



**INTERNATIONAL TROPICAL
TIMBER COUNCIL**

**COMMITTEE ON
REFORESTATION AND FOREST MANAGEMENT**

Distr.
GENERAL

CRF(LI)/4
18 August 2017

Original: ENGLISH ONLY

FIFTY-FIRST SESSION
27 November - 2 December 2017
Lima, Peru

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**Second Regional Workshop on ITTO Voluntary Guidelines
for the Sustainable Management of Natural Tropical Forests,
8 – 12 May 2017, Cotonou, Benin**

Prepared by

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Second Regional Workshop on ITTO Voluntary Guidelines for the Sustainable Management of Natural Tropical Forests, 8 – 12 May 2017, Cotonou, Benin

1 Introduction to the Workshop

1.1 The International Tropical Timber Council adopted *Guidelines for the Sustainable Management of Natural Tropical Forests* in 1990 as ITTO's first policy guidance document on the management of natural tropical forests. Building on this pioneering work, ITTO has subsequently generated a wide range of policy guidance, including its criteria and indicators for sustainable tropical forest management, which were recently reviewed and published in 2016. In conjunction to this work, in 2007, the Council decided to update the 1990 guidelines in light of increased knowledge and the emergence of a wide range of new challenges and opportunities for tropical forest management.

1.2 The reviewed *Voluntary Guidelines for the Sustainable Management of Natural Tropical Forests* (adopted by the Council through Decision 4[XLIX]), were published in 2015 and supersede the 1990 guidelines. The new guidelines are designed to serve as guidance for addressing the policy, legal, governance, institutional, ecological, social and economic issues that need to be taken into account in the planning, implementation and evaluation of SFM in natural tropical forests to ensure the sustainable provision of forest goods and environmental services.

1.3 The present report summarizes the outcomes of the **2nd Regional Workshop** on ITTO Voluntary Guidelines for the Sustainable Management of Natural Tropical Forests. The workshop was held in the city of Cotonou, Benin from 8 –12 Mai 2017¹. It was organized jointly by ITTO and the public authorities for forest and forestry of the Republic of Benin (Ministère du Cadre de Vie et du Développement Durable, Direction Générale des Eaux, Forêts et Chasse)².

1.4 The aim of the workshop was to stimulate the development and implementation of national and subnational guidelines on sustainable forest management (SFM) in African tropical forest countries, drawing on the [ITTO Voluntary Guidelines for the Sustainable Management of Natural Tropical Forests](#) and the particular experiences of countries in the region.

1.5 The workshop focused on discussing the scope of the guidelines, that are voluntary guidelines in nature, designed to provide a basis for policy decisions and as a technical reference that can be used or adapted to the needs and capacities of ITTO member countries, addressing there all stakeholders interested and engaged in sustainable forest management. The workshop aimed at clarifying the rationale for action and on the identification of the roles and responsibilities of stakeholders and the actions needed for achieving SFM, including financing. The voluntary guidelines may be adapted as appropriate to national and local circumstances (forest management unit level).

¹ The 1st regional workshop was held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia on 17th – 20th August 2015 and was organized by ITTO with cooperation of Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment of Malaysia, Forestry Department P. Malaysia and Forest Resources and Environment of Malaysia, Forestry Department P. Malaysia and Forest Research Institute Malaysia. The report to the Council has been made at the ITTC(LI) in November 2015.

² The Cotonou workshop is based on the implementation of ITTO Biennial Work Programme 2015-2016: Activity 4 "Promote the publication, dissemination and application of the ITTO Voluntary Guidelines for the Sustainable Management of Natural Tropical Forests".

Objective of the workshop:

- Review concept of SFM and key issues of sustainable management of natural tropical forests;
- Stimulate the application of the ITTO Voluntary Guidelines for the Sustainable Management of Natural Tropical Forest for the development and implementation of national and sub-national guidelines for SFM;
- Discuss main challenges and lessons learned for designing and implementing SFM at local and national levels in Africa;
- Identify recommended actions for national-level initiatives for effective implementation of SFM in African ITTO member countries; and
- Analyze the ATO-ITTO Principles, Criteria and Indicators (PC&I) in correlation with the 2016 set of ITTO C&I and the ITTO Voluntary SFM Guidelines.

1.6. A total of 32 participants, including ITTO focal points and substitutes from the forest agencies of African ITTO member countries and technical experts and civil society representatives attended the workshop from a total of thirteen (13) member countries in the Africa region namely: Benin; Cameroon; C.A.R, Congo (absent but country report delivered); Côte d'Ivoire, DR Congo, Gabon, Ghana, Liberia, Madagascar, Mali, Mozambique and Togo. The regional workshop was supervised by Mr. Polycarpe Masupa-Kambale, Projects Manager / FM Division / ITTO and technically conducted by Mr. Olivier Ahimin (ITTO/ATO), the coordinator of the regional project PD 124/01 (M) and Prof. Dr. Juergen Blaser, Bern University of Applied Sciences, the co-chair of the expert group that developed the Voluntary Guidelines for the Sustainable Management of Natural Tropical Forests on behalf of the ITTO.

1.7 In the workshop, the Voluntary Guidelines as well as country reports were outlined by the consultants and discussed in detail by participants. Country reports were prepared and presented to describe the stage of SFM in the African ITTO member countries. In addition links were made and comparative analysis conducted to the use of the ITTO Guidelines for SFM natural forests and the revised ITTO C&I 2016 for sustainable tropical forest management. Also a comparative review was undertaken on the use of the [ATO/ITTO Principles, Criteria and Indicators for the Sustainable Management of Natural Tropical Forests in Africa](#), elaborated in 2003 in close collaboration of ITTO with the African Timber Organization (ATO) and which are used by many of the African ITTO member countries as a monitoring tool for SFM.

2 Workshop deliberation, findings and results

2.1 The Workshop Program is the annex 1 of this Executive Summary. The opening session included presentations by Mr. Polycarpe Masupa-Kambale from ITTO, Colonel Séverin K. Nsia, General Director of the Water, Forest and Hunting Department and Mrs. Jeanne Josette Acacha Akoha, the Director of Cabinet of the Ministry in charge of forests in Benin.

2.2 In a number of technical presentations, the international consultant outlined the structure and use of the SFM Guidelines. He introduced the context in which the voluntary guidelines were developed and will be applied over the coming years; he also provided an overview of the principles and their relationships with the ITTO C&I for SFM and sets out the guidelines for each of the seven principles developed in the guidelines, as well as the open-ended list of suggested actions for each guideline that countries could consider when developing their national SFM approaches.

2.3 The international consultant also focused on the link to the [ITTO Criteria and Indicators for the Sustainable Management of Tropical Forests](#), published shortly after the SFM Guidelines in 2016. The new ITTO C&I draw strongly on the voluntary SFM guidelines, taking into account current forest policy issues such as those related to climate-change mitigation and adaptation, REDD+ strategies in member countries, the Convention on Biological Diversity's Aichi Biodiversity Targets, and the Sustainable Development Goals.

2.4 The regional consultant developed on the link between the new guidelines and the *ATO-ITTO Principles, Criteria and Indicators (PCI) for the Sustainable Management of Natural Tropical Forests in Africa* which were finalized in 2003. He, supported by representatives of the countries focused on the outcomes of ITTO Project PD 124/01 (M) "*promotion of sustainable forest management in African forests.*" In the debate it was well recognized that the ATO/ITTO PCI of 2003 very well served the purpose to develop forest policies and ensure SFM practices in African forest-rich countries and that they remain relevant. However, it was also concluded that there is need to bring them up-to-date considering the recent developments in the fast-

changing global policy environment and the particularity of forest development in forest-poor ITTO member countries in Africa.

2.5 A highlight in the deliberation of the workshop was the presentation of the various **Country report summaries** prepared and presented by each country delegation. Country reports were presented in a structured way, including (i) an overview on the situation of the forest sector in the country; (ii) Policy, legal and institutional arrangements in the country in respect to SFM; (iii) Experiences and lessons learned from SFM implementation; (iv) Challenges faced; (v) Current and future strategies to achieve SFM and (vi) Concluding observations. African ITTO member countries face a variety of situation in respect to their forest resource base. All countries underlined their policy aim for high commitment and engagement on implementation of SFM. Close links between the SFM agenda and the REDD+ strategy development were emphasized, considering that 11 out of the 13 African member countries of ITTO have developed or are developing their national REDD+ strategy that are strongly focused on SFM objectives: Cameroon, Central African Republic, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, D.R. Congo, Ghana, Liberia, Madagascar, Mali, Mozambique and Togo.

2.6 More in-depth discussions were held in two separate working groups, the first one (1) on the topic of SFM, governance and law enforcement and the second group (2) on issues relating to financing and investment in SFM. The international consultant introduced the two topics, and particularly gave an overview on financing strategies for forests and forestry at international level.

- Group 1 concluded that government and country's policy should continue to shift focus from singly timber production to multiple use of forest or environmental services and include new threats and opportunities such as climate change adaptation and mitigation as integration of components of national forest policy and SFM activities in cross-sectoral issues, including in NDCs (Nationally Determined Contributions³) and SDG strategies (sustainable development goals of the countries⁴). Participants recognized that future funding for forests and forestry might be more of cross-sectoral nature and forest sector should become prepared for this.
- Group 2 deliberated on coordination across a variety of sectors of national economies to reduce financing gaps and encourage resource allocation for SFM implementation from all sources, public and private sources alike. In its discussions, the working group recognized the importance of tenure security in managing forests to assure sustainable financing of SFM in the long run. Links should be made with the national focal points on climate funding, in particular the Green Climate Fund that is expected to become a major funding source for SFM in the future. Both working groups referred to challenges in strengthening staff competency in the forestry sector of the countries.

2.7 An important block of presentations and discussions was organized on the ATO/ITTO Principles, Criteria and Indicators for SFM in African Forests, the outcomes of ITTO project PD 124/01 (M) on SFM in African forests and the process on national reporting on progress towards SFM in ITTO African member countries, the latter based on Principle 1 of the PC&I of OAB/ITTO. In the discussion, the need for strengthening reporting and harmonization of the various reporting instrument was underlined. Another focus of work was on the organisation of forest auditing and the use of certification schemes in African forests. Olivier Ahimin presented the overall process of auditing and Bruno Mikissa gave an overview on the particular approach used by the Gabonese Forest Service to monitor its forest license agreements and forest concessions.

³NDC: An activity plan of countries that are signatory of the UNFCCC summarizing their intended country-based actions and priorities to contribute to the commitments to the Paris Agreement 2015 of the UNFCCC.

⁴ E.g. but not exclusively SDG 15: "Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss" with the Indicator 15.2: By 2020, promote the implementation of sustainable management of all type forests, halt deforestation, restore degraded forests, and increase afforestation and reforestation; and 15.b: Mobilize significantly resources from all sources and at all levels to finance sustainable forest management, and provide adequate incentives to developing countries to advance sustainable forest management, including for conservation and reforestation

2.8 A field trip was organized on the fourth day of the workshop to discuss issues as they derive from the ITTO SFM guidelines in the field. The subject of managing **tropical natural forests** in a forest-poor country such as Benin was thematised and discussed in the visit of the forest reserve (forêt classée) of Lama, Central Benin, which is jointly managed by the state forest enterprise ONAB (Office National de Bois) and a village committee (COGEPAF, Comité de Gestion Participative de la Forêt). The remaining bits of natural forests are generally highly degraded, but efforts to protect and restore the forest are undertaken, including enrichment planting of native species (raised in local nurseries, e.g. by a woman association), such as *Azelia africana*, *Milicia excelsa*, *Khaya spp*, *Ceiba pentandra* and *Triplochiton scleroxylon* among others show good results. Where the forest reserve is recognized by the local population and joint management strategies defined as it is the case of Lama, deforestation and forest degradation can be controlled to a sufficient degree. A forest **management system of planted teak forests** (*Tectona grandis*) managed in conjunction between ONAB and COGEPAF was also presented to the workshop participants. The system consists in strip harvesting of 30x1000 m (3 ha) strip-sizes in clear-cutting, followed by immediate reforestation. The forest management system is based on a 20-25 years of rotation of Teak (according to the site conditions). Teak wood is of high quality, while stem quality and size (volume) remain modest, but overall, the silvicultural system seems to work well and can be assessed as ecologically and economically sound. The fact that Teak has well adapted to the situation in Benin, the further planting of teak is encouraged by the forest service. The only larger scale transformation factory of Teak wood in the country (with a capacity of about 15,000 m³ of teak roundwood per year) was also visited (ATC Wood Industry) in the late afternoon of the field day. This visit demonstrated the potential of teakwood for further transformation in a country that is short on the production of quality timber.

3 Workshop recommendations

3.1 The elaboration on the new *ITTO Voluntary Guidelines on sustainable management of natural tropical forests* was much appreciated by the participants of the workshop. All countries shared the concern of SFM being a crucial element for the sustainable development of African countries. Also, the close link of SFM to address future challenges, such as climate change, food security and poverty reduction has been recognized. Participants identified common challenges in implementing the guidelines that are essential for achieving SFM in their respective countries. The need for continuous capacity building, at national level and in integrated sustainable forest management planning at FMU levels was highlighted as a major thrust.

3.2 Participants at the Second Regional Workshop agreed on a number of recommendations, as outlined in the table beneath. They particularly stressed the need to revise the ATO-ITTO Principles, Criteria and Indicators (PCI) for the Sustainable Management of Natural Tropical Forests in Africa and recommended to link them closely to the broader ITTO Guidelines on sustainable management of tropical natural forests. ITTO is invited to consider this recommendation in its forthcoming biannual work program.

Recommendations	Responsible Party	Remarks
1) Revise the ATO-ITTO PCI for SFM, in order to ensure consistency with the 2016 set of ITTO criteria and indicators, as well as with the voluntary guidelines for SFM, and also disseminate in ITTO member countries the revised version	ITTO and member countries	Adaptation and implementation of PCI
2) Train stakeholders' representatives (including SFM auditors) and reinforce the collaboration among them (and also with training and research institutions) for the implementation of PCI/C&I and SFM audits in all ITTO member countries	Member countries and Focal Points	Reinforcement of capacities for PCI implementation
3) Put in place a mechanism ensuring permanent consultations among all stakeholders, on the model of National Working Group (NWG), for debates on topics of common interest and for the promotion of Gender issues	Member countries and NWG	Improvement of forest-related governance

4)	Take into account the landscape dimension in the SFM implementation aspects, at the national level, in relation to the environmental impact of all stakeholders operating in the same landscape	ITTO and member countries	During the development of reviewed PCI
5)	Prepare projects involving several countries and regional and sub-regional institutions in order to facilitate access to available innovative funds and encourage the accreditation of national bodies	Regional institutions, member countries and Focal Points	Cooperation between countries
6)	Networking the workshop participants for revising the ATO-ITTO PCI at regional et national levels	ITTO	Exchange of information
7)	Encourage ITTO member countries to develop, implement and enforce the land use plans as a basis for solving tenure conflicts impacting SFM	Member countries	Multi-stakeholders consultation process
8)	Develop programmes for the training and capacity building of stakeholders' representatives (in centralized and decentralized public institutions) taking into account the ITTO voluntary guidelines and the ATO-ITTO PCI for SFM, with the purpose of ensuring the monitoring, control and evaluation of the implementation of SFM standards	Member countries (Universities and training institutions)	Upon adoption of revised PCI
9)	Promote the value-added process for goods and services provided by forests through SFM	Member countries (Ministry in charge of forestry)	Revise the laws conflicting with SFM
10)	Encourage ITTO member countries in Africa to be represented in important international meetings and convene information sharing meetings in each country for the follow-up and implementation of the recommendations of these meetings	Ministries and NGOs	Harmonization of points of view

Final remark:

A detailed report of the workshop outcomes in French Language was elaborated by Olivier Ahimin jointly with the two rapporteurs of the meeting, Célestin Meyer Wankpo and Bertrand Ayihouenou. The country reports prepared by the ITTO member countries, as well as the PowerPoint presentations of Mr. Ahimin, Mr. Masupa and Mr. Blaser are available at the ITTO website through the following link: http://www.itto.int/news_releases/id=5125

ITTO would like to express its gratitude to the Authorities of the Republic of Benin for the excellent organisation of the workshop, the informative field trip and the warm welcome that all participants of the workshop have experienced in their stay in Benin.

Annex:

1. Program of the workshop
2. List of Participants: 32 trainees, 22% women (7)

Annex 1: Program of the Workshop

Time	Monday, 08 May	Tuesday, 09 May	Wednesday, 10 May	Thu, 11 May	Friday, 12 May
8:30	Plenary Opening Session: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opening remarks by the Government of Benin Opening remarks by ITTO Objectives of the workshop Introduction of participants 	Plenary: National SFM lessons and challenges Country presentations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Benin Cameroon Central African Followed by Q+A	Plenary <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presentation on <i>ITTO C&I for SFM 2016 and links to the Voluntary Guidelines for the Sustainable Management of Natural Tropical Forests(SFM)</i> Followed by Q+A	Field visit to particular forest sites: Forest reserve of Lama (the detailed programme of the field visit was provided by DGEFC/Benin)	Plenary <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analysis of ATO-ITTO PC&I for SFM in correlation with the 2016 set of ITTO C&I for SFM and related ITTO Voluntary SFM Guidelines - Part I <i>Taking stock of the use of ATO/ITTO PC&I for the technical audit in forest concessions</i>
10:00	Morning Break	Morning Break	Morning Break		Morning Break
10:15	Plenary <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction to ITTO SFM policy and projects <i>ITTO Voluntary Guidelines for the Sustainable Management of Natural Tropical Forests(SFM)- Part I</i> Followed by Q+A 	Plenary: National SFM lessons and challenges Country presentations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Côte d'Ivoire Democratic Republic of the Congo Gabon Ghana 	Plenary Introduction to group work; presentation forest financing strategies Working Groups <ul style="list-style-type: none"> WG 1 – <i>SFM & Forest governance and legality</i> WG2 - <i>SFM financing and investment</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analysis of ATO-ITTO PC&I for SFM in correlation with the 2016 set of ITTO C&I for SFM and related ITTO Voluntary SFM Guidelines - Part II <i>Identifying the gaps in the ATO/ITTO PC&I to be filled for the purpose of consistency with the 2016 set of ITTO C&I 2016</i> 	
12:00	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	
13:00	Plenary <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>ITTO Voluntary Guidelines for the Sustainable Management of Natural Tropical Forests(SFM)- Part II</i> Followed by Q+A 	Plenary: National SFM lessons and challenges Country presentations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Liberia Madagascar Mali Mozambique Togo 	Plenary: Working group presentation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> WG 1 – <i>SFM & Forest governance and legality</i> WG2 – <i>SFM financing and investment</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analysis of ATO-ITTO PC&I for SFM in correlation with the 2016 set of ITTO C&I for SFM and related ITTO Voluntary SFM Guidelines – Part III Discussion and preparation of final recommendations 	
14:45	Afternoon Break	Afternoon Break	Afternoon Break	Afternoon Break	
15:00 to 17:30	Plenary <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>ITTO Voluntary Guidelines for the Sustainable Management of Natural Tropical Forests(SFM)- Part III</i> Followed by Q+A 	Two Parallel Working Groups: <i>Interactive discussion on lessons learned from the implementation of SFM policies</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> WG 1 – <i>SFM & Forest governance and legality</i> WG 2 – <i>SFM financing and investment</i> 	Analysis of ATO-ITTO PC&I for SFM in correlation with the 2016 set of ITTO C&I for SFM and related ITTO Voluntary SFM Guidelines <i>Taking stock of the use of ATO/ITTO PC&I for national assessment of progress towards SFM</i>	Closing of the Workshop: Government of Benin and ITTO	

Annexe 2 : List of Participants

Country / Institution	Participants		Gender assessment	
	ITTO Focal Points or Substitutes	Technical Experts involved in PD 124/01 (M) and Civil Society Representatives	Number of women	% of women
Benin	Mr. Achille Orphée LOKOSSOU lokossou@yahoo.fr	Mr. Maxime AGOSSOU maxime.agossou@gmail.com Mr. Barnabé SOSSA sossbarn@yahoo.fr Mr. Gauthier AYELO ayegaut@yahoo.fr Mr. Bertrand AYIHOUENOU abettyfr@yahoo.fr Mr. Augustin Matilo OROU matilorou@yahoo.fr Mr. Félicien AMAKPE staulysse@yahoo.fr Mr. Charles Chaffra YABI yabicc@yahoo.fr	0 / 8	0%
Cameroon	Mrs. Victoire EHETH ongmouto@yahoo.fr	Mrs. Aicha NGOUNGOURE MANJELI amanjeli@yahoo.fr	2 / 2	100%
C.A.R.	Mr. Rubens NAMBAI nambairubens@yahoo.fr	Mrs. Blandine Paulette DEALI GAHORO bpdeali@yahoo.fr	1 / 2	50%
Congo [ABSENT]	Mr. Gilbert KAYA gilkaka@yahoo.fr	Mr. Léon Joseph SAMBA sambajosephleon@gmail.com	0 / 2	0%
Cote d'Ivoire	Mrs. Christiane AHOU N'GUESSAN épouse ANZAN xianeanzan@gmail.com	Mr. Jean Baptiste Constant YAPO yapoconstant@yahoo.fr Mr. Alphonse Ayemou AMON amon_alphonse@yahoo.fr	1 / 3	33%
D. R. Congo	Mr. André KONDJO SHOKO kondjosh@gmail.com	Mr. Bébert DIKANGA MBAKI bdikanga@gmail.com	0 / 2	0%

Gabon	Mrs. Beatrice MINANGA BIMBISA beaminanga@yahoo.fr	Mrs. Rose NTSAME épouse ONDO ondorose@yahoo.fr Mr. Jean Bruno MIKISSA jbmikissa@gmail.com	2 / 3	67%
Ghana	Mr. Oppon SASU sasuoppon@yahoo.com	Mr. Joseph William OSEI oseijw@gmail.com	0 / 2	0%
Liberia	Mr. Garvoie G. KARDOH garvoie@yahoo.com	–	0 / 1	0%
Madagascar	Mr. Eric Olivier RABENASOLO SOLOFONIAINA eric.rabe2211@gmail.com	–	0 / 1	0%
Mali	Mrs. Fatoumata KONE KANOUTE kone_fa@yahoo.fr	Mr. Hady DIALLO hadys01@yahoo.fr	1 / 2	50%
Mozambique	Mr. Hilario AKISSA NDYAMBWANA hilario.ndyambwana@yahoo.com	–	0 / 1	0%
Togo	Mr. P. DETSE padetse@gmail.com	Mr. Kouami KOKOU kokoukouami@hotmail.com	0 / 2	0%
Total Number	13	19	7 / 32	22%
ITTO-ATO Regional Project	Mr. Olivier AHIMIN: o.ahimin@gmail.com			
HAFL, Bern, Switzerland	Mr. Juergen BLASER: Juergen.blaser@bfh.ch			
ITTO Secretariat	Mr. Polycarpe MASUPA-KAMBALE: masupa@itto.int			