITTO Budget:	USD 1,280,619 for Phase 1 (out of a total amount of USD 5,539,162)
Beneficiary country:	Angola, Cameroon , Central African Republic (CAR), Chad, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) , Equatorial Guinea, Gabon , Republic of Congo & Rwanda [<i>ITTO members in bold</i>]
Executing Agency:	Network of Protected Areas in Central Africa (<i>Réseau des Aires Protégées d'Afrique Centrale</i> - RAPAC)
Inception date:	March 2015 (12 months for Phase 1).

The Government of Japan, in March 2014, has provided an amount of USD 1,280,619, to fund the first phase of this Special Activity. The Memorandum of Understanding governing the implementation of this Special Activity was fully signed on 12 February 2015 by all parties: Secretariat of COMIFAC (Commission of Central African Forests) on behalf of Congo Basin countries, Secretariat of RAPAC (Network of Protected Areas in Central Africa) as the executing agency, and ITTO Secretariat. The first installment of ITTO funds was disbursed in order to allow the executing agency (RAPAC) to prepare the inception regional workshop.

This 12-month Special Activity, as the Phase 1 of a 3-year Special Activity, intends to contribute to the management of threats to biodiversity in trans-boundary protected areas (TBCAs) in the countries of the Congo Basin. Specifically the project intends to build the capacity and expertise in the use of satellite

imagery data for the management of TBCAs in the Congo Basin countries, with a special focus on the Democratic Republic of Congo during the execution of this Phase 1.

Since the inception of this Special Activity in March 2015, after the disbursement of the first installment of ITTO funds, the progress in its implementation can be summarized as follows:

- The regional inception workshop was held in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo, from 25 to 27 May 2015, and gathered experts from 10 transboundary protected areas operational in the Congo Basin countries;
- The first Steering Committee meeting of this Special Activity took place in Kinshasa, on 29 May 2015 for the assessment of main results and findings of the abovementioned regional workshop;
- This regional workshop was the opportunity to exchange the challenges, experience and findings from these 10 transboundary conservation areas in order to provide inputs for the preparation of appropriate training modules/programmes for capacity building sessions on the utilization satellites and radar imagery or the biodiversity conservation in TBCAs through the following expected outcomes:
- Improving the strategic and operational data for the management and monitoring of TBCAs;
 - Providing technical support for the control of illegal practices, including poaching and illegal logging;
 - Monitoring spatial and temporal changes in habitats and ecosystems;
 - Forest zoning;
 - Supporting the development of integrated decision-support systems in the management of TBCAs; and
 - Improving the mapping of ecosystems and habitats, as well as biological corridors.

Upon completion, the project will contribute raising awareness among policy makers and senior officers of TBCAs to the benefits of increased use of satellite imagery. This could lead and enable TBCA managers and policy makers to make full use of satellite imagery in several abovementioned purposes.

Additional projects currently approved and under consideration for funding include the following:

“Biodiversity Conservation with Collaboration of Local Communities in Traditionally Owned Forest Areas of South Western Ghana” submitted by the Government of Ghana with an ITTO budget of US\$489,194 [ITTO Ref. No.: PD 684/13 Rev.3 (F)]

“Enhancing the Implementation of Landscape Management of Giam Siak Kecil-Bukit Batu Biosphere Reserve (GSK-BR) in Riau Province of Sumatra Island, Indonesia (Indonesia)” submitted by the Government of Indonesia with an ITTO budget of US\$498,154 [ITTO Ref. No.: PD 712/13 Rev.2 (F)]

“Capacity Building for Strengthening Transboundary Biodiversity Conservation of the Taninthayi Range in Myanmar” submitted by the Government of Myanmar with an ITTO budget of US\$599,962 of Phase I and US\$1,339,083 of Phase II [ITTO Ref. No.: PD 723/13 Rev.2 (F)]

“Initiating the Conservation of Eboni Species (Diospyros Celebica Bakh) Involving Local Stakeholders in Sulawesi (Indonesia)” submitted by the Government of Indonesia with an ITTO budget of US\$402,550 [ITTO Ref. No.: PD 739/14 Rev.1 (F)]

“Local Capacity Building for the Management of Secondary and Residual Primary Forests in the Provinces of Coronel Portillo and Padre Abad, Department of Ucayali, Peru” submitted by the Government of Peru with an ITTO budget of US\$522,637 [ITTO Ref. No.: PD 742/14 Rev.1 (F)]

“Rehabilitation and Sustainable Management of Sacred Forests on Ramsar Sites 1017 and 1018 in Benin” submitted by the Government of Benin with an ITTO budget of US\$591,618 [ITTO Ref. No.: PD 754/14 Rev.2 (F)]

“Developing and Implementing Improved Management Practices that Maintain and Enhance Forests and Biodiversity Protection, to Support SFM within the Context of Multiple Use in Guyana’s Forest Dependent Communities” submitted by the Government of Guyana with an ITTO budget of US\$601,552 [ITTO Ref. No.: PD 762/14 Rev.2 (F)]

“Development of a Forest Landscape Restoration Program for Guatemala Based on ITTO Guidelines” submitted by the Government of Guatemala with an ITTO budget of US\$601,944 [ITTO Ref. No.: PD 765/14 Rev.2 (F)]

“Accelerating Restoration of Cibodas Biosphere Reserve (CBR) Functions through Proper Management of Landscapes Involving Local Stakeholders” submitted by the Government of Indonesia with an ITTO budget of US\$564,491 [ITTO Ref. No.: PD 777/15 Rev.2 (F)]

“Sustainable Forest Management, Conservation of Biological Diversity and Promotion of Landscapes for Socio-Ecologic Production in Indigenous Territories of the Uwalcox Micro-Watershed in Guatemala’s Western Altiplano” submitted by the Government of Guatemala with an ITTO budget of US\$699,581 [ITTO Ref. No.: PD 778/15 Rev.1 (F)]

Conclusion

Overall, the significant progress made in the collaboration between the Convention on Biological Diversity and the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO) through the implementation of eleven projects covering 26 countries in the three tropical regions of the world, within the framework of the ITTO/CBD Collaborative Initiative for Tropical Forest Biodiversity, is already visibly contributing towards the achievement of the **Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020**, and in particular, the following Forestry-related Aichi Biodiversity Targets:

Target 5: By 2020, the rate of loss of all natural habitats, including forests, is at least halved and where feasible brought close to zero, and degradation and fragmentation is significantly reduced;

Target 7: By 2020 areas under agriculture, aquaculture and forestry are managed sustainably, ensuring conservation of biodiversity;

Target 11: By 2020, at least 17 per cent of terrestrial and inland water, and 10 per cent of coastal and marine areas, especially areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem services, are conserved through effectively and equitably managed, ecologically representative and well connected systems of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures, and integrated into the wider landscapes and seascapes; and

Target 14: By 2020, ecosystems that provide essential services, including services related to water, and contribute to health, livelihoods and well-being, are restored and safeguarded, taking into account the needs of women, indigenous and local communities, and the poor and vulnerable.

Target 15: By 2020, ecosystem resilience and the contribution of biodiversity to carbon stocks has been enhanced, through conservation and restoration, including restoration of at least 15 per cent of degraded ecosystems, thereby contributing to climate change mitigation and adaptation and to combating desertification.

However, it should be further noted that the budget of this Collaborative Initiative for its first 4 years still falls short of its target, and therefore we reiterate our invitation to Parties, other Governments and relevant organizations to further support the Initiative, including through financial contributions.

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