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FIFTY-SIXTH SESSION
9 - 13 November 2020
Virtual Session

**PRESENTATION UNDER AGENDA ITEM 20(a) OF THE COUNCIL
AGENDA, DOCUMENT ITTC(LVI)/12**

REPORT OF THE 55TH EP MEETING



Expert Panel for Technical Appraisal of ITTO Project Proposals

Report of the 55th EP Meeting
Virtual Review, August/September 2020

Item 20(a) of the Provisional Agenda
Document ITTC(LVI)/12

56th Session of the International Tropical Timber Council, ITTC
Virtual Session, 9 - 13 November 2020



Implications of COVID-19

- The 55th Expert Panel was scheduled to be held at the ITTO Secretariat in Yokohama, 22-25 June 2020;
- Due to continued exigencies of the COVID-19 pandemic including immigration restrictions, quarantine requirements, disruption and/or cancelations of flight routes, it was not possible to physically convene the meeting or to reschedule;
- To avoid excessive delay in considering the proposal received under the Spring & Autumn 2020 cycles, the Secretariat proposed a virtual assessment procedure to the EP members;
- The proposed procedure was endorsed by the EP members.
- Review was conducted through electronic means in Aug/Sep 2020



Members of the 55th Expert Panel

Producer Group	Consumer Group
Mr. Arevalo, Rosven (Colombia)	Ms. Ghadiali, Aysha (U.S.A.)
Mr. Dambis, Kaip (Papua New Guinea)	Mr. Konishi, Rikiya / Ms. Tabata, Akiko (Japan)
Mr. Iddrisu, Mohammed Nurudeen (Ghana)	Mr. Shim, Kugbo (Korea)
Mr. Leigh, John (Peru)	Mr. Zhang, Zhongtian (China)
Mr. Lokossou, Achille Orphée (Benin)	<i>Nomination pending</i>
Mr. Sidabutar, Hiras (Indonesia)	<i>Nomination pending</i>



Mandate of the Expert Panel

- To assess pre-/project proposals in accordance with the Terms of Reference of the Expert Panel (*see Annex 1 of the EP Report*)
- To screen the proposals relevance to ITTA Objectives and ITTO's Action Plan, Council decisions, programs and ITTO guidelines
- To recommend amendments & if major, request resubmission
- To take into consideration previous reports of the EP
- To report on the results of the assessment to Council, Committees and submitting Governments



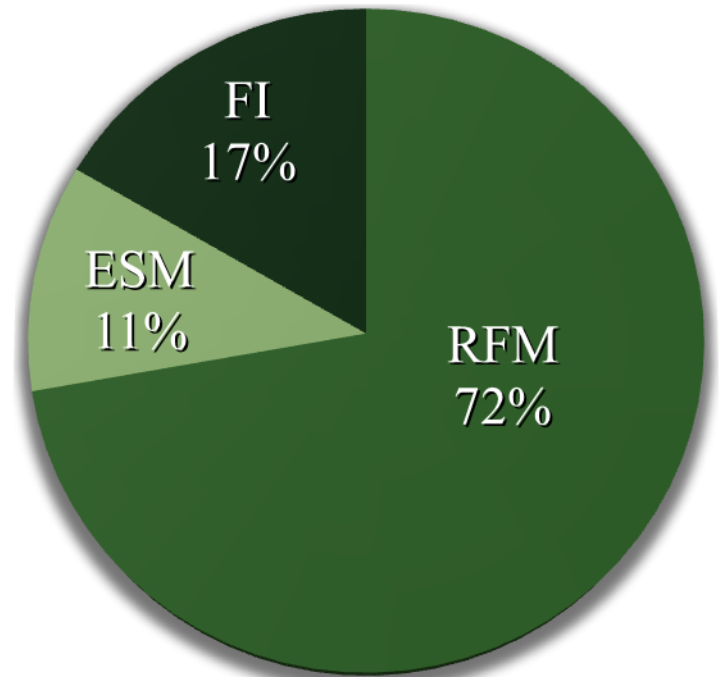
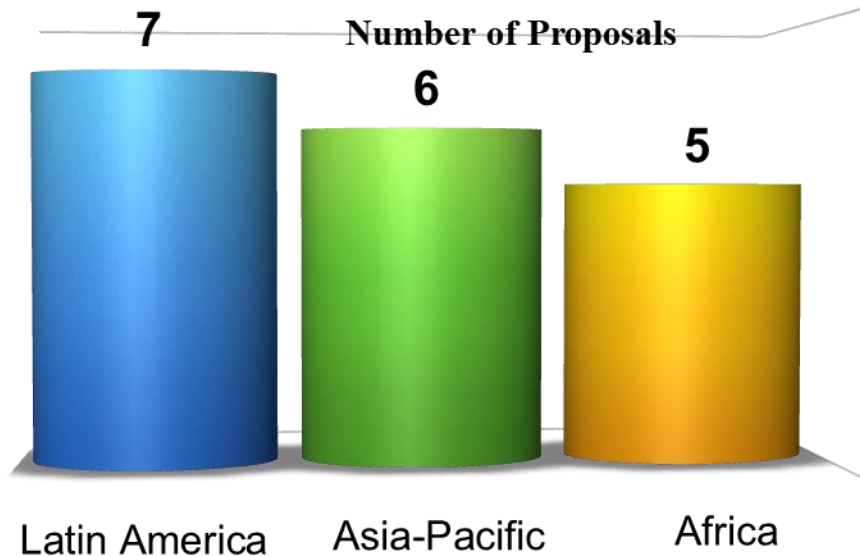
18 proposals assessed in 2020

18 proposals received under Spring & Autumn 2020 cycles

16 project and 2 pre-project proposals

7 Latin America; 6 Asia-Pacific; 5 Africa

13 RFM; 3 FI; 2 ESM



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



The virtual process

1. Each proposal was assigned to 2 EP members (*one Producer country and one from a Consumer country*)
2. Each Panel member completed the common appraisal sheet (*Scoring Table*) for the proposals assigned to her/him (*to be returned to the Secretariat*)
3. If both EP members ranked a proposal as Category 1 (*commended to the Committee with only minor modifications required*), such proposal would go forward to the Committee/Council for approval
4. If both EP members ranked a proposal as Category 4 (*not in line with ITTO objectives or requiring complete revision*), the proposal was returned to the proponent
5. In all other cases reviewers have a divergence of views/rank differently, reviewers rank a proposal as Category 2 (requiring essentials revisions) or Category 3 (a pre-project is required), such proposals would be held until such time that the panel can physically meet.



The virtual process

Two EP members/proposal (*Producer/Consumer*)



EP members apply the common criteria and the scoring system



If both EP members rank a proposal 'Category 1', the proposal will be commended to Council/Committees



If both EP members rank a proposal 'Category 4', the proposal will be returned to proponent

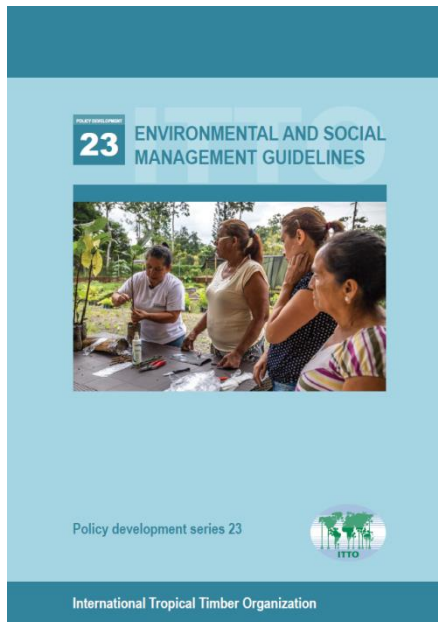


In all other cases the proposal will be held until the EP can physically meet (*e.g., divergence of views; reviewers rank differently; ranking Cat. 2 or 3*)



Criteria for the assessment

- Based on the ITTO Manual for Project Formulation, 3rd Edition (2009)
- A comprehensive weighted scoring system to support the technical appraisal of each project proposal
- ITTO Policy Guidelines on Gender Equality and Empowering Women (GEEW)
- ITTO Environmental and Social Management Guidelines



ITTO POLICY GUIDELINES ON GENDER EQUALITY AND EMPOWERING WOMEN (GEEW)

I. PURPOSE

1. ITTO is committed to gender mainstreaming and enhancing gender equality outcomes across its policy and project work. ITTO's Policy Guidelines on Gender Equality and Empowering Women (GEEW) institutionalize this commitment. The Policy Guidelines serve as a framework for gender integration and mainstreaming in ITTO policies, plans, programmes, projects, activities and internal functioning and are intended to enhance the impact and effectiveness of the Organization's operations in all areas and at all levels.

II. RATIONALE

2. Through the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, all ITTO Members recognize the crucial role of gender equality to realizing sustainable development and are committed to advancing Sustainable Development Goal 5: To achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls. In this context, ITTO recognizes that:

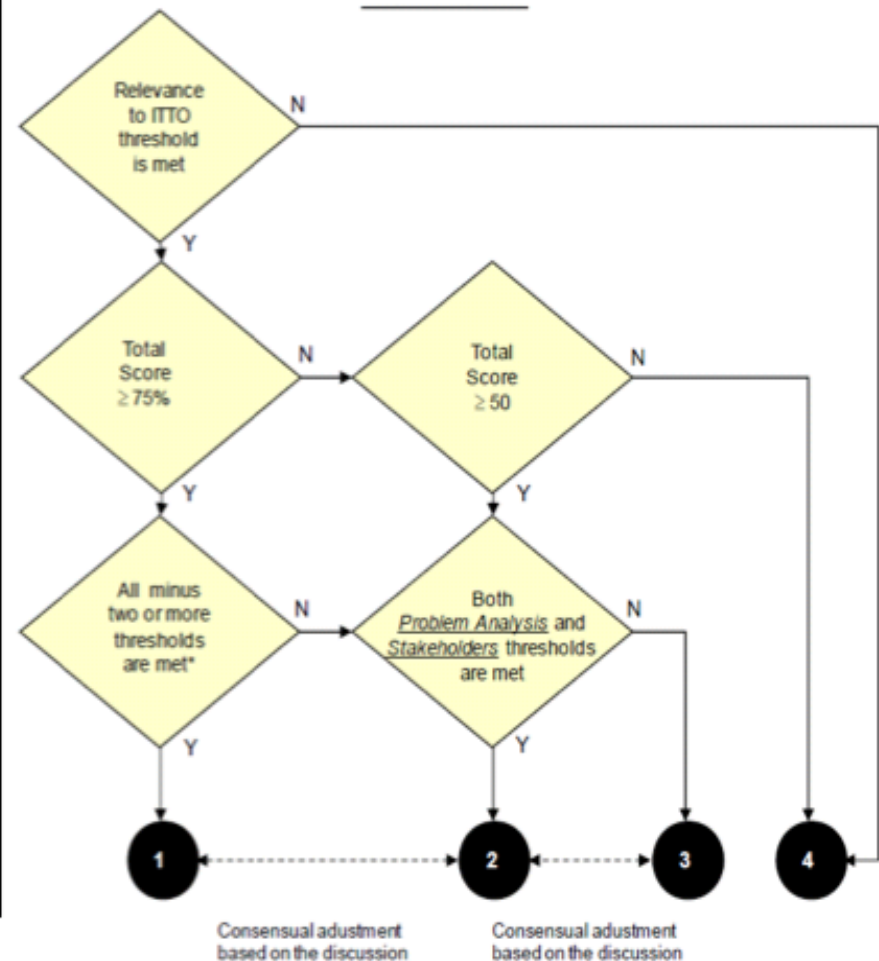
- Gender equality and empowering women are essential to achieving sustainable forest management, including the sustainable management of tropical timber producing forests, which is a core ITTO objective.
- Women participate in the forest sector in diverse ways and within different cultural and geographic contexts, including as part of indigenous and local communities, as migrants, as farmers, and as workers, technicians and professionals.
- In many rural communities, particularly in producer countries, men and women typically play different roles in forestry and agroforestry systems. Women are often primary collectors and users of forest resources, such as fuelwood, wild foods and medicinal herbs, have traditional knowledge of forest management practices that are often inherently sustainable, and make specific contributions to tropical forest value chains which are important for household incomes and well-being.
- Due to a variety of interrelated cultural, social, economic and institutional factors, which vary from country to country and sometimes within countries, women are often disadvantaged in the forest sector. Specific disadvantages vary depending on the spheres(s) in which the women operate, which may be rural, urban, indigenous, local, national, technical, professional, public and/or private.
- Despite their crucial role in forest management, many women are limited in their control over forest lands, access to financial resources, technology, education and training, share in forest-based benefits, and decision-making opportunities.
- Women are also often disadvantaged in tropical timber-based industries where they may not have equal access to employment opportunities or receive equal pay for equal work.
- In many Member countries, women are underrepresented, particularly at senior levels, in forest authorities, institutions and organizations, as well as in tropical forest-based processing and manufacturing industries and international trade groups. This hampers their ability to influence, and bring their perspectives to bear on, public and private sector decisions.
- In addition to cultural biases, the lack of sex-disaggregated data and statistics on the role of women in forestry, particularly in trade and industry, hampers the development of policy interventions to address gender inequalities.
- The potential of women to engage in, contribute to and benefit from the international forest-based economy as leaders, participants and agents of change, has yet to be fully realized. More work is needed by all stakeholders at all levels, including the ITTO.





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

The scoring system in practice





The Scoring System

The scoring system promotes the objective and efficient work of the Expert Panel by:

- Guiding the assessment
- Reducing the subjectivity
- Compelling to look close at all aspects
- Balancing the importance of the different aspects
- Promoting consistency
- Helping to issue recommendations
- Discussion by all members of the EP

The Scoring System serves as a tool, but at the end the final decision depends on discussion among the EP Members.



The Final Categories

Category 1: Proposal commended to the Council & Committees

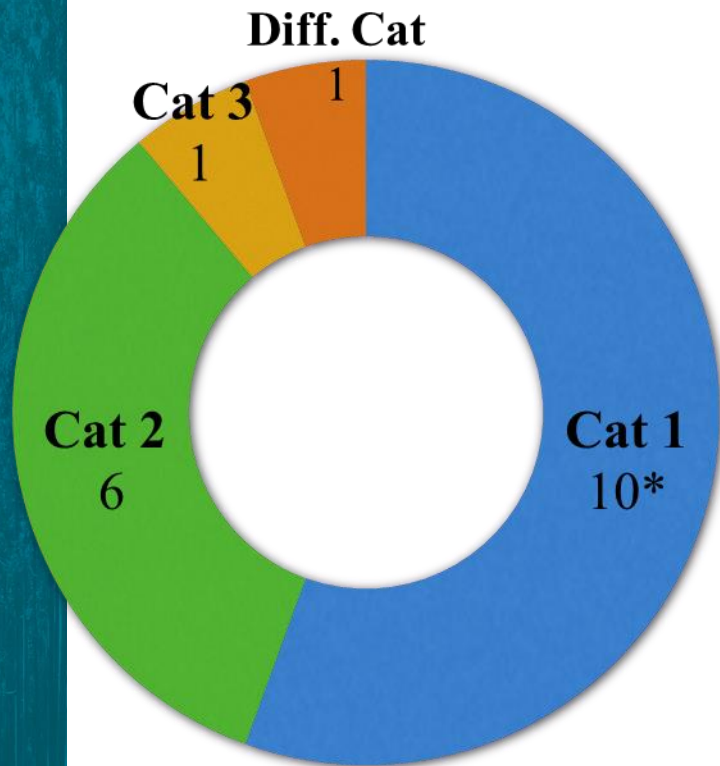
Category 2: Proposal requires essential modifications > revision > resubmission to EP

Category 3: Pre-project Proposal is required

Category 4: not recommended and submitted to the Committee with recommendation not to approve the Project Proposal (*e.g. complete reformulation is necessary; or in case of the project rev.2 proposals, because proponents don't attend properly the recommendations made by the panel; insufficient information*)



Results of the 55th Expert Panel



- Category 1 = 10;
- Category 2 = 6;
- Category 3 = 1;
- Different Ranking = 1;

- On 15 October 2020 members were informed that the Category I proposals had been posted for the time-bound electronic no objection procedure

- As no objections were received by the deadline (29 October 2020), the list of proposals pending finance on the ITTO website has been updated accordingly

* *Benin (1), Guatemala (1), Indonesia (1), Malaysia (3), Panama (1), Peru (2), Togo (1)*



Thank you