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

**Fifty-fourth Meeting
24 – 28 June 2019, Yokohama, Japan**

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**REPORT OF THE EXPERT PANEL FOR THE
TECHNICAL APPRAISAL OF ITTO PROJECT PROPOSALS
(Expert Panel)
REPORT OF THE FIFTY-FOURTH MEETING**

1. TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Expert Panel (ITTC/EP-54) worked in accordance with the Terms of Reference attached, see **Appendix I**. Furthermore, it has been guided by the endorsement of the Council at its 40th Session of Document ITTC (XL)/5 and, in particular the authorization contained in paragraph 7, to apply the "Revised ITTO System for Technical Appraisal of Project and Pre-project Proposals". The Fifty-fourth Panel appraised the proposals and classified them according to categories listed in **Appendix II** applying the current consolidated version of the scoring system summarized in **Appendix V** and **Appendix VI**.

2. PANEL MEMBERSHIP

The Fifty-fourth Expert Panel was attended by members listed in **Appendix IV**. Dr. Jobst-Michael Schroeder (Germany) chaired the meeting.

3. APPRAISAL PROCEDURES AND CRITERIA

- 3.1 The procedures, aspects and guidelines applied by the Panel to appraise Project and Pre-project Proposals are laid down in the Terms of Reference of the Expert Panel for the Technical Appraisal of ITTO Project Proposals (**Appendix I**). On a pilot basis, the Panel also assessed the proposals using the newly developed Guidelines for Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts Assessment in ITTO Projects (ESIA).
- 3.2 In accordance with established practice, each Project or Pre-project Proposal was introduced by two Panel members (one from a Consumer country and one from a Producer country). After that the Panel held an open discussion and finally concluded its assessment by taking a consensus decision on the category of each Project or Pre-project in accordance with terms contained in **Appendix II**. Furthermore, it applied the criteria for assessment contained in the third edition of the ITTO Manual for Project Formulation. In cases where proposals were submitted to the Panel as revised Project or Pre-project (Rev.1 or Rev.2), the Panel first referred to the overall and specific recommendations made by the earlier Panel(s) to assess if these recommendations had been adequately addressed.
- 3.3 In cases where a Project or Pre-project Proposal was submitted to the Panel that had already been subject to two revisions by prior Panel sessions (Rev.2 documents) the Panel had to follow Council's Decision 3(XXXVII) that projects may only be assessed three times and that such Rev.2 projects would either have to (a) qualify by obtaining category 1 (to be commended to the Committee); or (b) in case it does not qualify for a category 1, it could not be commended to the Committee.

4. APPRAISAL AND ASSESSMENT CARRIED OUT

- 4.1 Twenty-five (25) projects and five (5) pre-projects (total of 30) proposals were received for appraisal by the Fifty-fourth Expert Panel. The overall list of 30 Project/Pre-project Proposals reviewed by the Expert Panel and the category of decision allocated to each proposal is presented in **Appendix III**. The procedures and criteria applied for the assessment have been specified above in section 3.
- 4.2 The ITTO Secretariat allocated the Project and Pre-project Proposals in three blocks so that the Panel could deal with all proposals related to Reforestation and Forest Management (RFM) (24), then with those related to Forest Industry (I) (3), and finally with those related to Economics, Statistics and Markets (ESM) (3). This arrangement facilitated the appraisal as well as the formulation of the overall assessment and specific recommendations for each proposal listed in the **Annex** of this report.
- 4.3 The assistance provided by the ITTO Secretariat in addressing previous deliberations and necessary background information on each Project/Pre-project was extremely useful for adequate work of the Panel before it could finalize its evaluations and recommendations.
- 4.4 In following-up the meeting's results, the Panel requested the Secretariat to provide the following information and documents to all countries who have submitted proposals:

- The Overall Assessment and Specific Recommendations on each proposal submitted by the country (**Annex**);
- General findings and final categories commended by this Panel (section 5 and **Appendix III** of this report).

4.5 General findings and recommendations of the Fifty-fourth Expert Panel, as derived from the appraisal of 30 proposals, are listed in section 5.

4.6 The Panel heartily appreciated the willingness of the Secretariat to work effectively for very long hours whereby full deliberation of the 30 proposals and the success of this Fifty-fourth Panel were made possible.

5. GENERAL FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Panel noted that:

- Twelve (12) Proposals: 2 Pre-projects and 10 Project Proposals (40 percent of the total) were commended to the Committee for final appraisal with minor modifications required (category 1);
- Twelve (12) Proposals: 2 Pre-projects and 10 Project Proposals (40 percent of the total) will be sent back to proponents for essential revisions, rated as category 2; and
- Six (6) Proposals: 1 Pre-project and 5 Project Proposals (20 percent of the total) received a category 4, indicating that the Expert Panel does not commend these to the Committee for approval as they require complete reformulation.

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

The Panel noted:

Finding n°1: A high share of projects dealing with Reforestation and Forest Management (RFM), (see pie chart "*proposals by Committee area*"). Out of the 30 proposals only 3 were categorized under Forest Industry (10%), 3 were categorized under Economics, Statistics and Market (10%) and 24 were categorized under Reforestation and Forest Management (80%).

Finding n°2: Government agencies submitted 8 proposals, research organizations submitted 10 proposals, NGOs submitted 10 proposals, and 2 proposals were submitted from international organizations. There were no proposals submitted from Women's Associations and youth related Associations.

Finding n°3: One previously Council approved but sunset project proposal was resubmitted as new proposal to the Expert Panel. As this was assessed as category 1 by the previous Panel, this Panel rated it category 1 in order to be consistent with the previous evaluation.

Finding n°4: Only two proposals focused on regional issues.

Finding n°5: Only one proposal focused specifically on gender issues. Additionally two proposals incorporated strong components on gender issues. Although the Panel noticed that more proposals included gender, there is still room to further integrate gender according to the *ITTO Policy Guidelines on Gender Equality and Empowering Women* (GEEW).

Finding n°6: Numerous proposals did not fully follow the ITTO Manual for Project Formulation (Third Edition, 2009). There were inconsistencies with the contents and lengths of chapters and maximum total length of the proposals. Often the proposals did not reference or follow the relevant ITTO guidelines. Many proposals did not follow the correct formulation of all budget tables.

Finding n°7: Proponents are still having difficulties in using the tools that ITTO provides for project formulation, specifically Protocol as related to the construction of the budget.

Finding n°8: Failures to properly address the problem analysis and project sustainability after completion were common problems.

Finding n°9: Numerous proposals did not adequately state clear lines of cooperation between the executing agencies, the collaborating agencies, and relevant stakeholders; and failed to show the interaction among them and their in-kind contribution to the overall budget.

Finding n°10: In several cases the Country Focal Point did not support the proponents in formulating the proposals before the submission.

Finding n°11: The process of going from first-time submission to a project proposal approved by the Council has become even slower, partly due to the fact that the Expert Panel has only met once a year during the past three years.

Finding n°12: The Panel found a lack of completion reports, products and outcomes, the excerpts of committee's report on completed projects, and possible ex-post evaluations of previously completed projects in order to properly assess follow-up proposals.

Finding n°13: In cases of revised proposals, proponents did not always include comments from the previous Expert Panels.

Finding n°14: Proposals containing research components often did not include relevant references.

Finding n°15: The total number of project proposals has decreased during the last three years partially due to the current project funding situation. However, the number of small project proposals has increased. In addition, it was noted that only a few ITTO member countries submitted the majority of the proposals.

Recommendations:

For the Secretariat:

1. Considering that formulating proposals in accordance with the ITTO Manual for Project Formulation (Third Edition, 2009) may be a complex process, the Secretariat is encouraged to work closely with the ITTO country Focal Points in order to oversee the submission of proposals that are in full compliance with the ITTO Project Formulation Manual and other relevant ITTO guidelines.
2. The Panel suggests the Secretariat to update Protool software/app in order to assist potential project proponents in properly formulating their proposals.
3. Consider developing webinars/instructional videos for the formulation of project proposals and/or incorporation of relevant ITTO guidelines.
4. The Panel reiterates that the ITTO Manual for Project Formulation (Third Edition, 2009) requires an immediate update, with special attention to the budget components, among other items.
5. The Panel reiterates its request to the Secretariat to screen proposals for full compliance with the established procedures and the ITTO Manual for Project Formulation (Third Edition, 2009) prior to forwarding proposals to the Expert Panel.
6. The Secretariat should adhere to the Project Cycle as decided by Council for the Expert Panel to meet twice a year. If it is not possible to meet twice a year, the Panel recommends the Secretariat to develop new ways to review proposals under the established Project Cycle, such as exploring virtual meetings to review revised proposals.
7. The Secretariat should provide the background information such as completion reports, products and outcomes, the excerpts of committee's report on completed projects, and possible ex-post evaluations of previously completed projects in order to properly assess follow-up proposals.
8. The Secretariat should review and improve the Scoring Sheet taking into account all ITTO guidelines including the new *Guidelines on Gender Equality and Empowering Women (GEEW)* and the *Guidelines for Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts Assessment in ITTO Projects*. In addition, it should facilitate the inclusion of texts in all cells in the Scoring Sheet.

9. The Secretariat should clearly state the type of project (i.e. pre-project proposal, small project proposal, project proposal) on the cover page which should also include its summary and budget in one single page.
10. The Panel suggests that the Secretariat consider developing a 'Frequently Made Mistakes' document that would include mistakes made frequently by proponents which the Panel has outlined numerous times in their assessment of the proposals.
11. The Secretariat should advise the proponents of all proposals under category 1 and 2 to take into consideration as much as possible the two most recently approved guidelines (GEEW and ESIA) before submitting the revisions to the Secretariat.
12. The Secretariat should provide training on project formulation via webinars/instructional videos in all three official languages to national Focal Points.
13. The ESIA annex 3 checklist should be incorporated with the appropriate scores into the existing ITTO Expert Panel project assessment scoring sheet.
14. The Secretariat should brief the Panel members at the opening of the next Expert Panel meeting on the development of the aforementioned recommendations.

For the Expert Panel:

1. At the beginning of each Expert Panel (EP) session, the Panel should recall the Terms of Reference, and General Findings and Recommendations from the previous EP report.
2. First and second proposal reviewers must approve the final recommendation sheets.
3. With the help of the Secretariat, the Panel should collect statistics (type of executing agency, ITTO priority areas, inclusion of *ITTO Policy Guidelines on Gender Equality and Empowering Women* (GEEW) and the *Guidelines for Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts Assessment in ITTO Projects*) on the proposals during the review process.
4. In respect to Rev.1 and Rev.2 proposals, reviewers should assess the proposals in accordance with the recommendations of the previous appraisals.

For Country Focal Points:

1. Technical support to the potential proponents is essential for the good formulation of project propositions. In case the Focal Points do not feel prepared to support project proponents, they should seek support from the ITTO Secretariat.
2. It is important that Focal Points disseminate the ITTO manual and guidelines, the Panel recommendations, and several previous Expert Panel reports to every potential proponent. Focal Points should help to disseminate information on ITTO cooperation program amongst less represented groups, such as indigenous peoples and women. In addition, the Focal Points should make an effort to encourage proposals for the Forest Industry and Economics, Statistics and Market Committee areas.
3. It is also important that Focal Points fully and carefully screen the proposals, to ensure that the format and completeness of the proposal is in accordance with the ITTO Manual for Project Formulation (Third Edition, 2009), before submitting them to ITTO.

For the Project Proponents:

1. Always seek the guidance of the latest edition of the Manual for Project Formulation, ITTO website, ITTO Secretariat, and country Focal Point before formulating a project proposal. Pay special attention to recommendations of the Expert Panel in the case of revised proposals.
2. Carefully follow the latest ITTO Manual for Project Formulation with special attention to: problem analysis, logical framework matrix, and all budget tables. To the extent possible, indicators should be SMART (Specific, Measurable, Appropriate, Realistic, and Time-bound).

3. All ITTO guidelines relevant to the proposal objectives should be explicitly followed in the Project Proposals.
4. Always reference previously implemented ITTO projects and others directly relevant to the follow-up proposal in question. They should be explicitly referred to in the proposal and build upon their outcomes.
5. The searchable data tool “Project Search” [www.itto.int/project_search] could be consulted as reference and guidance.
6. Proposals should provide an equitable balance between ITTO and counterpart funding and must include permanent staff in the counterpart budget of the proposal in order to provide sustainability to the project.
7. Proposals containing research components must include relevant references.
8. Allocate sufficient time for thorough preparation of the proposals.

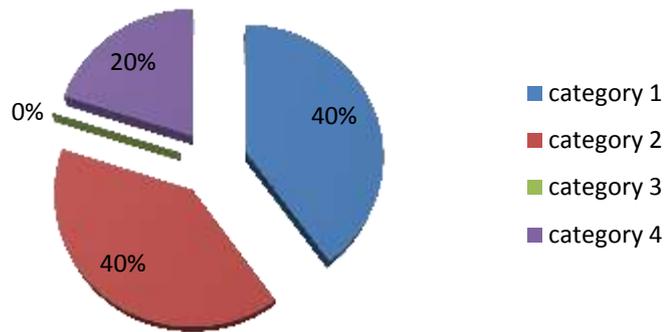
6. PANEL DISCUSSION ON ITTO GUIDELINES FOR ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL RISKS AND IMPACTS ASSESSMENT IN ITTO PROJECTS (ESIA)

Following the recommendation of the Committee on Reforestation and Forest Management (CRF(LII)/5) the Expert Panel reviewed the issue of the ESIA Guidelines and potential application mechanisms with the following observations:

- 6.1 ITTO Guidelines for Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts Assessment in ITTO Projects (ESIA) should not be a tool to discourage the proponents to submit project proposals to ITTO.
- 6.2 Objectives of ESIA should be clearly defined and shared among stakeholders, especially proponents.
- 6.3 The application of ESIA should be designed and conducted in efficient and effective manner.
- 6.4 The Panel suggested that an internal screening is first conducted by the proponent, followed by the Expert Panel, and only if needed, should an external assessment be carried out before project implementation.
- 6.5 The annex 3 (Project Environmental and Social Impact Assessment Screening Checklist) should be reviewed and updated for consistency with the environmental and social requirements defined in section 4 of the guidelines. The checklist should be clear and objective.
- 6.6 The Panel suggested the ESIA annex 3 checklist is incorporated into the ITTO Manual for Project Formulation under chapter 1.3.2 “Social, Cultural, Economic and Environmental Aspects” and Appendices A and B.
- 6.7 The ESIA annex 3 checklist should be incorporated with the appropriate scores into the existing ITTO Expert Panel project assessment scoring sheet.

7. PANEL DECISIONS ON PROJECT AND PRE-PROJECT PROPOSALS

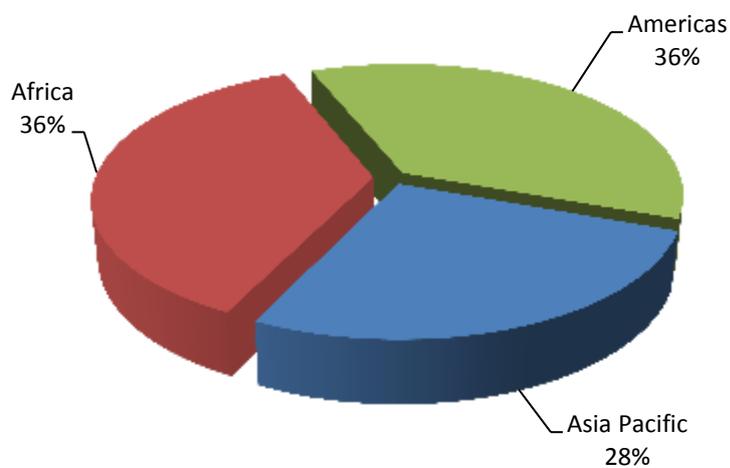
The Panel’s decisions are listed in **Appendix III**, in accordance with established practice. Proposals classified by category, by regions, by committee areas and by submitting countries are summarised in the following tables and charts:



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

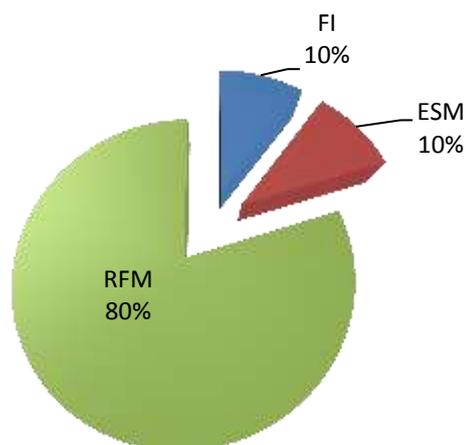
Region	Project Proposals				Pre-project Proposals				Total
	RFM	FI	ESM	Total	RFM	FI	ESM	Total	
<i>Americas</i>	9	-	1	10	1	-	-	1	11
<i>Asia Pacific</i>	6	1	-	7	-	-	1	1	8
<i>Africa</i>	6	1	1	8	2	1	-	3	11
Total	21	2	2	25	3	1	1	5	30

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



Decisions of the 54th Expert Panel on Project and Pre-project Proposals by Committee Area

Category	Committee			Total
	RFM	FI	ESM	
<i>Projects</i>				
1	8	1	1	10
2	9	1	-	10
3	-	-	-	-
4	4	-	1	5
Total	21	2	2	25
<i>Pre-projects</i>				
1	1	-	1	2
2	1	1	-	2
4	1	-	-	1
Total	3	1	1	5



Decisions of the 54th Expert Panel on Project and Pre-project Proposals by Submitting Country

Country	Category				Total
	1	2	3	4	
Cote d'Ivoire	2	-	-	-	2
Ghana	1	(1)+3	-	-	(1)+4
Guatemala	-	2	-	2	4
Indonesia	1	1	-	1	3
Malaysia	-	3	-	-	3
Mexico	2	1	-	-	3
Philippines	(1)	-	-	-	(1)
Peru	3	-	-	(1)	(1)+3
Thailand	-	-	-	1	1
Togo	(1)+1	(1)	-	1	(2)+2
Total	(2)+10	(2)+10	-	(1)+5	30

Note: Parenthesis indicates pre-project.

APPENDIX I

TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE EXPERT PANEL FOR THE TECHNICAL APPRAISAL OF ITTO PROJECT PROPOSALS

The Panel shall:

- (i) Assess new Project and Pre-project Proposals submitted to the organization. The recommendations for amendments to these proposals shall be made by the Expert Panel exclusively for the purpose of ensuring their technical soundness;
- (ii) Screen the Project Proposals for their relevance to ITTO's Action Plan and Work Programs (in the areas of Economics, Statistics and Markets, Reforestation and Forest Management, and Forest Industry), and consistency with ITTO decisions and policy guidelines, but not otherwise prioritize them;
- (iii) Where reformulation involving major amendments is recommended, request to carry out a final appraisal of the revised versions of Project and Pre-project Proposals, prior to their presentation to the relevant ITTO Committees;
- (iv) Report on the results of the technical assessment of Project and Pre-project Proposals to the submitting governments and to the ITTO Council and Committees, through the ITTO Secretariat;
- (v) The Expert Panel shall take into consideration previous Expert Panels' reports.

The Expert Panel, in assessing Projects and Pre-projects, shall also take into account:

- (a) their relevance to the objectives of the ITTA, 2006 and the requirement that a Project or Pre-project should contribute to the achievement of one or more of the Agreement objectives;
- (b) their environmental and social effects;
- (c) their economic effects;
- (d) their cost effectiveness;
- (e) the need to avoid duplication of efforts;
- (f) if applicable, their relationship and integration with ITTO policy work and their consistency with the ITTO Action Plan 2013-2018 including:
 - Guidelines for the Establishment and Sustainable Management of Planted Tropical Production Forests, 1993;
 - ITTO Guidelines on Fire Management in Tropical Forests, 1996;
 - ITTO Guidelines for the Restoration, Management and Rehabilitation of Degraded and Secondary Tropical Forests, 2002;
 - ITTO/IUCN Guidelines for the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biodiversity in Tropical Timber Production Forests, 2009; and
 - Voluntary Guidelines for the Sustainable Management of Natural Tropical Forests, 2015.

APPENDIX II

Rating Categories of the ITTO System for Technical Appraisal of Project and Pre-project Proposals

Rating schedule for Project Proposals

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

Category 2: The Panel concluded that the proposal requires essential modifications and will be returned to the proponent. The Panel will need to assess the revised proposal before it can commend it to the Committee.

Category 3: The Panel concluded that the proposal is not accepted because a Pre-project Proposal is required. According to the indication of the Panel the Pre-project shall (a) be submitted to the Expert Panel for appraisal or (b) could be directly submitted to the Committee for appraisal.

Category 4: The Panel concluded that it could not commend the proposal to the Committee, and submits it to the Committee with the recommendation not to approve the Project Proposal. Justification should be given to the proponent and the Committee (e.g. complete reformulation is necessary; in case of rev.2 Project Proposals; Project not relevant; Project with insufficient information, etc.).

Rating schedule for Pre-project Proposals

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

Category 2: The Panel concluded that the proposal requires essential modifications and will be returned to the proponent. The Panel will need to assess the revised proposal before it can commend it to the Committee.

Category 4: The Panel concluded that the Pre-project Proposal is not commended to the Committee. The proposal is submitted with the recommendation not to approve the Pre-project Proposal.

APPENDIX III
List of Project and Pre-project Proposals reviewed by the
Fifty-fourth Expert Panel

Project No.	Title	Country	Category
PPD 190/18 Rev.1 (F)	Promoting the Management of Economic Timber Species in Community Lands in Ghana Using a Multifunctional Landscape Approach	Ghana	2
PPD 194/19 (F)	Strengthening Sustainable Forest Management in ACTO Member Countries (ACTO-MC) Through The Application and Use of Harmonized ACTO/ITTO C&I and the Generation of Reliable and Useful Information for Technical Decision-Makers and Forest Policy-Makers	Peru	4
PPD 196/19 (F)	Support for Operational and Planning Capacity-Building for Stakeholders in the Private and Community Forestry Sector in Togo	Togo	1
PD 808/16 Rev.2 (F)	Conservation of African Barwood (Pterocarpus Erinaceus Poir) in the Gazetted Forests of la Palee and Boundiali in Northern Cote d'Ivoire with the Participation of Local Communities	Cote d'Ivoire	1
PD 818/16 Rev.2 (F)	"Boss - Cushabatay Project - Forest Management and Restoration in the Cushabatay Basin on the Eastern Slope of the Cordillera Azul National Park (PNCAZ)", Peru	Peru	1
PD 852/17 Rev.2 (F)	Development of a Regional Strategy for the Restoration and Rehabilitation of Degraded Areas on the South Coast of Peru	Peru	1
PD 859/17 Rev.2 (F)	Establishment of a Collaborative Framework through the Creation of a Local Joint Management Body for the Haho-Baloé Reserved Forest in Togo	Togo	4
PD 864/17 Rev.2 (F)	Forest Restoration to Reduce the Vulnerability of Rural Communities to Climate Change in Five Municipalities of Las Verapaces	Guatemala	4
PD 866/18 Rev.1 (F)	Multipling Selected Stands of Ghana's Heavily Threatened High-Value Hardwood Species on Degraded Papase High Forest Zone Lands through Sustainable Small-Farmer Reforestation Actions	Ghana	2
PD 876/18 Rev.1 (F)	Sustainable Forest Development in Tropical Moist Pasturelands - Use of Native Tree Species through Collaboration Between Local Communities and Livestock Farmers, Mexico	Mexico	2
PD 877/18 Rev.1 (F)	Taper and Commercial Volume Systems for the Planning of the Sustainable Management of Ten Tropical Forest Species in Quintana Roo, Mexico	Mexico	1
PD 880/18 Rev.1 (F)	Demonstrate the Development of Relationships Between Tree Growth and Climate Variability and Topographical Factors in Thailand's Natural Forests to Support Sustainable Forest Management in Thailand: Phase I	Thailand	4
PD 890/18 Rev.1 (F)	Rehabilitation of the Upper Bandama Gazetted Forest in the North of Côte d'Ivoire with the Participation of the Local People	Cote d'Ivoire	1
PD 894/19 (F)	Strengthening of Community Forest Management in Peru	Peru	1
PD 895/19 (F)	Strengthening the Participation of Women in Rural Communities for the Development of Ecotourism Service Enterprises and Sustainable Business Models on the Coast of Veracruz, Mexico	Mexico	1
PD 896/19 (F)	Protection and Restoration of Forested Water Catchment, Regulation and Recharge Areas in the Upper Salinas River Watershed, Guatemala, to Ensure Water Supply for Guatemalan Communities	Guatemala	2

PD 898/19 (F)	Implementation of Mechanisms to Strengthen Governance in Two Strategic Ecosystems of Guatemala	Guatemala	2
PD 899/19 (F)	Accelerating Effective Integrated Management of Newly Constructed Peat Hydrology Unit (PHU) in Kalimantan	Indonesia	4
PD 901/19 (F)	Promoting Conservation and Community Based-Management of Mangrove Ecosystems through Integrating Adaptation and Mitigation Action in Karang Gading and Langkat Timur Laut (KG-LTLWR) Reserve, North Sumatera Indonesia	Indonesia	2
PD 902/19 (F)	Management of Upper Baram Forest Area for Conservation and Sustainable Development with Involvement of Local Communities, Upper Baram, Sarawak, Malaysia	Malaysia	2
PD 903/19 (F)	Management of Sungai Menyang Conservation Area for Orangutan Protection and Uplifting Community Livelihood, Sarawak, Malaysia	Malaysia	2
PD 904/19 (F)	Restoring Productivity in Post-Logging Hill Forests by Enrichment Planting in Sarawak, Malaysia	Malaysia	2
PD 905/19 (F)	Providing Support for the Sustainable Management of the Fosse-Aux-Lions Gazetted Forest in the Savanna Region in Togo	Togo	1
PD 906/19 (F)	Improving the Genetic Base for Teak Plantation Establishment in Ghana	Ghana	2
PPD 195/19 (I)	Pre-Project for a Feasibility Study on Processing and Valorizing Timber in Togo	Togo	2
PD 892/19 (I)	Promoting Community-Based Digitalization and the Use of Mobile Application in Sustainable Forest Management in Ghana	Ghana	2
PD 900/19 (I)	Developing Gender Sensitive, Community-Based Bamboo Industry Development to Support Sustainable Bamboo Resource Management and Conservation in Lake Toba Catchment Area (LTCA) of the North Sumatra Province of Indonesia	Indonesia	1
PPD 193/19 (M)	Enhancing Socio-Economic Development and Environmental Protection through Comprehensive Bamboo and Rattan Programme in the Asean Member Countries	Philippines	1
PD 893/19 (M)	Promoting Development of Teak Plantations on Farmlands to Improve Quality, Marketing and Livelihood of Local Communities in Forest-Savannah Transition Zone, Ghana	Ghana	1
PD 897/19 (M)	Business Management Services Program in Guatemala – Second Phase	Guatemala	4

APPENDIX IV

MEMBERSHIP OF THE FIFTY-FOURTH MEETING OF THE EXPERT PANEL
FOR TECHNICAL APPRAISAL OF PROJECT PROPOSALS
Yokohama, 24 – 28 June 2019

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APPENDIX V

Revised Scoring Table – ITTO Project Proposal (PD)

Weighted Scoring System							
1.	Project relevance, origin and expected outcomes (15)			Mark	Score	Threshold	
1.	1.	Relevance					
1.	1.	1.	Conformity with ITTO's objectives and priorities (1.2.1)				Y
1.	1.	2.	Relevance to the submitting country's policies (1.2.2)				Y
1.	2.	Origin (1.1)				5	
1.	3.	Geogr. location (1.3.1)+ Social, cultural and environ. aspects (1.3.2)				5	
1.	4.	Expected outcomes at project completion (1.4)				5	
2.	Project identification process (25)						
2.	1.	Institutional set up and organisational issues (4.1. + 2.1.1)				5	
2.	2.	Stakeholders				10	Y 6
2.	2.	1.	Stakeholder analysis (2.1.2)		5		
2.	2.	2.	Stakeholders involved at inception (2.1.3.) & implementation (4.1.4.)		5		
2.	3.	Problem analysis (2.1.3)				10	Y 6
2.	3.	1.	Problem identification		5		
2.	3.	2.	Problem tree		5		
3.	Project design (45)						
3.	1.	Logical framework matrix (2.1.4)				20	Y 13
3.	1.	1.	Objectives (2.2)		5		
3.	1.	2.	Outputs (3.1.1)		5		
3.	1.	3.	Indicators & means of verification (columns 2 and 3 of the LogFrame)		5		
3.	1.	4.	Assumptions and risks (3.5.1)		5		
3.	2.	Implementation				20	Y 13
3.	2.	1.	Activities (3.1.2)		5		
3.	2.	2.	Strategy (approaches and methods, 3.2)		5		
3.	2.	3.	Work plan (3.3)		5		
3.	2.	4.	Budget (3.4)		5		
3.	3.	Sustainability (3.5.2)				5	Y 3
4.	Implementation arrangements (15)						
4.	1.	Project's management (EA - 4.1.1, Key staff - 4.1.2, SC - 4.1.3)				5	Y 3
4.	2.	Reporting, review, monitoring and evaluation (4.2)				5	
4.	3.	Dissemination and mainstreaming of project learning (4.3)				5	
Entire project proposal (100)					100,0%	Y	75%
Category					1		

Marks indicate:

- 0 - Information is completely missing
- 1 - Very poor: some elements are there but the essential ones are missing
- 2 - Poor: essential elements are incomplete, insufficient, wrong or misunderstood
- 3 - Moderate: essential elements are available but unclear or inaccurate
- 4 - Good: clear, accurate and informative
- 5 - Excellent: clear, accurate, informative and comprehensive (perfectly integrated with other items)

Rating categories:

Category 1:	The Panel concluded that the proposal could be commended to the Committee with incorporation of amendments.
Category 2:	The Panel concluded that the proposal requires essential modifications and will be returned to the proponent. The Panel will need to assess the revised proposal before it can commend it to the Committee.
Category 3:	The Panel concluded that the proposal is not accepted because a Pre-project Proposal is required. According to the indication of the Panel the pre-project shall (a) be submitted to the Expert Panel for appraisal or (b) could be directly submitted to the Committee for appraisal.
Category 4:	The Panel concluded that it could not commend the proposal to the Committee, and submits it to the Committee with the recommendation not to approve the Project Proposal. Justification should be given to the proponent and the Committee.

Revised Scoring Table – ITTO PRE-PROJECT PROPOSALS (PPD)

Weighted Scoring System						
1. PRE-PROJECT CONTEXT (5)			Mark	Score	Threshold	
1.	1.	Origin and justification		5		
1.	2.	Relevance				
1.	2.	1. Conformity with ITTO's objectives and priorities			Y	
1.	2.	2. Relevance to the submitting Country's policies			Y	
2. JUSTIFICATION OF PRE-PROJECT (15)						
2.	1.	Objectives		15	Y 9	
2.	1.	1. Development objective	5			
2.	1.	2. Specific objective	5			
2.	2.	Preliminary problem identification	5			
3. PRE-PROJECT INTERVENTIONS (25)						
3.		Outputs and activities		10	Y 7	
3.	1.	Outputs	5			
3.	2.	Activities, inputs and unit costs	5			
3.	3.	Approaches and methods		5		
3.	4.	Work plan		5		
3.	5.	Budget		5		
4. IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS (15)						
4.	1.	Executing agency and organizational structure		5		
4.	2.	Pre-Project Management		5		
4.	3.	Monitoring and reporting		5		
Entire project proposal (60)				100,0%	Y	75%
Category				1		

Marks indicate:

- 0 - Information is completely missing
- 1 - Very poor: some elements are there but the essential ones are missing
- 2 - Poor: essential elements are incomplete, insufficient, wrong or misunderstood
- 3 - Moderate: essential elements are available but unclear or inaccurate
- 4 - Good: clear, accurate and informative
- 5 - Excellent: clear, accurate, informative and comprehensive (perfectly integrated with other items)

Rating categories:

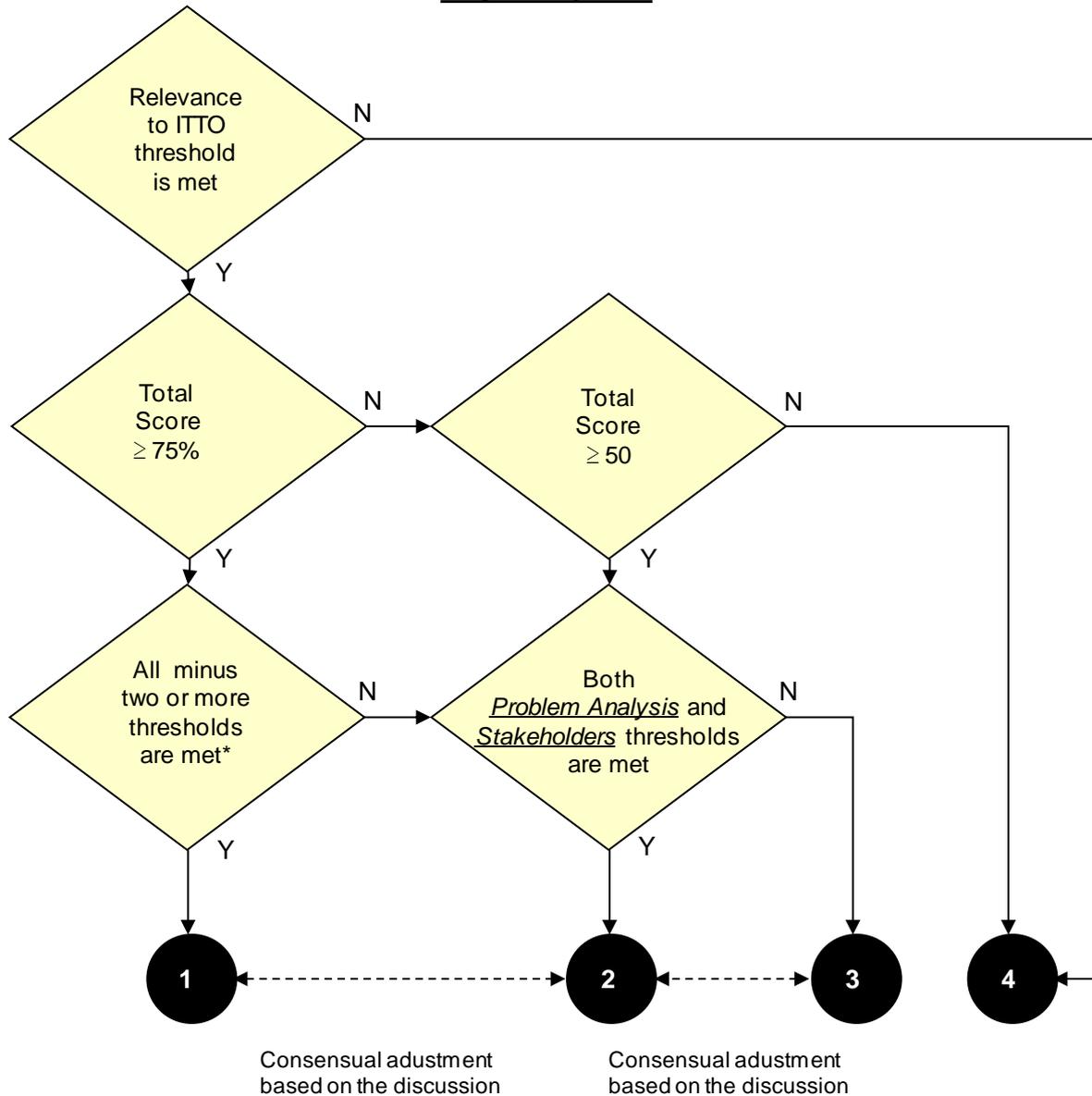
Category 1: The Panel concluded that the proposal could be commended to the Committee with incorporation of amendments.

Category 2: The Panel concluded that the proposal requires essential modifications and will be returned to the proponent. The Panel will need to assess the revised proposal before it can commend it to the Committee.

Category 4: The Panel concluded that it could not commend the proposal to the Committee, and submits it to the Committee with the recommendation not to approve the Project Proposal. Justification should be given to the proponent and the Committee

Appendix VI
Flow charts for deciding categories in the scoring system

Project Proposals

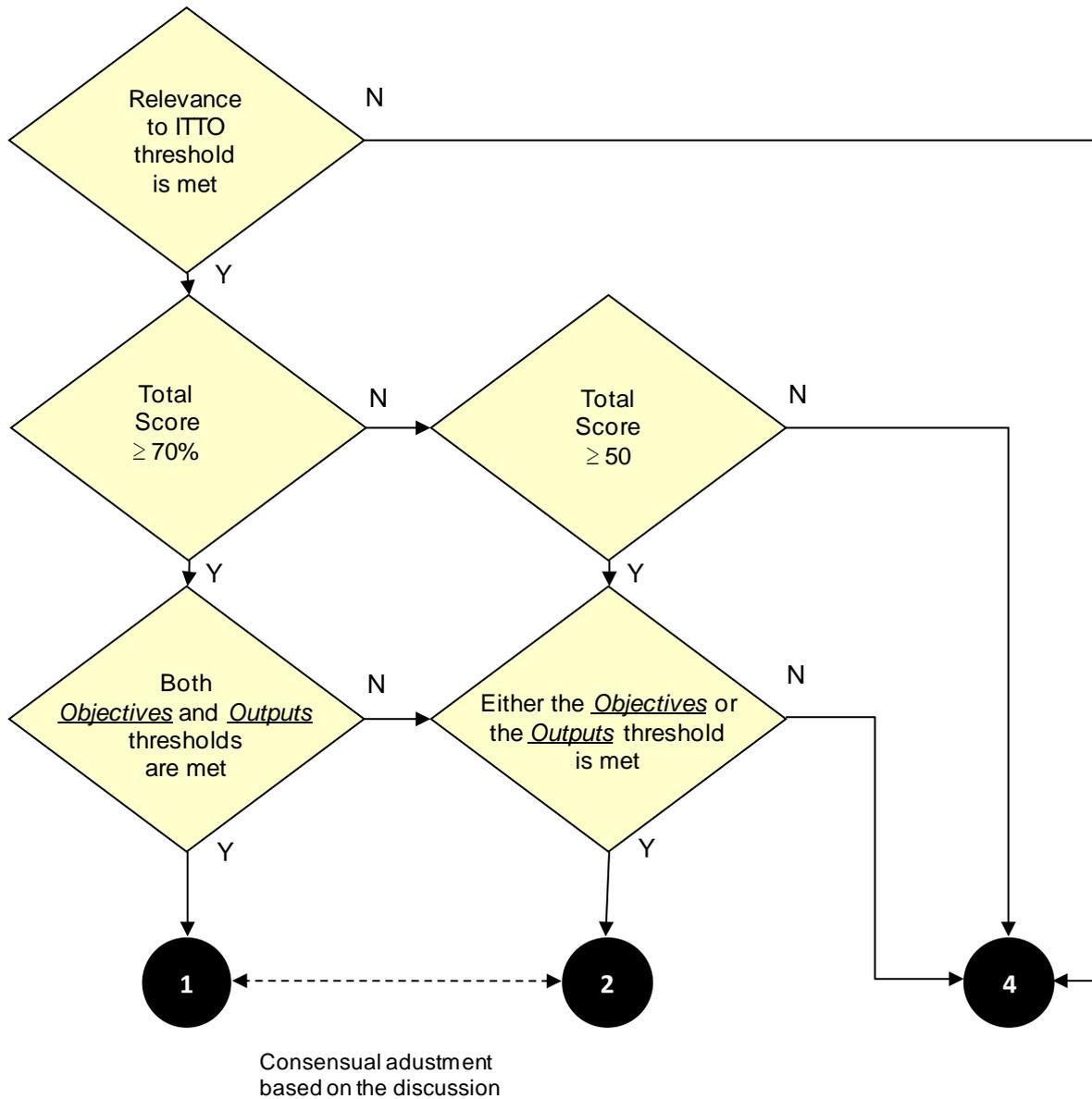


*Thresholds failed cannot be any two among the following three:

- Stakeholder
- Logical Framework
- Sustainability

- Category 1: The Panel concluded that the proposal could be commended to the Committee with incorporation of amendments. Proposal commended to the Committee with incorporation of amendments if any.
- Category 2: The Panel concluded that the proposal requires essential modifications and will be returned to the proponent. The Panel will need to assess the revised proposal before it can commend it to the Committee. Proposal requires essential modifications and will be returned to the proponent.
- Category 3: The Panel concluded that the proposal is not accepted because a pre-project proposal is required. According to the indication of the Panel the pre-project shall (a) be submitted to the Expert Panel for appraisal or (b) could be directly submitted to the Committee for appraisal. Proposal is missing fundamental information, consequently a pre-project is required and to be submitted to the EP.
- Category 4: The Panel concluded that it could not commend the proposal to the Committee, and submits it to the Committee with the recommendation not to approve the project proposal. Justification should be given to the proponent and the Committee. Proposal not recommended but submitted to the Committee with the recommendation not to approve the project proposal, (a) either because a complete reformulation is necessary, or (b) because it's not relevant to ITTO. Justification should be given to the proponent and the Committee.

Pre-Project Proposals



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

Category 2: The Panel concluded that the proposal requires essential modifications and will be returned to the proponent. The Panel will need to assess the revised proposal before it can commend it to the Committee. Proposal requires essential modifications and will be returned to the proponent.

Category 4: The Panel concluded that it could not commend the proposal to the Committee, and submits it to the Committee with the recommendation not to approve the project proposal. Justification should be given to the proponent and the Committee. Proposal not recommended but submitted to the Committee with the recommendation not to approve the project proposal, (a) either because a complete reformulation is necessary, or (b) because it's not relevant to ITTO. Justification should be given to the proponent and the Committee.

Annex

**Assessment, recommendation and conclusion by the Fifty-fourth Expert Panel on
each Project and Pre-project Proposal**

Assessment by the Fifty-fourth Panel

A) Overall Assessment

The Panel reiterated the relevance of the project's objective intending to contribute to the sustainable management of some forest ecosystems in Cote d'Ivoire through the conservation of the African Barwood (*Pterocarpus erinaceus* Poir) within the Palee and Boundiali Forest Reserves, in the Bagoue Region, Northern Cote d'Ivoire. It was recognized that efforts had been made to address most of the comments in the overall assessment, as well as most of the specific recommendations, made by the Fifty-third Expert Panel. However, the Panel noted that there were still a need for improvement for some sections and sub-sections of the revised project proposal.

The need for improvement was still needed in the following sections and sub-sections: (1) Logical Framework Matrix (LFM) in which some outcome indicators (for the specific objective) were entirely or partially repeated in Output 1, Output 2 and Output 3 without taking into account the need to differentiate the intervention strategy scope of the specific objective from that of Outputs; (2) most annexed terms of reference for specialists were not matching with the work plan in which they are not explicitly mentioned in the column of responsible party for the implementation of activities. This was due to the fact that some terms of reference of subcontracting partners were provided in annexes without a clear title; (3) the comments and specific recommendations of the 51st Expert Panel was missing for the ease of reference by the reviewers of the revised project proposal.

B) Specific Recommendations

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

1. Furthermore improve the Logical Framework Matrix by appropriately amending the indicators of the specific objective, as well as those of the Output 1, Output 2 and Output 3, while taking into account the intervention strategy scope of the specific objective which is different from that of outputs, as explained in the ITTO manual for project formulation (third edition, 2009) from page 32 to page 36 (in the English version);
2. Improve the terms of reference of all relevant consultancy and sub-contracting tasks included or to be included as annexes, while making sure to clearly identify each of them with a title correlated to the Work Plan and the budget items regarding the sub-contracting tasks. Subsequent to the improvement of the terms of reference, each relevant subcontracting partner should be added in the column of responsible party of the Work Plan (for each activity involving a subcontracting partner for its implementation);
3. Include an Annex that shows the overall assessment and specific recommendations of the 54th Expert Panel and respective modifications in tabular form, as well as those of the 51st and 53rd Expert Panel. Modifications should also be highlighted (**bold and underline**) in the text.

C) Conclusion

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

Assessment by the Fifty-fourth Panel

A) Overall Assessment

The Panel recognized the international and national relevance of this project proposal with its objective contributing to the forest and biodiversity restoration, conservation and sustainable use for the benefit of local communities in the Cushabatay Basin on the eastern slope of the Cordillera Azul National Park, Peru. It was recognized that efforts had been made to address most of the comments in the overall assessment, as well as most of the specific recommendations, made by the Fifty-third Expert Panel. However, the Panel noted that there was still a need for improvement in some sections and sub-sections of the revised project proposal.

Improvement was still needed in the following sections and sub-sections dealing with: (1) duties in the terms of reference of both consultants (legal consultant and consultant for investment project formulation) not clearly linked to the project implementation due to the lack of information in the section dealing with the implementation approaches and methods; (2) ITTO monitoring and review costs not calculated with the rate of US\$10,000.00 per year.

B) Specific Recommendations

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

1. Improve by revising in a concise manner the terms of reference of both consultants (refer to the 1st comment of the overall assessment, here above) while referring to the guidance in the ITTO manual for project formulation, on page 63;
2. Amend the ITTO budget in line with the above overall assessment and specific recommendations and also in the following way:
 - a) Adjust the budget item 81 to the standard rate of US\$10,000.00 per year for the monitoring and review costs (US\$30,000 for 3 years) and the budget item 82 to the standard rate of US\$15,000 for ex-post evaluation costs,
 - b) Recalculate the ITTO Programme Support Costs (sub-item 83) so as to conform with standard rate of **12%** of the total ITTO project costs (on budget items 10 to 82); and
3. Include an Annex that shows the overall assessment and specific recommendations of the 52nd and 54th Expert Panels and respective modifications in tabular form. Modifications should also be highlighted (**bold and underline**) in the text.

C) Conclusion

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

Assessment by the Fifty-fourth Panel

A) Overall Assessment

The importance of this project was recognized by the Panel for the development of a regional strategy contributing to the restoration and rehabilitation of degraded areas on the south coast of Peru through a participatory process of identification, demarcation and registration of degraded lands and ecosystems. It was acknowledged that efforts were made to address the comments in the overall assessment and specific recommendations made by the Fifty-third Expert Panel.

Improvement was still needed in the following sections and sub-sections: (1) map still not having the appropriate scale and not clearly indicating the project target sites; (2) key problem identified in the problem analysis was not consistent with the key problem mentioned in the problem tree, while the elements in the problem tree and objective tree (not following the required format explained and presented in the ITTO manual for project formulation) were worded in form of very short formulation not allowing their better interpretation. The objective tree did not adequately mirror activities mentioned in the work plan which is missing the responsible party for each activity, as well as in the list of activities under each output; (3) while the curriculum vitae (CV) of the project coordinator was padded in annex, the terms of reference for nine consultants were missing; (3) master budget table not following the format presented in the ITTO manual for project formulation as it was based on components instead of activities. Mid-term evaluation and ex-post evaluation funds are required for a small project.

B) Specific Recommendations

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

1. Provide a good map having an appropriate scale and clearly indicating the project target sites;
2. Subsequent to the 2nd comment of the overall assessment, here above, further improve the format of the problem tree and correlated objective tree, in compliance with the requirements of the ITTO manual for project formulation, while ensuring the consistency of the key problem in both the problem analysis and problem tree. The improved objective tree should be mirrored in the work plan (with consistent activities and related responsible party to be added to each), and also in the list of activities under each output;
3. Add the terms of reference for all nine consultants to be involved in the implementation of this project, as annexes;
4. Amend the budgets in line with the above overall assessment **and** specific recommendations and also in the following way:
 - a) Prepare and add the master budget table (following the format in the ITTO manual for project formulation), as the tables 3.4 and 3.5 are budget tables by component, while providing separate budget tables by component (ITTO and counterpart),
 - b) Move the funds budgeted for the mid-term and ex-post evaluation in other budget components with a clear justification to be added in the section on the implementation approaches and methods,
 - c) Recalculate the ITTO Programme Support Costs (sub-item 83) so as to conform with standard rate of 12% of the total ITTO project costs (on budget items 10 to 82); and
5. Include an Annex that shows the overall assessment and specific recommendations of the 53rd and 54th Expert Panels and respective modifications in tabular form. Modifications should also be highlighted (**bold and underline**) in the text.

C) Conclusion

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

**PD 859/17 Rev.2 (F) Establishment of a Collaborative Framework through the Creation of a
Local Joint Management Body for the Haho-Baloé Reserved Forest in Togo**

Assessment by the Fifty-fourth Panel

A) Overall Assessment

The Panel recognized the relevance of the project intending to contribute to the establishment of a collaborative framework through the creation of a local joint management body for the Haho-Baloé Forest Reserve in Togo. That contribution could be made possible by establishing a climate of trust conducive to some collaboration between local communities and the Togolese Agency for Forest Development and Use (ODEF) for the participatory management of Haho-Baloé Forest Reserve.

However, as general comments, the Panel noted that there were important weaknesses in all project sections and sub-sections, which are considered as critical for an ITTO project: problem analysis and related problem tree and objective tree, logical framework matrix, budget, assumptions, risks and sustainability. Given the above-mentioned comments, the Panel was of the view that the quality of the proposal was not improved enough, after two revisions.

It was the view of the Panel that the revised project proposal should be sent back to the proponent in application of the provisions of the ITTO Council Decision 3(XXXVII) limiting the number of appraisal of any project proposal to three (original appraisal and two revisions). Therefore, this project proposal is taken out of the ITTO regular project cycle and cannot be resubmitted to the ITTO Secretariat by the proponent.

B) Conclusion

Category 4: The Panel concluded that it could not commend the proposal to the Committee, and submits it to the Committee with the recommendation not to approve the project proposal, in accordance with the provisions of the Council Decision 3(XXXVII).

PD 864/17 Rev.2 (F)

Forest Restoration to Reduce the Vulnerability of Rural Communities to Climate Change in Five Municipalities of Las Verapaces (Guatemala)

Assessment by the Fifty-fourth Panel

A) Overall Assessment

The Panel recognized the relevance of the project which could contribute to restoring the forest cover in order to reduce the vulnerability of rural communities to climate change in five municipalities of Las Verapaces, Republic of Guatemala, through the restoration of the forest cover and the generation of local income with the implementation of an inter-institutional policy aimed at the technical development of management, processing and marketing of forest products and by-products.

However, as general comments, the Panel noted that there were important weaknesses in all project sections and sub-sections, which are considered as critical for an ITTO project: stakeholder analysis, problem analysis and related problem tree and objective tree, logical framework matrix, budget, assumptions, risks and sustainability. Given the above-mentioned comments, the Panel was of the view that the quality of the proposal was not improved enough, after two revisions.

Therefore it was the view of the Panel that the revised project proposal should be sent back to the proponent in application of the provisions of the ITTO Council Decision 3(XXXVII) limiting to three the number of the ex-ante appraisal of any project proposal (original appraisal and two revisions). Therefore, this project proposal is taken out of the ITTO regular project cycle and cannot be resubmitted to the ITTO Secretariat by the proponent.

B) Conclusion

Category 4: The Panel concluded that it could not commend the proposal to the Committee, and submits it to the Committee with the recommendation not to approve the project proposal, in accordance with the provisions of the Council Decision 3(XXXVII).

Assessment by the Fifty-fourth Panel

A) Overall Assessment

The importance of this small project was acknowledged by the Panel for its goal to develop a strategy to promote small-farmer-reforestation programmes involving popular mixed indigenous high-value tropical timber in degraded lands of Dodi-Papase high forest zone located in the Ghana's Volta Region. It was recognized that efforts had been made to address some comments in the overall assessment, as well as some specific recommendations, made by the Fifty-third Expert Panel.

However, the Panel noted that the revised project proposal still contained a number of weaknesses in the sections and sub-sections dealing with: (1) project target sites not clearly indicated in map included in the revised version; (2) social aspects considering, as optional, the ITTO guidelines on gender equality and empowering women (GEEW); (3) formulation expected outcomes still needing improvement in compliance with the requirements of the ITTO manual for project formulation; (4) stakeholder analysis and stakeholder tables improved but should be more concise and focused to the most important stakeholders in each category, in correlation with the problem analysis; (5) problem analysis still needing some improvement, while the problem tree was not mirrored in the objective tree (3 main causes identified but 4 outputs defined, while 12 sub-causes identified but 21 activities defined); (6) development objective and specific objective still needing some formulation improvement, in correlation with the problem analysis and related problem tree; (7) logical framework matrix not required for a small project if the ITTO budget is not exceeding US\$150,000 in the revised version; (8) Outputs not consistent with the main causes of the key problem in the problem tree, as well as activities listed under each output not consistent with the sub-causes presented in the problem tree; (9) master budget table needing improvement in relation to the improvement of the problem tree and related objective tree, and subsequently impacting the budgets by component; (10) organizational chart still needing some improvement in reference to the ITTO manual for project formulation.

B) Specific Recommendations

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

1. Further improve the section dealing with the target project area by including an appropriate map clearly indicating the project target sites;
2. Furthermore elaborate the section on social aspects by taking into account the ITTO guidelines on gender equality and empowering women (GEEW);
3. Improve the stakeholders' analysis tables in a concise manner by focusing on the most important stakeholders in each category in correlation with the improved problem analysis;
4. Improve the formulation of the expected outcomes in compliance with the guidance box on page 22 of the ITTO manual for project formulation;
5. Revise the problem analysis and problem tree in adherence to the ITTO manual for project formulation. Consider defining the key problem as "*Dodi-Papase high forest zone lands not sustainably managed*" with 3 main causes namely: i) *absence of management plan*, ii) *weak commitment of stakeholders to SFM* and iii) *weak capacity to SFM practices*. Further, identify 3 sub-causes (most important ones) of each of the main causes;
6. construct an objective tree inverting the problem tree and identify 3 outputs (correlated to the main causes) with 3 activities (correlated to the sub-causes identified in the problem tree) under each output;
7. Subsequent to the improvement of the problem analysis, problem tree and objective tree, the development objective and specific objective should be redefined accordingly in compliance with the requirements of the ITTO manual for project formulation;
8. Improve the organizational chart in compliance with the requirements of the ITTO manual for project formulation (refer to figure 13 on page 60);
9. Amend the ITTO budget (not exceeding US\$150,000) in line with the above overall assessment **and** specific recommendations and also in the following way:

- a) Prepare a new master budget table with activities to be derived from the improved problem analysis, problem tree and objective tree and it should be the source for the readjustment of budgets by component, as required in the ITTO manual for project formulation,
 - b) Recalculate the ITTO Programme Support Costs (sub-item 83) so as to conform with standard rate of **12%** of the total ITTO project costs (on budget items 10 to 82); and
10. Include an Annex that shows the overall assessment and specific recommendations of the 53rd and 54th Expert Panels and respective modifications in tabular form. Modifications should also be highlighted (**bold and underline**) in the text.
- C) Conclusion

Category 2: The Panel concluded that the pre-project proposal requires essential modifications and will be returned to the proponent. The Panel will need to assess the revised project proposal before it can commend it to the Committee for final appraisal.

Assessment by the Fifty-fourth Panel

A) Overall Assessment

The Panel recognized that the project aims to establish woodlots in pasturelands in Los Tuxtlas Range Region in the Gulf of Mexico and acknowledged that efforts were made to address the specific comments provided by the Fifty-third Expert Panel. However, the Panel noted that there was still the need to address some important weaknesses in the revised proposal. These weaknesses include: weak presentation of Section 1.4 (Expected outcomes at project completion) without focusing on the establishment of demonstration plots; contradictory presentation of the development objective due to inclusion of increasing livestock production which is outside of the ITTO mandates; poor presentation of the specific objective by describing project activities (e.g., “organize workshops”); limited presentation of measurable impact and outcome indicators; different presentation of four Outputs in Sections 3.1 (Outputs) and 3.2 (Activities and inputs) and inconsistent presentation of the Outputs and Activities between the work plan and Sections 3.1 and 3.2; and no ToRs for the two national technical experts. In addition, the Panel felt that the planted sites must be protected by fencing as young trees in grazing areas are prone to browsing and that such activities could be included. The Panel was again concerned about the sustainability after project completion and underlined the need for this concern to be fully addressed. In this light, the Panel was of the view that the proposal should be further revised so as to incorporate the recommendations detailed as below.

B) Specific Recommendations

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

1. Further elaborate Section 1.4 by including the establishment of demonstration plots;
2. Elaborate the concrete role of women who shall be involved in the implementation of project activities in Section 2.1 (Stakeholder analysis) in which Ejidos and ejido members in the Municipalities of San Andrés Tuxtla and Catemaco were identified as the primary stakeholders;
3. Rework the presentation of the development and specific objectives. Increasing the livestock production with the participation of livestock farmers should not be part of the development objective. The specific objectives should be presented in a concise way and it can focus on the establishment of demonstration woodlots on pasturelands in the target sites as specified in Output 4 (Demonstration sites);
4. Further refine the impact and outcome indicators in a SMART (specific, measureable, appropriate, realistic and time-bound) way;
5. Make a consistent presentation of the outputs and project activities between Section 3.1 (Outputs), Section 3.2 (Activities and inputs) and the work plan;
6. Provide TORs for each of the two national technical experts to be funded by ITTO;
7. Elaborate the sustainability by addressing the issues of technical and social sustainability in Section 3.3 (Strategic approaches and methods); and
8. Include an annex which shows the overall assessment and recommendations of the 53rd and 54th Panels and the respective modifications in tabular form. Modifications should also be highlighted (**bold and underline**) in the text.

C) Conclusion

Category 2: The Panel concluded that the project proposal requires essential modifications and will be returned to the proponent. The Panel will need to assess the revised project proposal before it can commend it to the Committee for final appraisal.

Assessment by the Fifty-fourth Panel

A) Overall Assessment

The Panel recognized that it is a small project proposal aiming at generating a biometric system for the estimation of stem, branch and whole-tree volumes as well as compatible taper-commercial volume systems for ten commercial species in the State of Quintana Roo, Mexico. The Panel acknowledged that efforts had been made to address the most of the specific recommendations provided by the Fifty-third Expert Panel. However, the Panel noted that further amendments are needed to enhance the design and formulation of the revised proposal in a consistent way. The Panel recommended that the proposal should be amended so as to incorporate the recommendations detailed as below.

B) Specific Recommendations

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

1. Further improve the summary of the project on the cover page by including the specific objective in a concise way;
2. Correct the page numbering for Parts 2 and 3 in the table of contents in a sequence way as the current corresponding page numbers for these two Parts are incorrect. Correct the numbering for output 6 in the work plan;
3. Remove the presentation of all activities under each output in Section 3.1 (Outputs) as they are presented in Section 3.2 (Activities and inputs). Remove the column for cost per output in Table 2 as such cost information is presented in the budget tables;
4. Include the dissemination of a technical manual on biometric systems for 10 commercial value species as part of activity 1.1.4 or as a new activity under output 1;
5. Amend the ITTO budget in the following way:
 - a) Provide breakdown of the items of the budget in Table 5 (Consolidated budget by source – ITTO) in line with the standard presentation format provided in the ITTO Manual for Project Formulation;
 - b) Correct the numbering of the table on master budget schemes in Section 3.4 (budget);
 - c) Make a consistent presentation on the costs for sub-contract (topic 2 – budget item 22) between Tables 4 and 5;
 - d) Add an amount of US\$10,000 for ITTO Monitoring and Review Costs in Table 4 (consolidated budget by component), Table 5 (Consolidated budget by source-ITTO) and other parts of the budget presentation accordingly; and
 - e) Recalculate the ITTO Programme Support Costs (sub-item 83) so as to conform with standard rate of **12%** of the total ITTO project costs (on budget items 10 to 82).
6. Include an annex which shows the overall assessment and recommendations of the 53rd and 54th Panels and the respective modifications in tabular form. Modifications should also be highlighted (**bold and underline**) in the text

C) Conclusion

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

Demonstrate the Development of Relationships Between Tree Growth and Climate Variability and Topographical Factors in Thailand's Natural Forests to Support Sustainable Forest Management in Thailand: Phase I

Assessment by the Fifty-fourth Panel

A) Overall Assessment

The Panel recognized that this project aims to demonstrate the development of relationships between tree growth and climate variability and topographic factors in mixed deciduous forests to support sustainable forest management in Thailand.

However, the Panel continued to express concerns on how this research-oriented project proposal can contribute towards the SFM of natural mixed deciduous forests in Thailand. The revised proposal does not clarify how the dendrochronological research of one single species can improve the SFM in mixed deciduous forests, nor how it will contribute to the knowledge on forest dynamics in this type of forest. The Panel further observed the lack of additional scientific explanations on environmental factors related to tree growth in mixed deciduous forests, particularly as related to species composition and the growth dynamics of other important canopy species species, such as *Lagerstroemia calyculata*, *L. balansae*, *Xylia xylocarpa*, *Pterocarpus macrocarpus*, *Bombax ceiba*, *Anogeissus acuminata*, *Dalbergia oliveri*, *Terminalia mucronata*, *T. tomentosa*, and *T. alata*.

The Panel further noted that the revised project proposal did not go far enough in addressing many of the specific recommendations provided by the Fifty-third Expert Panel. Comments (shown below in Italics) to the each of the modifications made to the Fifty-third Expert Panel's specific recommendations include:

1. Improve the conformity with ITTO's objectives and priorities by adding an appropriate explanation in relationship to SFM policies in Thailand; *No indication was given as regards community participation in SFM nor as regards the involvement of women in SFM decision-making. In addition, if logging is banned in Thailand's natural forests, then the suggested research should be applied to teak plantations rather than teak trees in natural mixed deciduous forests.*
2. Improve the problem analysis for the appropriate revision by considering how the research on natural forests is related to SFM planning. Reformulate the key problem in a realistic manner; *The key problem has not been appropriately reformulated and does not directly contribute to the mentioned consequences. In reality the consequences are the key problem, i.e. forest degradation and unsustainable management of natural forests. Moreover, most of the sub-causes are false, as research has been carried out and data is currently available at the Mahidol and Chiang Mai Universities in Thailand, and also in Myanmar, India and others.*
3. Clearly describe the expected outcomes in relation to solving the key problem; *It is not explicit how the expected outcomes will solve the problem of forest degradation and the unsustainable management of Thailand's natural forests. It is important to provide concrete evidence the key problem will be solved, not just assumptions.*
4. Revise the logical framework matrix especially the specific objective and outcome indicators (Section 2.2.2) based on the refined key problem; *The LFM still lacks indicators related to the mitigation of forest degradation and improvement of SFM.*
5. Describe and further elaborate how to develop relationships between climate variability and tree growth and topographical factors, and how the findings will be applied to improve SFM in Thailand; *It is still not clear how the findings on a single species – Teak - will be applied to improve SFM in the mixed deciduous forests in Thailand, as these forests are composed of many tree species with greater numbers than teak.*
6. Consider the involvement of forest industry and stakeholders by adding their representatives to the project steering committee; *Private sector and forest communities representatives have not been included in the PSC.*
7. Further describe the project partners by elaborating their roles and responsibilities in the implementation of the project (Section 4.1.1); *The roles and responsibilities of RFD, DNP, DMCR and FIO in the implementation of the project has not been sufficiently elaborated.*
8. Include detailed terms of references of all project personnel involved in carrying out project activities to achieve the expected outputs; *Detailed TOR as related to the implementation of project activities has not been included. The TOR for the individual members of the PMT are also not provided.*

9. Clearly specify all sources of funding, including the Kasetsart University; *Not specified*. Explain the need to hire the project manager for only 160 days when the project's duration is of 36 months; *Not explained*.
10. Scale down the budget item 10, project personnel as the executing agency is filled with relevant experts; Budget not scaled down. Include these in the executing agency's budget; *Not included, and it appears that the Kasetsart University does not have expertise nor the appropriate laboratory equipment required to carry out this research, as it requires to outsource the dendrochronology expert and many other experts and assistants*. Clearly specify its input units and related unit costs; *Not specified*.

Given the above mentioned comments, the Panel was of the view that all critical components of an ITTO project were not appropriately addressed by the proponent, making it impossible to consider this revised proposal in the ITTO project cycle. In particular, the Panel was concerned about possible duplication of research as a similar research paper in northwestern Thailand was already published. A completely new research project proposal with an in-depth review of references can be submitted. The formulation of a new project proposal should follow the requirements specified in the ITTO Manual for Project Formulation.

B) Conclusion

Category 4: The Panel concluded that it could not commend the proposal to the Committee because a complete reformulation of the project proposal is necessary.

Assessment by the Fifty-fourth Panel

A) Overall Assessment

The Panel acknowledged the relevance of the project that could contribute to rehabilitating the Upper Bandama Gazetted Forest in an inclusive way by significantly diminishing the demand for fuelwood, building up a strategy for sustainable construction wood production and incorporating the need for grazing land and permanent watering points for nomad cattle drivers. The project also aims at conducting outreach activities with households about the new energy-saving technologies to reduce their fuelwood consumption. It was recognized that efforts had been made to address most of the comments in the overall assessment, as well as most of the specific recommendations, made by the Fifty-third Expert Panel.

The need for improvement was still needed in the following sections and sub-sections dealing with: (1) map not having an appropriate scale for clearly indicating the project target sites; (2) social, cultural, economic and environmental aspects of the project target not taking into account the ITTO policy guidelines on gender equality and empowering women (GEEW) and the guidelines for environmental and social risks and impacts assessment in ITTO projects (ESIA); (3) expected outcomes still presenting non-consistent figures regarding the number of hectares to be achieved by the project; (4) problem analysis and related problem tree still presenting some discrepancies with planned activities to be derived from the sub-causes in the problem tree; (5) lack of consistency with some figures use in the budget tables on the number of hectare of plantations to be established by the project (60 ha instead of 20 ha as mentioned the Section 1.4 and Section 3.2); (6) no information provided in order to differentiate the role of the stakeholder consultation committee from that of the advisory committee.

B) Specific Recommendations

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

1. Provide a map with an appropriate scale and clearly showing the project target sites;
2. Improve the section dealing with the social, cultural, economic and environmental aspects of the project target area by taking into account the ITTO policy guidelines on gender equality and empowering women (GEEW) and the guidelines for environmental and social risks and impacts assessment in ITTO projects (ESIA);
3. Improve the expected outcomes (Chapter 1.4) because the expected outcomes are not project outputs but the situation to be expected from the achievement of specific objective. There is a need to refer to the guidance box on page 22 of the ITTO manual for project formulation;
4. Further improve the objective tree by making sure to have consistent wording of elements with the list of outputs and activities in the work plan;
5. Subsequent to the 4th specific recommendation, here above, improve the logical framework matrix in correlation with the consistent wording used for the objective tree and work plan;
6. Redefine the outputs and related activities with the consistent wording in accordance with the 4th specific recommendation, here above;
7. Improve the section dealing with stakeholders' involvement mechanism by clarifying the role of the advisory committee versus the role of the stakeholder consultation committee;
8. Amend the ITTO budget in line with the above overall assessment **and** specific recommendations and also in the following way:
 - a) Prepare and add the master budget table with the consistent wording, in accordance with the 4th and 5th specific recommendations, here above, while making sure to use 20 ha for any calculation (for plantation) as mentioned in the Section 1.4 and Section 3.2,
 - b) Recalculate the ITTO Programme Support Costs (sub-item 83) so as to conform with standard rate of 12% of the total ITTO project costs (on budget items 10 to 82); and
9. Include an Annex that shows the overall assessment and specific recommendations of the 53rd and 54th Panels and respective modifications in tabular form. Modifications should also be highlighted (**bold and underline**) in the text.

C) Conclusion

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

Assessment by the Fifty-fourth Panel

A) Overall Assessment

The Panel recognized the importance of the project for strengthening community forest management in Peru through the establishment and implementation of community forest management technical units at the national level. The Panel acknowledged that this proposal has been built on the findings of two completed projects: RED-PD 033/11 Rev.3 (F) and PD 741/14 Rev.3 (F) which contributed to strengthening the capacities of indigenous peoples and local communities in the management of timber and non-timber forest products. The Panel also acknowledged the submitting agency's extended working experience on community forest management through the successful implementation of several internationally or nationally financed community-based projects, including two ITTO projects.

Overall, the Panel noted that the proposal has been well formulated in line with the ITTO Manual for Project Formulation and that it is based on participatory approaches applying gender equality criteria and interaction based on intercultural awareness. However, the Panel felt that the proposal was overly ambitious for the 24-month timeframe, given the nature of the proposed project work covering 400,000 hectares of forests under community forest management. Regarding the risk assessment, the Panel noted that analyzing risk mitigation measures should be provided to ensure the effective risk management process in project implementation.

B) Specific Recommendations

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

1. Consider reducing the project area to make success achievable in the 24-month time frame or extending the project duration from 24 months to 30 months in a more realistic way without increasing the current ITTO budget;
2. Improve the risk assessment (Section 3.5.1 Assumptions and risks) by showing risk mitigation measures to be employed and how they should be monitored in the course of project implementation;
3. Include Year 1's financial auditing cost in Table 3.4.3 (EA budget by component) as submission of an annual financial audit report is required for projects with duration of two years or more and an ITTO budget above US\$200,000;
4. Provide ToRs for each of consultants (budget items 13.1 and 13.2) for guidance on UTMFC in Amazon and dry forest region in Annex 3 (ToR of personnel and consultants financed by ITTO);
5. Clarify the role of Project Coordinator in the project management organization chart in Section 4.1.2 (Project management team) as it is confusing with the role of three regional project coordinators; and
6. Include an annex which shows the overall assessment and recommendations of the 54th Panel and the respective modifications in tabular form. Modifications should also be highlighted (**bold and underline**) in the text.

C) Conclusion

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

PD 895/19 (F)

Strengthening the Participation of Women in Rural Communities for the Development of Ecotourism Service Enterprises and Sustainable Business Models on the Coast of Veracruz, Mexico

Assessment by the Fifty-fourth Panel

A) Overall Assessment

The Panel recognized that it is a small project aiming at strengthening the capacity of rural communities, especially four ecotourism groups and five organised women groups, in community ecotourism business development and operation in the municipalities of Tecolutla, Actopan and Jamapa, in the centre of the State of Veracruz, Mexico. The Panel acknowledged that the submitting agency has successfully implemented PD 349/05 Rev.2 (F) and RED-PD 045/11 Rev.2 (M) and that this proposal has been built on these two completed projects which mapped coastal wetlands in central part of Veracruz and evaluated ecosystem services provided by mangrove and flood forests.

Overall, the Panel noted that the proposal has been well written in line with the ITTO Manual for Project Formulation through good stakeholders analysis, including role of women in project implementation. However, the Panel noted that further improvements are needed to enhance the formulation of the proposal. The weakness of the proposal include: limited elaboration of the project's potential contribution to the ITTO Guidelines on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (GEEW) in Section 1.2.1 (conformity with ITTO's objectives and priorities); weak problem analysis without focusing on the issues of community ecotourism development and operation; and weak presentation of the development and specific objectives. Regarding the ITTO budget, the Panel noted that some amount would be necessary for ITTO Monitoring and Review Costs. For the sustainability after project completion, the Panel noted that the extended use of "Women's House" and local governments' support are essential.

B) Specific Recommendations

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

1. Improve the list of abbreviations and acronyms by including all those used in the project proposal;
2. Improve Section 1.2.1 by referring to the ITTO Strategic Action Plan for 2013-2018 and by taking into account the ITTO Policy Guidelines on Gender Equality and Empowering Women (GEEW) and the Guidelines for Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts Assessment in ITTO projects (ESIA);
3. Improve the problem analysis by focusing on issues of community ecotourism development and operation in the target areas. It is encouraged to use a problem tree in order to ensure the consistency of the key problem and specific objective as well as sub-causes and activities;
4. Improve the presentation of the development and specific objectives in a concise way in line with the refined key problem;
5. Include an amount of US\$5,000 for ITTO Monitoring and Review Costs in the ITTO budget. Delete the empty table for yearly project budget by source – other sources;
6. Improve the sustainability after project completion by ensuring the extended use of "Women's House" and the engagement and contributions from relevant local governments;
7. Reduce the number of pages for Annex 1 (Profiles of the executing and collaborating agencies) and Annex 2 (CVs for key experts) as small project proposals are encouraged to be presented within 20 pages; and
8. Include an annex which shows the overall assessment and recommendations of the 54th Panel and the respective modifications in tabular form. Modifications should also be highlighted (**bold and underline**) in the text.

C) Conclusion

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

Protection and restoration of forested water catchment, regulation and recharge areas in the upper Salinas river watershed, Guatemala, to ensure water supply for Guatemalan communities.

Assessment by the Fifty-fourth Panel

A) Overall Assessment

The Panel recognized the importance of the project for conservation of water resources of the upper Salinas watershed areas of Guatemala, and improves water quality and quantity for Guatemalan communities.

However, the Panel noted that the project proposal contained a number of weaknesses in the sections and sub-sections dealing with: (1) weak presentation in summary of the cover page; (2) some activities do not directly relate to outputs; (3) inconsistent total budgets between budget in cover page and master budget and consolidate budget; (4) weak budget category arrangement and calculations in all budget tables; (5) project site map and organization chart not clear; (6) inconsistencies among expected outcomes and activities in master budget schedule; (7) insufficient consideration of reforestation with government fund; (8) community outreach is not discussed.

B) Specific Recommendations

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

1. Remove first paragraph related to Executive Agency (WFFP) history and include the key problem, development, specific objectives and expected outcomes in summary of the cover page;
2. Include Sub-section 1.2.1 (conformity with ITTO's objectives and priorities) in table of contents;
3. Rearrange activities in Sub-section 3.1.2 (Activities and Inputs), Sub-section 3.3 (work plan) and Sub-section 3.4.1 (Master budget schedule) so that activities support outputs; Activity 1.2 should move under Output 4 and Activity 2.2 and 2.3 should move under Output 1;
4. Combine Activity 1.3 and Activity 1.4 in one Activity due to these two activities are the same activity;
5. Include budget contribution from INAB in cover page; maintain consistency of the total budget amount cover page, master budget (3.4.1) and consolidated budget (3.4.2); Improve budget category number arrangement and budget calculation in all budget tables (change number of budget Item for ITTO management cost from item 72 to item 82);
6. Provide clear picture of project site map Organization Structure of Executive Agency (Water for People);
7. Provide information on type of delivering reports and their reporting time in sub-section 4.3 (monitoring and reporting);
8. Provide CVs of key personnel of the executing agency in Annex 2;
9. Provide Terms of Reference of seven consultants funded by ITTO in Annex 3; and
10. Include an annex that shows the recommendations of the 54th Expert Panel and the respective modifications in tabular form. Modifications should also be highlighted (**bold and underline**) in the text.

C) Conclusion

Category 2: The Panel concluded that the project proposal requires essential modifications and will be returned to the proponent. The Panel will need to assess the revised project proposal before it can comment it to the Committee for final appraisal.

PD 898/19 (F)

Implementation of Mechanisms to Strengthen Governance in Two Strategic Ecosystems of Guatemala

Assessment by the Fifty-fourth Panel

A) Overall Assessment

The Panel recognized the importance of the project for building local capacities for the governance and management of forest ecosystems in Guatemala.

However, the Panel noted that the project proposal contained a number of weaknesses in the sections and sub-sections dealing with: (1) project briefing not follow ITTO Manual for project formulation; (2) detailed map of the project site missing; (3) stakeholder analysis does not provide enough information on NGOs; (4) some of expected outcomes at project completion are not measurable; (5) involvement of government sectors and private sectors are not considered despite the importance of their role in law enforcement; (6) objective tree is not consistent with the description of outputs; (7) high personnel fees, vehicle and tablet PCs in the budget component; (7) role of executive agency is not clear.

B) Specific Recommendations

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

1. Improve project briefing in line with the ITTO manual for project formulation;
2. Further elaborate how project contributes to the ITTO objectives and proprieties;
3. Provide detailed map of project sites (map of mangrove missing);
4. Further provide information on NGOs in the stakeholder analysis;
5. Reduce personnel fees, vehicle and tablet PCs in the project budget; reduce number and scale of workshops and high unit costs of workshops;
6. Clarify the role of executing agency and collaborative agency;
7. Improve inconsistency between indicators and means of verification in the logical framework matrix;
8. Elaborate on how long-term indicators are measured by adding base lines for the measurement in Section 2.2 (Objectives);
9. Provide detailed information of early warning system, forest product traceability and forest incentives in Section 3.1.2 (Activities);
10. Include an Annex that shows the overall assessment and specific recommendations of the 54th Expert Panel and respective modifications in tabular form. Modifications should also be highlighted (**bold and underline**) in the text.

C) Conclusion

Category 2: The Panel concluded that the project proposal requires essential modifications and will be returned to the proponent. The Panel will need to assess the revised project proposal before it can comment it to the Committee for final appraisal.

Assessment by the Fifty-fourth Panel

A) Overall Assessment

The Panel recognized that the project aims to improve the sustainable utilization and productivity of Peat Hydrology Unit (PHU) in Indonesia through the improvement of current practices, coordination, regulation, and other enabling conditions.

However, the Panel noted that the proposal has been poorly formulated which makes it difficult to understand and assess. The Panel furthermore noted that there were some fundamental weaknesses in the design and formulation of the proposal. These weaknesses include; very poor presentation of Section 1.3 (Target area) without sufficient information on social, cultural, economic and environmental aspects as well as a map for the project sites; Measurable indicators and key assumptions should be updated and developed in Section 2.1.4 (Logical Framework matrix); poor presentation of the stakeholder analysis without clearly clarifying the views and interests of key stakeholders; weak problem analysis without elaboration of the key problem identified and its causes and effects in addition to a problem tree; weak and unbalanced presentation of Section 3.3 (Work Plan) focusing on the first year and third year without well-organized implementation plans and activities; weak presentation of the logical framework matrix with some outputs which would be presented as an activity and lack of measurable indicators; insufficient budget presentation not following the Work plan; and unclear stakeholder involvement mechanisms. In addition, the Panel was not convinced as there were no clear strategies on how to sustain project results.

Given the above-mentioned comments, the Panel was of the view that all critical components of an ITTO project were not appropriately elaborated in the proposal, making it impossible to consider this proposal in the ITTO project cycle. A completely new project proposal clearly focusing on ITTO's objectives and priorities can be submitted. The formulation of such a new project proposal should follow the requirements specified in the ITTO Manual for Project Formulation.

B) Conclusion

Category 4: The Panel concluded that it could not commend the proposal to the Committee because a complete reformulation of the project proposal is necessary. The Panel encouraged resubmitting a new proposal considering important subjects and outputs of this project proposal.

PD 901/19 (F) Promoting Conservation and Community-based Management of Mangrove Ecosystems Through Integrating Adaptation and Mitigation Action in Karang Gading and Langkat Timur Laut (KG-LTLWR) Reserve, North Sumatera Indonesia

Assessment by the Fifty-fourth Panel

A) Overall Assessment

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

Overall, the Panel noted that the project has been well formulated in line with the ITTO Manual for Project Formulation. However, the Panel noted that further improvements are needed to enhance the design and formulation of the proposal. The weakness of the proposal includes; insufficient stakeholder analysis; inconsistent and lack of measurable indicators for the achievements of the development and specific objectives; weak presentation of three outputs and activities; and poor presentation of the project budget. In light of this, the Panel was of the view that the proposal should be modified and revised so as to incorporate the recommendations detailed below:

B) Specific Recommendations

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

1. Provide a more detailed map showing the project sites;
2. Briefly describe the recommendation of 3 previous projects to check the connection with former projects;
3. Improve Section 1.4 (Expected outcomes at project completion) by describing what the key groups such as communities and women will get direct benefits as a consequence of the project;
4. Further improve Section 2.1.2 (Stakeholder analysis) by elaborating major and various stakeholders;
5. Improve the logical framework matrix by refining the indicators in a realistic way as they are quite ambitious;
6. Provide consistent indicators in Section 2.2.1 (Development objective and impact indicators) in line with the logical framework matrix (30% of poorly managed core area biologically enriched);
7. Consider how these objectives are achieved in measurable terms in Section 2.2.2 (Specific objectives and outcome indicators);
8. Improve and update the information of Section 3.2 (Implementation approaches and methods) by listing relevant activities under each output;
9. Rewrite the budget to fit the work plan (the third year of activity 1.2) and organize budget table;
10. Improve Section 4.1.1 (Executing agency and partner) in association with Annexes 1 and 2;
11. Provide a more concrete method on how to disseminate and mainstream the project results and learning in Sections 4.3.1 and 4.3.2;
12. Fill out Annex 1 (Profiles of the Executing Agency) and make clear the duration of the national experts in Annex 2 (two or three years); and
13. Include an Annex that shows the overall assessment and specific recommendations of the 54th Expert Panel and respective modifications in tabular form. Modifications should also be highlighted (**bold and underline**) in the text.

C) Conclusion

Category 2: The Panel concluded that the project proposal requires essential modifications and will be returned to the proponent. The Panel will need to assess the revised project proposal before it can commend it to the Committee for final appraisal.

Assessment by the Fifty-fourth Panel

A) Overall Assessment

The Panel recognized the importance of the project proposal to manage the Upper Baram Forest Area (UBFA) for biodiversity conservation and socio-economic development to benefit local communities in northern Sarawak Malaysia.

Overall, the Panel noted that the project has been well formulated in line with the ITTO Manual for Project Formulation. However, the Panel noted that further improvements are needed to enhance the design and formulation of the proposal. The weakness of the proposal includes: insufficient logical framework matrix; inconsistent and lack of measurable indicators for the development and specific objectives; unsolid presentation of three outputs and activities; and poor presentation of the project budget. In light of this, the Panel was of the view the proposal should be modified and revised so as to incorporate the recommendations detailed as below:

B) Specific Recommendations

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

1. Provide a more detailed map clearly highlighting the core conservation areas, harvest licenses and community forests as appropriate;
2. Further describe why the surrounding Transboundary Biodiversity Conservation Area (TBCA) national parks could not effectively conserve 79,000 ha of mixed dipterocarp forests;
3. Describe government policies on land tenure, gender and SDGs in rural areas of Malaysia in Section 1.2.2;
4. Improve Sections 2.1.2 and 2.1.3 by elaborating the analysis of unsustainable land conversions/deforestation or gender/inheritance issues;
5. Enhance the logical framework matrix by refining the indicators in a SMART (specific, measurable, appropriate, realistic and time-bound) way and including quantitative means of verification;
6. Focus on socio-ecological productive landscapes and include SMART quantitative indicators in Section 2.2.1 (Development objective and impact indicators);
7. Include baseline studies of communities in Section 2.2.2 as an indicator;
8. Focus on the presentation of concrete deliverables in Section 3.1.1 (Outputs) and include the conduct of baseline studies on communities and gender as an activity in Section 3.1.2 (Activities);
9. Provide the methodologies to be applied in Section 3.2 (Implementation Approaches and Methods) and sub-activities required in Section 3.3 (Work Plan);
10. Include community and gender representatives in project management arrangements in Sections 4.1.1 4.1.2 and 4.1.3;
11. Amend the ITTO budget in the following way:
 - a) Move Activity 3.5 (Development of Infrastructure) into the Executing Agency budget
 - b) Check the price of a camera per unit
 - c) Scale down the duty travel and monitoring costs
 - d) Clarify the budget of sub-contracts
 - e) Move the employees provident fund into the Executing Agency budget
12. Strengthen the sustainability after project completion as the project will set the baseline for improvements; and
13. Include an Annex that shows the overall assessment and specific recommendations of the 54th Expert Panel and respective modifications in tabular form. Modifications should also be highlighted (**bold and underline**) in the text.

C) Conclusion

Category 2: The Panel concluded that the project proposal requires essential modifications and will be returned to the proponent. The Panel will need to assess the revised project proposal before it can commend it to the Committee for final appraisal.

Assessment by the Fifty-fourth Panel

A) Overall Assessment

The Panel recognized the importance of the project for managing Sungai Menyang Conservation area in Sarawak, Malaysia for orangutan protection and community livelihood improvement through sustainable use of forest and biological resources.

However, the Panel noted that the project proposal contained a number of weaknesses in the sections and sub-sections dealing with: (1) Large amount of total budget of the proposal with the period 24 months (2) lack of information on the outcomes of previous ITTO project; (3) insufficient stakeholder analysis missing research and financial institutions; (4) weak problem analysis particularly inconsistency between key problem in Sub-section 2.1.3 (problem analysis) and key problem in figure 1 (problem tree); (5) weak presentation on the relation between problem tree and objective tree failing to follow ITTO manual for project formulation (effect on the problem of orangutan raiding on farm crop and orangutan protection is not described); (6) high cost for activities and outcomes of the project focusing on people's livelihood in particular large amount of budget for personnel requested from ITTO.

B) Specific Recommendations

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

1. Reconsider to increase the period of the proposal from 24 months to 36 months;
2. Reduce the volume of summary in the cover page;
3. Improve Project Brief by including development and specific objectives and expected outcomes of the project;
4. Correct page number of logical framework matrix and objectives in Table of Contents;
5. Provide a short summary of outcomes of previous ITTO project, PD 288/04 Rev.2 (F), in Section 1.1 (origin);
6. Include research and financial institutions as tertiary stakeholders in Table 2.1 (Stakeholder analysis);
7. Further improve the problem analysis by refining the key problem and identifying immediate causes and sub-causes of the refined key problem; provide a revised problem tree based on the refinements in accordance with ITTO manual for project formation;
8. Provide baseline for the monitoring and evaluation of the project's achievement in the column of measurable indicator in the logical framework matrix;
9. Refine the text of activities in Table 3.1 (work plan) in consistent with the text of activities in Sub-section 3.1.2 (Activities);
10. Amend the ITTO budget in line with the above overall assessment **and** specific recommendations and also in the following way:
 - a) Scale down the ITTO budget by transferring project manager costs (item 10.11) from ITTO contribution to the counterpart contribution;
 - b) Scale down the costs for ITTO Monitoring and Review from US\$ 25,000 to US\$ 15,000; and the costs for ITTO Ex-post evaluation from US\$ 20,000 to US\$ 10,000;
 - c) Reconsider budget component 32 (travel outside Malaysia);
11. Provide Curricula vitae and terms of reference of Project Manager;
12. Provide further information on the profile of executing agency in Annex 1;
13. Include an annex that shows the recommendations of the 54th Expert Panel and the respective modifications in tabular form. Modifications should also be highlighted (**bold and underline**) in the text.

C) Conclusion:

Category 2: The Panel concluded that the project proposal requires essential modifications and will be returned to the proponent. The Panel will need to assess the revised project proposal before it can comment it to the Committee for final appraisal.

Assessment by the Fifty-fourth Panel

A) Overall Assessment

The Panel recognized that the project is aiming at improving productivity of logged-over commercial forests by enrichment planting particularly in degraded areas and conducting experiments to study the impacts of logging intensities on recovery of residual forests in Sarawak, Malaysia.

However, the Panel noted that the project proposal contained a number of weaknesses in the sections and sub-sections dealing with the following aspects: (1) target sites of the project are not readable on the map; (2) weak presentation of the relation between certified forest management units and heavily logged and degraded areas, with regard to demand of enrichment planting; (3) insufficient information on the extent of degraded areas in Sarawak including the causes of degradation; (4) lack of information and consideration on the outcomes of ITTO projects on sustainable forest management implemented in Sarawak; (5) insufficient information on available research outcomes on enrichment planting in Sarawak; (6) insufficient information on geographical and demographical data for the analysis of social and cultural impacts of the project; (7) lack of NGOs and insufficient analysis of local communities in stakeholder analysis; (8) expected outcomes of the project completion are ambitious and optimistic; (9) weak analysis of problem trees and logical framework; (10) high personnel costs; (11) weak analysis of assumption and risk (technical aspects of enrichment planting is not enough to solve the problem).

B) Specific Recommendations

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

1. Provide readable map which describe project sites and study areas;
2. Provide further information on the causes of the existence of heavily logged and degraded area in commercial forests while government promotes forest certification;
3. Add information on the extent of degraded areas in Sarawak including the causes of degradation;
4. Add information on the outcomes of related ITTO projects on sustainable forest management implemented in Sarawak and available research outcomes on enrichment planting in Sarawak;
5. Provide information on geographical and demographical data for the analysis of social and cultural impacts of the project;
6. Include NGOs and civil societies and improve analysis of local communities in stakeholder analysis;
7. Further elaborate problem tree and logical framework based on the recommendations above;
8. State how outcome indicators can be measured using SMART goal method;
9. Reduce the number of field sites and activities of the project considering available research outcomes on enrichment planting in Sarawak;
10. Significantly scale down the ITTO budget, particularly the costs for the project leader, consultants and accountants; remove travel cost outside Malaysia and transfer payment for employee provident fund from ITTO contribution to counterpart contribution;
11. Include an Annex that shows the overall assessment and specific recommendations of the 54th Expert Panel and respective modifications in tabular form. Modifications should also be highlighted (**bold and underline**) in the text.

C) Conclusion

Category 2: The Panel concluded that the project proposal requires essential modifications and will be returned to the proponent. The Panel will need to assess the revised project proposal before it can comment it to the Committee for final appraisal.

PD 905/19 (F)

Providing Support for the Sustainable Management of the Fosse-Aux-Lions Gazetted Forest in the Savanna Region in Togo

Assessment by the Fifty-fourth Panel

A) Overall Assessment

The Panel acknowledged the relevance of this project which could contribute to improve the living conditions and environment of local communities in the Prefectures of Tone and Tandjoare, in Togo. That improvement could be made possible through the sustainable management of the Fosse-aux-Lions Gazetted Forest, with the involvement of local communities.

The Panel noted that the project proposal was well formulated but there was still a need for improvement in the following sections and sub-sections: (1) project brief missing; (2) no reference to the ITTO policy on gender equality and empowering women (GEEW), as well as on the ITTO guidelines for environmental and social risks and impacts assessment in ITTO projects (ESIA); (3) expected outcomes not appropriately formulated in relation to the specific objective; (4) institutional set-up and organizational issues not enough elaborated; (5) problem tree with a key problem requiring some improvement in its formulation, as well as the causes of the key problem; (6) logical framework matrix with indicators having the time-bound (by 2040) not realistic for the achievement of a 3-year project or not with realistic level of impact (refer to the 3rd indicator) for the development objective; (7) outputs still too general; (8) master budget table missing not allowing to assess the level and appropriateness of budgets by component, while there the duplication between some sub-components in the budget table by component; (9) section on sustainability not elaborated as required in the ITTO manual for project formulation.

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

1. Add the project brief following the format recommended in the ITTO manual for project formulation;
2. Improve the section on geographical location while making sure to take into account the ITTO policy on gender equality and empowering women (GEEW), as well as on the ITTO guidelines for environmental and social risks and impacts assessment in ITTO projects (ESIA);
3. Reformulate the expected outcomes (Chapter 1.4) because the expected outcomes are not project outputs but the situation or changes expected to occur from the achievement of specific objective. There is a need to refer to the guidance box on page 22 of the ITTO manual for project formulation;
4. Further elaborate the institutional set-up and organizational issues in compliance with the requirements of the ITTO manual for project formulation;
5. Improve the problem tree with appropriate formulation of the causes of the identified key problem, in compliance with appropriate guidance of the ITTO manual for project implementation, and also revise the objective tree in order to mirror the problem tree;
6. Improve the logical framework matrix in correlation with the improved problem tree and objective tree, and while making sure to improve the indicators of impact of the development objective in order to become more realistic (for time-bound and level of impact), for a 3-year project;
7. Subsequent to the 7th comment in the overall assessment, here above, adequately redefine the expected outputs in correlation with the improved objective tree;
8. Amend the ITTO budget in line with the above overall assessment **and** specific recommendations and also in the following way:
 - a) Prepare the master budget table (by activity) in correlation with the improved work plan, as required in the ITTO manual for project formulation,
 - b) Delete all budget sub-components regarding fellowship and training (15.1, 15.2, 15.3 and 15.4) which are in duplication with the budget sub-components regarding sub-contracting partners (21, 22, 23 and 24), if we refer to their terms of reference,
 - c) Recalculate the ITTO Programme Support Costs (sub-item 83) so as to conform with standard rate of 12% of the total ITTO project costs (on budget items 10 to 82); and
9. Include an Annex that shows the overall assessment and specific recommendations of the 54th Expert Panel and respective modifications in tabular form. Modifications should also be highlighted (**bold and underline**) in the text.

C) Conclusion

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

PD 906/19 (F)

Improving the Genetic Base for Teak Plantation Establishment in Ghana

Assessment by the Fifty-fourth Panel

A) Overall Assessment

The Panel recognized the relevance of improving the genetic base of teak plantation establishment in Ghana. It was reminded that this project proposal was submitted in 2017 and assess by the 52nd Expert Panel which was wondering why this research-oriented project proposal dealing with teak genetic improvement was submitted by an non-governmental organization instead of a real research institution operating in Ghana. Therefore, the sustainability of the project outcomes was highly questionable. This time the project proposal is submitted by the Forestry Research Institute of Ghana (FORIG). The set objectives are clear, but this project may be too ambitious (35 different species varieties and 5 different geographical locations) for research. Suggest reviewing if 35 different species varieties are sustainable and achievable for this proposal.

However, the Panel noted that the project proposal contained a number of weaknesses in the sections and sub-sections dealing with: (1) project brief not following the requirements of the ITTO manual for project formulation; (2) map not clearly indicating the project target sites; (3) target area not enough elaborated as required in the ITTO manual for project formulation, while there were no elements dealing with the ITTO policy on gender equality and empowering women (GEEW), as well as on the ITTO guidelines for environmental and social risks and impacts assessment in ITTO projects (ESIA); (4) expected outcomes not appropriately formulated in relation to the requirements of the ITTO manual for project formulation; (5) institutional set-up and organizational issues not enough elaborated; (6) stakeholder analysis missing and making it difficult to understand the table of stakeholders which was not divided in categories (primary, secondary and tertiary); (7) lack of consistency between the key problem identified in the problem analysis and the key problem mentioned in problem tree leading to the question of the appropriateness of the objective tree which is supposed to provide the specific objective; (8) logical framework matrix with most indicators not complying with the requirements of the ITTO manual for project formulation; (9) the appropriateness of the development objective and specific objective was questionable due the abovementioned comment (7); (10) implementation approaches and methods not explaining the need to have a centralized nursery for the production of teak seedlings instead of decentralized nurseries established near each project target site, while no justification was provided for undertaking four scoping trips; (11) work plan with activities not consistent with the sub-causes included in the problem tree; (12) Master budget table questionable due to the lack of consistency between the problem tree and the work plan, and the budget tables by components were not detailed at the level of sub-components, while two budget tables were following the format of the previous manual for project formulation (second edition), and there was a need to consider reviewing and reducing the overall budget (13) terms of reference for sub-contracts were not enough elaborated as required in the ITTO manual for project formulation.

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

1. Improve the project brief following the format recommended in the ITTO manual for project formulation;
2. Provide a good map with appropriate scale clearly indicating the project target sites;
3. Rewrite the whole section on geographical location while making sure to take into account the ITTO policy on gender equality and empowering women (GEEW), as well as on the ITTO guidelines for environmental and social risks and impacts assessment in ITTO projects (ESIA);
4. Reformulate the expected outcomes (Chapter 1.4) because the expected outcomes are not project outputs but the situation or changes expected to occur from the achievement of specific objective. There is a need to refer to the guidance box on page 22 of the ITTO manual for project formulation;
5. Further elaborate the institutional set-up and organizational issues in compliance with the requirements of the ITTO manual for project formulation;
6. Add the stakeholder analysis facilitating the understanding of the table of stakeholders, while improving the table of stakeholders in compliance with the requirements of the ITTO manual for project formulation;
7. Revise in an appropriate manner the problem tree in correlation with the key problem identified in the problem analysis, revise also the objective tree in order to mirror the problem tree;
8. Improve the logical framework matrix in correlation with the revised problem tree and objective tree, while making sure to comply with the requirements of the ITTO manual for project formulation;

9. Subsequent to the 7th specific recommendation, here above, redefine the development objective and specific objective in correlation with the readjusted objective tree;
10. Improve the implementation approaches and methods by describing the reason why the project should be implemented on five target sites, and also by providing the justification for undertaking four international scoping trips;
11. Improve the format and the content of the work plan in correlation with the revised objective tree;
12. Improve the terms of reference for sub-contracts in compliance with the requirements of the ITTO manual for project formulation;
13. Amend the ITTO budget in line with the above overall assessment considering to reduce the overall budget **and** specific recommendations, and also in the following way:
 - a) Prepare the master budget table (by activity) in correlation with the improved work plan, while making sure to prepare the tables of budget by component detailed at the level of sub-component, as required in the ITTO manual for project formulation,
 - b) Need to budget an amount for the purchasing of a vehicle, as the costs for hiring one is very high,
 - c) Review cost for four international scoping trips,
 - d) Delete the budget tables 3.4.5 and 3.4.6, as they are presented in the format of the previous ITTO manual for project formulation (second edition),
 - e) Recalculate the ITTO Programme Support Costs (sub-item 83) so as to conform with standard rate of **12%** of the total ITTO project costs (on budget items 10 to 82); and
14. Include an Annex that shows the overall assessment and specific recommendations of the 54th Expert Panel and respective modifications in tabular form. Modifications should also be highlighted (**bold and underline**) in the text.

C) Conclusion

Category 2: The Panel concluded that the project proposal requires essential modifications and will be returned to the proponent. The Panel will need to assess the revised project proposal before it can commend it to the Committee for final appraisal.

**PPD 190/18 Rev.1 (F) Promoting the Management of Economic Timber Species in
Community Lands in Ghana Using a Multifunctional Landscape
Approach**

Assessment by the Fifty-fourth Panel

A) Overall Assessment

The Panel noted the relevance of the proposal, to assist in the identification process and in generating the needed information and data for the formulation of a full project proposal with the objective of contributing to rehabilitating degraded forest lands while ensuring species recovery, in collaboration with local communities living in the Afram Plains, Ghana. The Panel noted that the pre-project implementation could be an opportunity to draw lessons on relevant experiences accumulated during the implementation of previous ITTO projects dealing with the rehabilitation of degraded forest lands in Ghana while contributing to achieve the community ownership of key project outcomes.

The Panel also noted the weakness in the following sections; (1) development objective continued to be vague as it was not clear what problem it wished to address, i.e. the encroachment of PAs by the surrounding communities or improving the living standards of the communities through silvicultural restoration practices so as to provide a sustainable supply of fuelwood and construction materials, or both; (2) what is meant by protected-area communities?; it is not clear because these are mentioned as off-reserve forests in the description of communities (it is not clear whether these are living within the boundaries of the PA or located in buffer zones); (3) insufficient information on local communities (maps describing their size, location, target areas, etc.), as well as the elements justifying four communities rather than one to be involved in the implementation of the pre-project; (4) lack of information on the land tenure in the target area of the future project; (5) some budget elements were not clearly correlated with the work plan; (6) tables 3.2 (Activities, Inputs and Unit costs) and table 3.4.1 (Master Budget) differ from the values presented in the budgets by components; (7) table 3.4.4 (Other source budget) should also clearly specify the counterpart funding individually provided by FORIG, KNUST and FC; (8) in Annex 2 the tasks and responsibilities of the key personnel in relation to the implementation of the pre-project are lacking, and in Annex 3 the TOR for the national consultants have not been included; (9) hiring international consultants are proposed, but no budget has been allocated for this purpose.

B) Specific Recommendations

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

1. Provide justification of including four communities. Add in a clear manner the location of four communities, if it is justified to involve all four communities in the pre-project implementation, in the map; define the areas of influence of the pre-project areas and the boundaries of the PAs;
2. Provide information of protected forests and indicate them on the map;
3. Clearly focus and state the development objective of the future project, by stating clearly and concisely the development objective to which the future project will intend to contribute through its implementation;
4. Provide further detailed information and data, in the preliminary problem identification, on four communities (names, size, location, etc.) to be involved in the pre-project implementation for the formulation of the future project, as well as on the land tenure in the target area of the future project;
5. Modify activities to address the ITTO policy on gender equality and empowering women, as well as on the guidelines for environmental and social risks and impacts assessment in ITTO projects, in the terms of reference of studies to be carried out by consultants;
6. Include the terms of reference for consultants while justifying the need to hire them for the implementation of specific pre-project activities; Clarify in Annex 2 the tasks and responsibilities of the key personnel in relation to the implementation of the pre-project, and include in Annex 3 the TOR for the national consultants. Add the budget for hiring international consultants, if it is needed; Provide TOR for the forester, agroforester, socio-economist, watershed expert and others;
7. Readjust the ITTO budget in accordance with the above overall assessment and specific recommendations and also in the following way:
 - a) Clarify the unit cost and inputs;
 - b) Remove from the ITTO budget, if not appropriately justified, the costs of the sub-component 43.4 (4WD vehicle rent), sub-component 44.1 (computer equipment), sub-component 51 (raw materials) and sub-component 52 (spares);

- c) Recalculate the ITTO Programme Support Costs (Sub-component 83) specified in the budget so as to conform with new standard rate of 12% of the total ITTO pre-project costs; and
- 8. Include an Annex that shows the overall assessment and specific recommendations of the 54th Expert Panel and respective modifications in tabular form. Modifications should also be highlighted (**bold and underline**) in the text.

C) Conclusion

Category 2: The Panel concluded that the pre-project proposal requires essential modifications and will be returned to the proponent. The Panel will need to assess the revised pre-project proposal before it can commend it to the Committee for final appraisal.

PPD 194/19 (F)

Strengthening Sustainable Forest Management in ACTO Member Countries (ACTO-MC) through the Application and Use of Harmonized ACTO/ITTO C&I and the Generation of Reliable and Useful Information for Technical Decision-Makers and Forest Policy-Makers

Assessment by the Fifty-fourth Panel

A) Overall Assessment

The panel noted that the proposal is aiming at an important topic which is of high priority for ITTO, however it suffers from substantial weaknesses and shortcomings in terms of format as well as content. The proposal does not clearly indicate which 'type' of proposal it is, however it is largely in the format of a pre-project, which by ITTO regulations should not exceed US\$150,000 and a duration of one year. The information provided is not sufficient and does not allow for a thorough assessment. It remains unclear how the C & I have been internalized by each ACTO member country or whether/how they have been officially published/circulated through ACTO. It was also noted by the Expert Panel that a significant number of the proposing countries are in arrears with their payments to the ITTO Administrative Budget and also include an ITTO non-member country.

The five defined outputs and eighteen corresponding activities are supplemented by three previous or preceding/preparatory activities which should better be entitled preceding or preparatory activities, referring to organizational arrangements. The same applies to activities under O1. Activity 1.4 appears to be a replication of Activity 1.2. The Activities under O2 are rather unspecific and partially not understandable (2.1), the same also applies to 2.2. 'Presentation, discussion and recommendations of the RW (Regional Workshop) proposal with the representatives of the NFA'. Also 2.3 refers to such 'proposal', but it is not clear what the activity is aimed at. Activities 3 and 4 cover preparation and conducting of technical-pedagogical courses, Steering Committee Meetings and National workshops and again the execution of a "pilot experience" is mentioned without any additional explanation. The proposal indicates collaboration with FAO-FRA and states that ACTO will request technical support from FAO but it is unclear what is expected from FAO and whether FAO is actually willing and has confirmed participation in the project. The proposal is unprecise and remains vague about what will actually be undertaken and how results shall be derived. Beyond this it should be clarified beforehand if FAO is willing to participate (MoU).

B) Specific Recommendations

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

1. Budget and duration exceed the threshold for ITTO pre-projects;
2. The chapter on Relevance (1.2) consists of just 4 lines and is very weak;
3. In line with the presentation in pre-proposal format there is no logframe, no problem tree, no objective tree, no stakeholder analysis and there are no detailed budget tables, however this information is crucial for a regional proposal of this magnitude;
4. The budget is requesting funding for a non-member country of ITTO (Bolivia);
5. The proposal states to conduct a regional workshop for C&I implementation, but it does not define the expected result;
6. The consideration of ITTO Guidelines for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment is well noted, however it appears a bit haphazardly cited as no further outline of Gender aspects takes place;
7. Letters of agreement of participating countries need to be provided as well as letters of agreement of the three forest training centers in Brazil, Guyana and Peru;
8. Organizational arrangements are partly listed as activities and there are too many;
9. Detailed budget tables need to be provided in accordance with the ITTO Manual for Project Formulation;
10. The operational arrangements (Ch. 4) are overloaded with far too many hierarchies, i.e. Regional Coordinator, Technical Assistant, Financial Officer, Administrative Assistant, and Communication Officer;
11. The budget includes many extremely costly items, e.g. eight national courses with 20 participants for US\$ 216,000 or Steering Committee Meetings at US\$ 44,700. This needs streamlining and details need to be provided (unit costs etc.);
12. ITTO program support costs have to be calculated at 12% instead of 8%;

13. The proposal is full of acronyms which makes it very cumbersome to read. Many acronyms are not included in the list of acronyms provided. Also, acronyms are mixed in Spanish and English language;
14. Page numbers need to be included; and
15. It is not clear why the proposal has been submitted by the Government of Peru, while the PS/ACTO is hosted by the Brazilian Government in Brasilia and therefore project related operational arrangements shall be hosted in Brasilia.

C) Conclusion

Category 4: The Panel concluded that it could not commend the proposal to the Committee because a complete reformulation of the project proposal is necessary.

Assessment by the Fifty-fourth Panel

A) Overall Assessment

The Panel noted the relevance of the pre-project proposal, to assist in the identification process and in generating the needed information and data for the formulation of six forestry projects which will be submitted to various funds/initiatives supporting the forestry and environmental sectors, as support to the private and community stakeholders.

The pre-project proposal was well formulated but there was still a need for improvement in the following sections and sub-sections dealing with: (1) development objective not defined in accordance with the ITTO manual for project formulation; (2) development objective and specific objective not defined as required in the ITTO manual for project formulation; (3) problem tree, which is optional for a pre-project, not presented as required in the ITTO manual for project formulation; (4) no reference to the ITTO policy on gender equality and empowering women (GEEW), as well as on the ITTO guidelines for environmental and social risks and impacts assessment in ITTO projects (ESIA), in the section dealing with implementation approaches and methods, as they should be taken into account in the projects to be formulated; (5) budget by component and by source (ITTO and counterpart) not detailed at the level of sub-component, and monitoring and review costs not budgeted; (6) annex 3 missing with the terms of reference for experts and consultants.

B) Specific Recommendations

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

1. Improve the development objective of the future project, by stating clearly and concisely the development objective to which the future project will intend to contribute through its implementation, while the specific objective should relate to the identification and formulation of a full project;
2. Improve the preliminary problem identification, by deleting the problem tree (as it is optional for a pre-project) or amend it in compliance with the requirements of the ITTO manual for project formulation. The identified key problem could be as follows: *"limited capacity of private and community stakeholders to expand forest plantations in Togo"*;
3. Improve the section on the implementation approaches and methods with appropriate information on the way to take into account the ITTO policy on gender equality and empowering women (GEEW), as well as on the ITTO guidelines for environmental and social risks and impacts assessment in ITTO projects (ESIA), during the preparation of future full project;
4. Add the annex 3 with the terms of reference of experts and consultants elaborated with enough information of the required competence/expertise, their tasks and responsibility in the pre-project implementation;
5. Readjust the ITTO budget in accordance with the above overall assessment and specific recommendations and also in the following way:
 - a) Improve the budget by component (ITTO and counterpart) by detailing each of them at the level of sub-component;
 - b) Adjust the budget item 81 to the standard rate of US\$3,000.00 for the monitoring and review costs;
 - c) Recalculate the ITTO Programme Support Costs (Sub-component 83) specified in the budget so as to conform with new standard rate of 12% of the total ITTO pre-project costs; and
6. Include an Annex that shows the overall assessment and specific recommendations of the 54th Expert Panel and respective modifications in tabular form. Modifications should also be highlighted (**bold and underline**) in the text.

C) Conclusion

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

Assessment by the Fifty-fourth Panel

A) Overall Assessment

The Panel appreciated the submission of this innovative/out of the box project proposal aimed at developing an Information and Communication Technology (ICT) application for supporting forest plantation management. The development of the technology will contribute to overcome the problem of poor access of information as well as the lack of good decision support tools for managing the natural resources in Ghana. The proposal will encourage other proponents to work on advanced ICT applications to effectively and efficiently manage their forest resources.

However, the Panel noted that the proposal has a number of weaknesses and needed improvement. There should be stronger statements on the purpose of developing the mobile application/tool box and to what extent it replaces traditional practice of forest management. There should also be clarification on the relationship between the Executing Agency (FORIG) and the collaborating partners (FC and the University of Helsinki), in terms of institutional set-up of the project as well as financial/in-kind contributions.

B) Specific Recommendations

1. Improve the List of Abbreviations and Acronyms with the missing items such as LDC, ICT, InVEST, CASA, etc.;
2. Add proper thematic maps of the project area;
3. In Section 1.1, elaborate on the need of developing the mobile applications (please refer to Paragraph 2 of Point A-Overall Assessment above);
4. In Sections 1.2.1 and 1.2.2, clearly describe how these address the specific issues (see in particular Tables 1, 2 and 3);
5. In Section 1.3.2, refine the section by adding relevant information in accordance with ITTO manual for project formulation;
6. Improve Section 1.4 with more concrete statements of the expected outcomes;
7. In Section 2.1.2, elaborate on gender and community forestry and how these will benefit from the project;
8. In Section 2.1.3, strengthen the problem statement with the discussion on how the lack of mobile applications impact on the poor management of plantations. Improve significantly the problem tree and the objective tree and depict them into accurate objectives' statements (Development and Specific Objectives);
9. In Section 2.1.4, include qualitative and quantitative (SMART) indicators for plantation improvement. Include the assumption the apps will work to solve the problem;
10. In Section 2.2.1, improve the impact indicators with indicator/s on how the apps help in achieving more and better forest plantations in Ghana. Add Outcome Indicators with indicator/s on plantations development. Reassess the indicators to be addressed to the right objectives (Development or Specific Objectives). Revise the Specific Objective statement with "To develop and promote the use of mobile.....";
11. In Section 3.1.1, revise the structure of the Outputs with the following logic: research on the data/information collection (Output 1), ICT application/tool box development (Output 2), and workshop and information dissemination (Output 3);
12. In Section 3.1.2, revise the activities following the revision of the Outputs and add necessary sub-activities to sharpen the interventions to achieve the outputs;
13. In Section 3.2, include economic, market and feasibility analysis and the variables to be developed in the application. Value-added products should also be looked into;
14. In Section 3.4, improve the presentation of budget table in accordance with ITTO manual for project formulation. Clearly specify the 'unit costs'. Reduce overall project budget, including declining the item of purchasing a vehicle. Reduce budget component 81 (ITTO monitoring and review) to US\$26,000 and component 82 to US\$10,000;

15. In Section 3.5.1, add discussion on risks on the absence of the ITC applications to the development of forest plantations;
16. In Section 3.5.2, add discussion on how the forest plantations improve over time with use of ITC applications;
17. In Section 4.- Figure 1, improve the organizational chart with more detailed information, such as who will be included in the Project Steering Committee (please refer to ITTO manual);
18. Include Annexes of TOR for all experts/consultants and other personnel financed with ITTO funds; and
19. Include an Annex that shows the responses to the above overall assessment and specific recommendations and respective modifications in tabular form. Modifications should also be highlighted (**bold and underline**) in the text.

C) Conclusion

Category 2: The Panel concluded that the proposal requires essential modifications and will be returned to the proponent. The Panel will need to assess the revised proposal before it can commend it to the Committee.

PD 900/19 (I)

Developing Gender Sensitive, Community-based Bamboo Industry Development to Support Sustainable Bamboo Resource Management and Conservation in Lake Toba Catchment Area (LTCA) of the North Sumatra Province of Indonesia

Assessment by the Fifty-fourth Panel

A) Overall Assessment

The Panel recognized that the aim of this project is sustainable management of bamboo resources in LTCA with a gender and community based approach. The capacity building will be targeting the training of women in propagating and planting of bamboo as well as in harvesting and processing to value added commodities.

The Panel acknowledged that the submitted proposal is well written, logically and technically sound and in full accordance with the manual for project formulation. However, the Panel considered that some recommendations are still necessary to be conveyed to the proponent for improving the proposal.

B) Specific Recommendations

1. Improve the presentation of the project location and site maps;
2. In Section 1.1, add more information about PD 394/06 Rev. 1 (F) and its contribution to the current project PD 900/19 (I);
3. In Section 1.2.1, describe the relevance of the project with ITTO Guidelines on Gender Equality and Empowering Women (GEEW);
4. Improve Section 1.3 with further clarification on the following issues: Who owns the lands where bamboo is harvested? How are the harvesting rights? How is the bamboo industry sector organized?;
5. In Section 1.4, add elaboration on expected outcome related to gender issues;
6. In Section 2.1.1, redefine various roles of institutions involved in the project and their relationship with the Executing Agency. In 2.1.2, clarify the statement on 'foster father for farmers' of private firm stakeholder;
7. In Section 3.1.2, provide information on the availability of know-how and facilities to undertake the tissue culture propagation technology;
8. In Section 3.4, refine the budget presentation. Use English decimal system. Clarify the sub-contract items in the budget table and link them with appropriate TORs. Increase the budget allocation for ITTO monitoring and review to US\$18,000;
9. In Section 4.1.1, improve and clarify the Executing Agency and its relationship with its higher organization (FOERDIA); and
10. Include an Annex that shows the responses to the above overall assessment and specific recommendations and respective modifications in tabular form. Modifications should also be highlighted (**bold and underline**) in the text.

C) Conclusion

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

Assessment by the Fifty-fourth Panel

A) Overall Assessment

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

However, the Panel noted a number of weaknesses in several sections of the pre-project proposal: Those changes are listed in the Specific Recommendations.

B) Specific Recommendations

1. The number of staff involved in the pre-project and the personnel total amount seem too numerous and should be reduced;
2. Under the same paragraph 3.5.3, the budget component 70: National management cost should be put under Executive Agency budget contribution;
3. Reformulate paragraph 3.2 as requested in the Manuel of project formulation;
4. As stated in the pre-project document, there is no timber processing facility in Togo. Therefore, the pre-project should clarify why a feasibility study is necessary on a timber processing facility. It should also expand and explain in details the outputs of the pre-projects which are too vague and unspecific. Also, the gains of the pre-project are not sufficiently emphasized;
5. Furthermore elaborate preliminary identification of the problem. If previous researches have already been conducted, they should be clearly mentioned in the pre-project and the conclusions of these researches should also be highlighted;
6. Reformulate the outputs and theirs indicators in paragraph 3.1;
7. Some information from paragraph 1.2.1 (*conformity with ITTO's objectives and priorities*) should be moved to 2.1.2 (*specific objective*);
8. The country policies should be highlighted in paragraphs 1.1 and 2.2;
9. Paragraph 3.3 (*approaches and methods*) should be expanded and broadened;
10. The pre-project should highlight how surveys will be conducted and what the research methodology will be;
11. The pre-project should clarify the expected role of the co-funding partners;
12. The pre-project should also present an alternative scenario in which the timber facility cannot be established;
13. Budget should be modified and clarified accordingly with these recommendations; and
14. Include an Annex that shows the responses to the above overall assessment and specific recommendations and respective modifications in tabular form. Modifications should also be highlighted (**bold and underlined**) in the text.

C) Conclusion

Category 2: The Panel concluded that the pre-project proposal requires essential modifications and will be returned to the proponent. The Panel will need to assess the revised pre-project proposal before it can commend it to the Committee for final appraisal.

Assessment by the Fifty-fourth Panel

A) Overall Assessment

The Panel noted the proposal has been resubmitted following the sunset status of the same project proposal PD 694/13 Rev.1 (M). The Panel considered the relevancy of the project with the current situation teak development in Ghana.

The project aims is to promote sustainable, profitable, quality teak plantation development on farmlands thereby curtailing deforestation and degradation of farmlands/agricultural lands, expanding timber resource base and improving livelihood. The project proposal outlined two Specific Objectives which in accordance with ITTO manual should be consolidated into one.

B) Specific Recommendations

1. Improve the Table of Contents by adding the missing sub section 3.4.3 Yearly project budget by source-Executing Agency and Annexes of Terms of Reference of personnel and consultants and sub contracts funded by ITTO;
2. In Section 2.1.3, refine and consolidate the problem analysis into concise but robust statements. Improve significantly the Problem Tree with appropriate and correct causal-effect relationship. Carefully check the assignment of causes and sub-causes. Some of them are assigned the other way round. Each sub-cause can be directly linked to cause. Rephrase the core problem so that it is in conformity with the Specific Objective statement. Following these revisions, the Objective Tree needs to be amended accordingly. Move the Objective Tree into Section 2.1.3. Delete Figure 2;
3. In Section 2.1.4, refine the indicators into SMART (Specific, Measurable, Appropriate, Realistic, Time-bound) indicators. Remove the description and explanation of the inclusion of Specific Objective 2 from the section;
4. In Section 3.1.1 and 3.1.2, amend the outputs and activities. The outputs outlined in Section 3.1.1 do not correspond with the Problem Tree as well the Objective Tree. Revisit and reconsider the activities into appropriate outputs. For example: Activities 1.2 and 3 of Output 1 do not have strong relationship with the output itself;
5. In Section 3.3, remove Item Output 5/5.1 from the table;
6. In Section 3.4, revise the budget arrangement in accordance with ITTO manual for project formulation. Provide budget breakdown for each component, sub-category and sources (ITTO and Executing Agency). Reduce overall budget, especially for personnel (around 32% of the total budget), revise the budget of ITTO monitoring and review to US\$21,000. Include budget for ITTO Ex-post Evaluation; and
7. Include an Annex that shows the responses to the above overall assessment and specific recommendations and respective modifications in tabular form. Modifications should also be highlighted (**bold and underline**) in the text.

C) Conclusion

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

PD 897/19 (M)

Business Management Services Program in Guatemala – Second Phase

Assessment by the Fifty-fourth Panel

A) Overall Assessment

The Panel recognized that the aim of this project is to contribute to poverty alleviation and local development by strengthening community enterprises involved in the production and marketing of timber and non-timber products and environmental services and improve local business management capacities to develop and manage community MSMEs in Guatemala.

The Panel acknowledged that this proposal is regarded by the proponent as the “second phase” of Project PD 756/14 Rev.1 (M): “Development of a business management services programme for forest MSMEs in Guatemala”, and also noted that the proponent is expecting to strengthen the business management plans by expanding to more MSMEs.

However, the Panel noted that most sections of the proposal appeared as copies from the project document of PD 756/14 Rev.1 (M) including stakeholder and problem analysis, development and specific objective and indicators, outputs and activities, and implementation approaches and arrangements. The Panel did not see any adding value to the previous project except the increase of MSMEs and budget.

Furthermore, as for a full project, a number of significant weaknesses were remained in relevant sections and sub-sections, especially the social, culture, economic and environment aspects, the institutional set-up and organizational issues, problem analysis tree, workplan, and the project budget.

Nevertheless, the Panel acknowledged the potential of this project building on the positive final evaluation reports for PD 756/14 Rev.1 (M) and encouraged the proponent to reformulate the proposal by taking into account the above comments.

B) Conclusion

Category 4: The Panel concluded that it could not commend the proposal to the Committee, and submits it to the Committee with the recommendation not to approve the project proposal.

Assessment by the Fifty-fourth Panel

A) Overall Assessment

The Panel recognized that the aim of this pre-project is to fill knowledge gaps on bamboo and rattan potentials, thoroughly map stakeholders, and firm up the political and financial investments of ASEAN member states stakeholders in the formulation of a full project proposal and eventual participation in the program.

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

However, the Panel further noted that the pre-project proposal could be further improved in some sections and sub-sections and suggested the specific recommendations mentioned below for that purpose, such as the stakeholders and problem analysis, outputs and activities, the project budget, and implementation arrangements.

B) Specific Recommendations

1. As a regional pre-project, it needs letters of support from each country involved and/or ASEAN;
2. Add a stakeholder analysis in the Relevance section;
3. Clearly elaborate the key problem and its logical links with causes and effects;
4. Clearly define the development objective and specific objective of the full project to be formulated via this pre-project;
5. Clearly define the outputs;
6. Follow ITTO manual for preparing the budget by components for ITTO and the EA separately and in detail;
7. Include an Annex that shows the overall assessment and specific recommendations of the 54th Expert Panel and respective modifications in tabular form. Modifications should also be highlighted (**bold and underline**) in the text.

C) Conclusion

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