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ITTO / OIBT / OIMT



Federal Ministry
of Food
and Agriculture

B.M.E.L.

Concept Note

ITTO REGIONAL WORKSHOP ON SMALLHOLDER FOREST LANDSCAPE RESTORATION (FLR) IN WEST AFRICA

27-29 November 2019, Lomé, Togo

1) Background

Forest landscape restoration (FLR) initiatives have grown enormously in the international community since the publication of the *ITTO Guidelines for the Restoration, Management and Rehabilitation of Degraded and Secondary Tropical Forests*, which were developed in collaboration with IUCN, WWF, CIFOR and FAO in 2002.

Global FLR commitments include the Bonn Challenge (2011) to restore 150 million hectares by 2020 as a contribution to early action on REDD+ under UNFCCC; the CBD's Aichi Biodiversity Target 15; the New York Declaration on Forests (2014) to restore 350 million hectares by 2030; the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 15; and the United Nations Strategic Plan for Forests 2017-2030 (UNSPF) Global Forest Goal 1 call for efforts to prevent forest degradation and contribute to the global effort of addressing climate change.

The IPCC Special Report released in October 2018 makes it very clear: without massive investment efforts in landscape restoration, including productive forests, and the use of forest-based products as part of an effective circular economy, there is little chance of keeping the global temperature increase within the UNFCCC target of 1.5 °C. It is now well-recognized view that FLR can contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation by increasing the productivity of forest lands to deliver goods and services, enhancing the resilience of forest ecosystems, and reducing the vulnerability of forest-dependent local communities.

West African forests on public lands are state-owned classified forests (*forêts classées*). Their quality has degraded for decades mainly resulting from a high population pressure and grazing, and more recently exacerbated by civil conflicts which have driven people into migration and occupying forests for shelter, firewood and subsistence farming. Smallholder forestry organized into community forest plantations is considered to offer a good potential for FLR because it can increase local supply of firewood and at the same time strengthen livelihoods from timber products. It is therefore deemed utmost necessary to accelerate and facilitate the sustainable development of smallholders FLR in West Africa and beyond.

2) Organizers of the Lomé regional workshop

The Lomé regional workshop in Togo is being co-organized by the ITTO Secretariat and the Office de Développement et d'Exploitation des Forêts (ODEF) with support of the Ministry of Environment, Sustainable Development and Nature Protection of Togo.

The Lomé regional workshop is based on the implementation of Activity 3 of ITTO LSSC Programme: *"Promotion of smallholders' forest landscape restoration in West Africa"*. The ITTO LSSC Programme is funded by the German Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture (BMEL).

3) Objectives of the Lomé regional workshop

The Lomé regional workshop in Togo aims to contribute to more effective implementation of forest landscape restoration (FLR) in ITTO member countries in Africa Region. It is also an opportunity to share the countries' best practices on intensifying the sustainable development of smallholders FLR in West Africa. Specifically, the Lomé regional workshop intends, among others, to:

- Update global FLR initiatives and the newly drafted ITTO guidelines for FLR in the tropics which have been prepared under a joint initiative of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF);
- Discuss main lessons learned from designing and implementing FLR programs/projects at local and national levels in Africa, with a special focus on the involvement of forest plantation smallholders in ITTO member countries in West Africa (namely Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia, Ghana, Mali and Togo);
- Analyze government's policies and measures, and capacity building for improved silvicultural practices and legal and sustainable supply chain development for the sustainable development of smallholders FLR in West Africa; and
- Identify recommended actions for effective promotion of smallholders FLR in ITTO member countries in Africa to support the achievement of SDGs especially SDG 15 "Life on land", SDG 12 "Sustainable supply and consumption", and SDG 8 "Decent work and economic growth".

To ensure informed discussions and outcomes for the regional workshop, the draft of the new ITTO Guidelines for forest landscape restoration (FLR) being currently developed by a multidisciplinary expert team, will be a main reference to the workshop. Participants will have the opportunity to learn about these Guidelines and share their FLR experiences and views.

The outcomes of the Lomé regional workshop will be reported to the ITTC at its 55th Session to be held in Lomé (Togo), from 2 to 7 December 2019. More information on ITTC-55 can be accessed in the ITTO website through the following link: https://www.itto.int/council_committees/documents/

4) Language of the workshop: French and English

5) Participants

It is expected the Lomé regional workshop will be attended by around 25-30 participants. Invited member countries in Africa are: Benin, Cameroon, Central African, Republic Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Gabon, Ghana, Liberia, Mali, Mozambique, and Togo.

Due to the budget constraint of the regional workshop, sponsored participants will be limited to ITTO Focal Points and selected FLR experts.

6) Workshop venue

IMMEUBLE HOTEL ECOLE LE BENIN (HOTEL LE BENIN, in short).
Avenue du Général de Gaulle
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7) Contact Points:

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