ITTO

TFU

Promoting the conservation and sustainable development of tropical forests

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Polishing tropical timber's green credentials

Wood is an obvious part of the answer to some of the world's complex crises. As a renewable material that embodies carbon, the forests from which it is harvested anchor the global climate; when those forests are managed sustainably, harvesting timber helps protect biodiversity and water supplies while providing livelihoods and other goods and services.

Tropical wood products can also deliver critical solutions for recovery in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic. But there is still work to be done to help producers deliver tropical timber sustainably—and to convince sceptical buyers that it really is a green material.

This edition of Tropical Forest Update illustrates several initiatives that are strengthening tropical timber's green credentials, with the aim of helping it to secure the recognition and market access that it deserves.

At the XV World Forestry Congress in the Republic of Korea, ITTO placed tropical forestry and wood products at the heart of the global sustainable solutions we need. The article beginning on page 3 highlights ITTO interventions across a series of high-level discussions during the 2–6 May Congress in Seoul as well as presentations of some of its latest activities.

ITTO Executive Director Sheam Satkuru informed delegates that sustainable forestry was an underappreciated example of "bioeconomy" and "nature-based solutions" gaining traction as means for building greener, healthier and more-resilient societies. "Sustainable forest harvesting is *not* deforestation; it is wood security, and wood should be given the value it deserves," she said. During the Congress, Ms Satkuru called for effective advocacy to dispel mistrust and misperceptions about the tropical wood industry in some consumer markets.

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Cover image: Coding a cumaru log in Madre de Dios, Peru. *Photo: CNF*
Above: View of Minato-Mirai, Yokohama. *Photo: R. Carrillo/ITTO*

ITTO also co-organized and participated in several sessions highlighting various aspects of sustainable forestry across the tropics.

The Congress, which drew more than 15 000 participants from over 140 countries either in person or online, concluded with a declaration identifying priority areas for action, including the need to ramp up investment in forest and landscape restoration.

In line with the Congress declaration, the second article in this edition, by Ngo Sy Hoai, describes an ITTO project in Viet Nam—the organization's first in the Southeast Asian country—designed to help farmers and processors increase the value of planted acacia. The project's objectives included an increase in the proportion of larger diameter acacia timber and the share of certified timber in three pilot provinces.

Shifting Viet Nam's acacia plantations in this direction would help meet demand from the export-oriented wood processing industry in the context of a recently signed voluntary partnership agreement with the European Union and the implementation of the Viet Nam Timber Legality Assurance System.

Easing the trade in sustainable timber is the key aim of the revamped Timber Trade Portal, which is featured on page 13. Esther Boer and Rutger de Wolf explain how the online portal, supported by ITTO, helps operators and traders to access comprehensive, factual and up-to-date information that makes it easier to prove the legality of their timber, for instance on the often-complex due-diligence requirements in different importing countries.

Other articles in this edition detail a newly developed ITTO-backed training programme for legal and sustainable supply chains in the Congo Basin; efforts to combine participatory community forest management and REDD+ projects in the highlands of Guatemala; and the insights of an ITTO Fellowship recipient into conflict management in protected areas in her native Indonesia.

How the timber industry is being tossed around by global economic and political turbulence is at the centre of the "Market trends" feature on page 23. Many timber producers and processors, already badly disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic, face further uncertainty because of the impact of the Russian invasion of Ukraine on global wood trade.

While the war is causing death and suffering in Ukraine as well as negative and disruptive impacts worldwide, it has also sharpened discussions about sustainability. That can ultimately help to increase understanding of the need for renewable materials, including tropical timber. ITTO will continue to work with its partners to demonstrate and communicate the message that tropical timber—produced sustainably, traded fairly and used efficiently—is part of a better future for people and the planet.

The green future of tropical timber

At the recently convened World Forestry Congress, ITTO stressed the role of tropical timber as a sustainable solution to complex global challenges

by Ramon Carrillo

Communications and Outreach Officer, ITTO (carrillo@itto.int)

Putting tropical timber's case: ITTO stressed the credentials of sustainable timber and wood products as a solution to the world's complex crises during the XV World Forestry Congress in Seoul. *Photo: Hwan Ok Ma/ITTO*

Tropical forestry that benefits people and nature is important for the sustainable development needed for effective recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and to combat the triple global environmental crisis of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution.

This was among the messages delivered by ITTO and other tropical forestry experts during the fifteenth meeting of the World Forestry Congress. Hosted by the Republic of Korea on 2–6 May 2022, the Congress drew more than 15 000 participants from over 140 countries either in person or online to explore opportunities and challenges under the theme of "building a green, healthy and resilient future with forests."

ITTO Executive Director Sheam Satkuru and other ITTO representatives actively participated in a series of high-level discussions as well as policy and technical sessions during the five-day gathering in Seoul, billed as the largest ever gathering on forests. ITTO contributed to the Congress as a member of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF) Consultative Group and a Gold Sponsor with an exhibition booth to disseminate information on the organization's work to visitors.

Sustainable benefits

On the opening day, in a dialogue on climate change, conflict and food insecurity, Ms Satkuru emphasized how sustainably managed tropical forests conserve soil and water, filter the air, prevent land degradation and desertification, reduce the risk of floods, landslides, droughts and other disasters. At the same time, they provide stakeholders, including local communities, with much-needed timber, income and materials.

Ms Satkuru also addressed questions on governance; the role of the timber industry in the tropics; the future of young people, women and Indigenous communities; the value, scalability and replicability of successful small ITTO projects; and the repercussions of armed conflicts. She noted that the tropical forest sector has changed dramatically in the last 40 years and is well-organized in several tropical countries, but the support of government is essential when it comes to good governance.

Ms Satkuru noted that while "bioeconomy" and "nature-based solutions" are gaining traction as means for building greener, healthier and more-resilient societies, it is important to provide concrete examples. Sustainable forest management (SFM)—although often taken for granted—is one such example because it provides legally and sustainably produced wood, the most environment-friendly construction material. "Sustainable forest harvesting is *not* deforestation; it is wood security, and wood should be granted the value it deserves," she said.

Getting to know ITTO: A visitor browses through information on ITTO's activities during the XV World Forestry Congress. *Photo: R. Carrillo/ITTO*

Later, during a session on landscape approaches, Ms Satkuru stressed the importance of sustainable finance and cross-sectoral cooperation among agriculture, infrastructure, mining and forestry for the conservation of natural tropical forests.

"Coherent approaches are needed for scaling up landscape restoration in the tropics and ensuring economic gains, environmental and social protection," said Ms Satkuru. "If tropical forests generate sustainable decent incomes, they will remain rather than being converted to other land-uses".

Tropical timber's green credentials

On day two of the Congress, ITTO co-organized a special event on "Sustainable Investments in Forests for People, Profit and Nature". Experts stressed how greater forest finance can catalyse low-carbon economic growth, green jobs and ecosystem restoration while delivering attractive returns, in turn contributing to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

The need for good governance and tropical timber's environmental credentials also featured on day three during a plenary session on the future of wood as a raw material. Panellists noted how increasing recognition of timber as environmentally friendly coupled with technological advances create opportunities to expand the use of sustainable wood.

Speaking at the session, Ms Satkuru said exploiting those opportunities requires effective advocacy to dispel mistrust and misperceptions about the tropical wood industry in some consumer markets. She also noted that the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's latest reports have established the centrality of SFM and the use of wood products to climate-change mitigation and adaptation efforts.

ITTO also participated in a session on strengthening governance and verification systems to counter deforestation and forest degradation; a special event on the role of forests in the recovery from COVID-19; a fire management forum; and a side-event on building data foundations for sustainable forest management.

Managing forest fires: ITTO took part in a fire management forum during the Congress. *Photo: SERFOR*

Fostering forest education and youth

ITTO, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the International Union of Forest Research Organizations (IUFRO) partnered in 2019 in a global project designed to catalyze, accelerate and enhance forest education at the national and local levels in developing countries. Results of the project were presented during the Congress,

Generation sustainability: ITTO's work raises awareness of sustainable forestry and is an example of the organization's commitment to supporting the next generation of forestry professionals, including through its Fellowship Programme. *Photo: Sarawak Forest Department*

including two digital education platforms launched in 2021: *forestra*, a resource-sharing gateway developed by IUFRO; and an online course on legal and sustainable supply chains (LSSC)[1], based on ITTO's work on the production, trade and use of forest products, under its Programme on Legal and Sustainable Supply Chains of Tropical Wood and Tropical Forest Products.

ITTO also participated in a special event "The Future is Now: 'Investing' in Young Professionals & Career Development". The event provided insights and recommendations on improving career development within the forest sector, and establishing a culture and/or a space for young professionals to share their expertise and perspectives. The event recognized that ITTO's long-running Fellowship Programme[2] is an effective mechanism to promote human resource development and strengthen professional expertise in tropical forestry and related disciplines. The ITTO programme awarded three fellowships to young professionals so that they could attend the Congress.

Opportunities for teak sector

ITTO joined forces with IUFRO and Teaknet to highlight the role of a vibrant teak sector in building back better and improving livelihoods following the COVID-19 crisis. The Congress event also shared the results of an ongoing ITTO initiative to assist governments, local communities and smallholders to improve natural teak forest management, production and marketing in the Greater Mekong Subregion. The initiative aims to facilitate the establishment of legal and sustainable teakwood supply chains while improving national economies and the livelihoods of local communities.

The event set the stage for the 4th World Teak Conference[3] in Accra, Ghana on 5–8 September 2022, where ITTO will be present.

[1] https://lsscourse.com Read the TFU article on ITTO's Online LSSC course in TFU issue No. 30/3–4 at www.itto.int/tfu/2022/01/07/council_appoints_new_executive_director/

[2] www.itto.int/fellowship/

[3] www.worldteakconference2020.com/

International forest reporting processes

ITTO co-organized a side-event showcasing the utility of explicit forest reporting frameworks, such as those built around criteria and indicators, in providing a comprehensive picture of forest conditions and their sustainability subject to spatial scale and context. Panellists noted the critical importance of consistency across reporting platforms and the value of accurate interpretation of information gathered for policy- and decision-making.

Women's champion: Cécile Ndjebet, a Cameroonian activist for gender equality in forest management who is involved in several ITTO activities, receives the 2022 Wangari Maathai award. *Photo: World Forest Voices*

ITTO projects in poster sessions

Two ITTO projects—one in Brazil and another in Fiji—presented posters at the Congress.

The poster on the Brazilian project[4] showcased initiatives for timber production in community forest in the Amazon. It emphasized the value that sound forest management practices, such as reduced impact logging, have for forest conservation while also promoting entrepreneurship in the community. The poster asserted that projects assisting forest communities in the production of legal and sustainable timber should be further enhanced with participatory approaches.

The Fijian poster featured the role of empowered women in the restoration of mangrove forests in the Rewa Delta. The corresponding project[5] has conducted community training and awareness-raising in six villages on the rehabilitation and restoration of degraded mangroves and wetlands, seed collection and seedling planting, and the ecological valuation of mangroves and wetlands, while also developing alternative livelihoods. The project has facilitated the inclusion of women in community decision-making processes, enabling them to lead and advocate on environmental issues that affect their lives. For example, the women's group in Nasilai planted 5 000 mangrove seedlings along the foreshore as part of their mangrove restoration and rehabilitation work.

[4] PD 452/07 Rev.5 (F), "Sustainable management of production forests at the commercial scale in the Brazilian Amazon – Phase II".

[5] PD 696/13 Rev.2 (F), "Community based restoration and sustainable management of vulnerable forests of the Rewa Delta, Fiji".

Stronger together: ITTO and the Asian Forest Cooperation Organization (AFoCO) agreed to strengthen their joint work. *Photo: AFOCO*

Strengthened ties with AFoCO

ITTO also marked the occasion of the Congress by enhancing its joint work with the Asian Forest Cooperation Organization (AFoCO). Ms Satkuru and AFoCO Executive Director Ricardo L. Calderon endorsed a memorandum of understanding to intensify cooperation on the conservation, restoration and sustainable management of tropical forests, as well as the sustainable production and consumption of forest products and ecosystem services.

Wangari Maathai award

In a ceremony at the Congress, Cameroonian activist Cécile Ndjebet, Founder and President of the African Women's Network for Community Management of Forests (REFACOF), won the 2022 Wangari Maathai Forest Champions Award. Presented by the CPF, of which ITTO is a member, the award recognizes Ms Ndjebet's outstanding contribution to preserving forests and improving the lives of people who depend on them.

Ms Ndjebet has been a tireless promotor of the involvement of women in forest management. In recent years, she has been involved in a mangrove restoration project in Cameroon and a forest restoration project in Togo, both of which have received ITTO support. ITTO has also invited her to events as an advocate for women's rights and to Council sessions as a member of the Civil Society Advisory Group.

Congress declaration

The Congress concluded with a declaration identifying priority areas for action.

Investment in forest and landscape restoration globally needs to triple by 2030 to meet internationally agreed commitments and targets on restoring degraded land, according to the declaration. The need for healthy, productive forests to reduce the risk of future pandemics and to provide other essential benefits for human physical and mental health.

Maria Helena Semedo, FAO Deputy Director-General, said the declaration sent "a powerful message that forests, forestry and forest stakeholders offer major solutions to the challenges the world currently faces, but action is needed now." This mirrors ITTO's aspirations, strongly advocated in recent years.

Read the Seoul Forest Declaration at https://www.fao.org/3/cc0160en/cc0160en.pdf. Details of the discussions at the XV World Forestry Congress are available at https://enb.iisd.org/xv-world-forestry-congress

Strengthening the "kingdom of acacia"

An ITTO project has enhanced the capacities of farmers and processors with the aim of increasing the value of planted acacia

By Ngo Sy Hoai

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Growth industry: A stand of three-year-old acacia at a plantation in Luc Ngan district, Bac Giang Province. *Photo: Cao Xuan Thanh/VIFOREST*

By the end of the Viet Nam War in 1975, the forest estate of the country was severely depleted due to shifting cultivation, overexploitation, illegal logging, forest conversion and other factors. To regreen denuded lands and barren hills, and stop illegal and legal deforestation, the Government of Viet Nam has over the last three decades banned the logging of natural forests and pursued a radical shift to plantation forestry.

The reform of land tenure through the extensive reallocation to farmers of forest lands owned by state forest enterprises, and the rapid development of the wood industry, have been key drivers for the development of commercial plantations.

Acacia was introduced to Viet Nam in the middle of the last century. With fast growth, site adaptive advantages, and good tolerance of pests and diseases, acacia has overtaken eucalyptus as the dominant planting species in the country. While small acacia wood is predominantly used to feed wood chip and wood pellet factories, larger-size wood is used to make furniture for local consumption and export. With newly developed acacia plantations covering about 3 million ha, Viet Nam has become a "kingdom of acacia" and a top exporter of wood products.

Room for improvement

The acacia business in Viet Nam is, however, in need of further improvements in both plantation establishment and acacia wood processing. Greater efficiency in these sectors would benefit more than 1 million farming households that grow acacia and the large number of workers engaged in the acacia timber supply chain.

The challenges include low-quality seedlings, improper plantation management, extremely high planting density (4 000 stems per ha) and short cutting rotation (at age 4–5 years). This has led to massive, but low-profit production of small wood for woodchip export with limited value addition. Moreover, the shortage of bigger-size and higer-quality wood leaves Vietnamese wooden product manufacturers dependent on imported raw material.

Efficiency improvements also include timber legality assurance. Viet Nam is moving quickly toward sustainable forest management (SFM) and responsible wood industry development. Its wood industry is highly targeted at overseas markets, and it recently signed a voluntary partnership agreement (VPA) with the European Union. The VPA aims to address illegal logging, improve forest governance and promote trade in legal timber products.

Viet Nam's first ITTO-backed project

To help Viet Nam address some of the challenges facing the forestry and wood industry sectors, an ITTO project[1] was implemented between 2018 and 2021. The project was the first in Viet Nam supported by ITTO after the country joined the organization in 2015.

The project set two main objectives. The first was to increase the proportion of larger-diameter acacia timber (> 15 cm) and the share of certified timber in three selected provinces. This would help meet demand from the wood processing industry in the context of the VPA and the implementation of the Vietnam Timber Legality Assurance System (VNTLAS).

[1] PD 815/16 Rev.2 (I) "Increasing efficiency of acacia plantation and timber processing industry in Viet Nam".

Extending the cycle: The author visiting a pilot plantation producing larger-size acacia timber in Binh Duong Province. *Photo: Cao Xuan Thanh/VIFOREST*

The second was to lift the value of acacia timber-based products in the three pilot provinces and thereby help to raise the efficiency of the forest sector and its contribution to the development of Viet Nam's economy.

The project included the following targets to be reached within three years of project completion: an increase in the production of larger diameter, improved quality and certified acacia timber in the three provinces of 35–45%; and an increase in the export value of acacia plantation products in the three pilot provinces of 20–25%.

Methods and activities

The project identified major problems facing Viet Nam's wood industry and proposed relevant countermeasures. These countermeasures include government policies to facilitate forestry companies and wood product manufactures to work jointly towards SFM and large-size timber plantations.

On the ground, to boost the supply of larger-size timber, the project helped acacia growers to access preferential loans or other support so that they could extend plantation rotations. Government-subsidized low interest loans are mostly directed to ethnic minorities and poorer farmers in remote areas rather than areas where acacia plantation growers are found. Therefore, the project focused on linking plantation farmers and wood processors, especially lead companies, who wished to help farmers to produce larger-size timber. Several members of VIFOREST (Woodsland, NAFOCO, Scancia, Hao Hung Corp., etc.) have since advanced payment to farmers so they could extend the cutting cycle to 7–8 years from the usual 4–5 years.

To encourage the supply of certified and higher-quality timber, the project trained more than 100 farmers in Nghe An Province on plantation management technologies and the benefits of large-scale plantations. The project also provided technical and financial support for the establishment of a nursery in the province. In 2020, an acacia hybrid developed by Thanh Thuy Forest Cooperative was recognized as qualified for commercial production.

The project also brought together dozens of timber growers and wood processing enterprises in workshops and training sessions to promote forest certification and improve the acacia timber supply chain.

On the industry side, the project addressed a lack of design and branding skills and access to appropriate technologies among wooden-furniture manufacturers. Through a series

Low value-added: Dense, short-cycle plantations often offer low profit margins. *Photo: Cao Xuan Thanh/VIFOREST*

Tomorrow's timber: The project introduced technologies for improved seedling propagation to support the establishment of high-yield plantations. *Photo: Cao Xuan Thanh/VIFOREST*

of workshops, meetings and trade fairs, the project provided wood processors with information on good business governance and connected them with suppliers of equipment for classifying, sawing, drying and preserving acacia timber. The project also trained more than 300 workers from wood processing firms to operate the machinery. Better skills and equipment are expected to reduce waste and raise the utilization rate of wood by 30–40% in targeted enterprises. The project also built a database of acacia plantations and acacia timber to support the design, marketing and development of new acacia timber products.

To raise awareness on the the applicability of VNTLAS for acacia plantations, the project also trained more than 200 representatives of wood companies and provided guidance on VNTLAS and due diligence, including on how to simplify procedures and reduce associated costs.

While it is too early to measure the lasting impact of some aspects of this first ITTO-supported project in Viet Nam, it can serve as a good example of how technical cooperation and modest funding can advance SFM and facilitate small businesses to move forward with responsible wood processing and trading.

Project outputs can be found by inserting the project code 815/16 Rev.2 (I) into the ITTO project search function at www.itto.int/project_search. This ITTO project was made possible by funding from the governments of the Republic of Korea and the United States of America.

Local to global in Guatemala's highlands

Safeguarding forests and livelihoods by combining community management with REDD+ in Quiché

By Marta Molina[1] and Walter Carrillo[2]

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Fragile forests: The Upper Rio Xaclbal basin, an area prioritized by the ITTO project. *Photo: Walter Carrillo/Calmecac*

As in many parts of the world, poor communities in rural Guatemala are vulnerable to the degradation of natural resources on which many depend for their livelihoods. An ITTO project[3] in the highlands of western Guatemala has sought to create opportunities for local people and reduce the pressure on forests by supporting the development of sustainable management practices in community forests.

The project was implemented over an area of about 600 km^2 in Santa María Nebaj, a municipality in the department of Quiché that lies about 1 800 metres above sea level in the Sierra de los Cuchumatanes mountain range (Figure 1). The municipality is culturally rich and complex, with social structures, ties and traditions that are closely linked to the conservation and traditional management of natural resources and biodiversity. The Ixil ethnic group accounts for more than 85% of the local population.[4]

Forests under pressure

During the 2006–2010 period alone, the department of Quiché lost 38 971 ha of forest, or about 1.5% of its total forest cover. At the same time, a total of 45 999 ha of forest area was restored.[5] This resulted in a net gain of 7 027 ha of forest. However, forest regrowth usually results in a forest of lower ecological quality than the primary forests that were destroyed.

Moreover, a study of vulnerability to climate change in the country's western altiplano[6] has shown that municipalities including Santa María Nebaj are exposed to high risks related to climate factors and phenomena such as forest fires, soil erosion, water demand, deforestation and forest degradation.

The above issues, coupled with the ongoing problem of poverty in the area, have prompted the implementation of this ITTO-supported initiative. The project developed REDD+-based[7] alternatives to ensure the conservation and sustainable management of local forests, as well as economic options for communities living in conditions of extreme poverty.

A national framework

The initiative ties into various country-level programs, such as Guatemala's Framework Policy and Law on Climate Change and two forest incentive programmes[8] promoted by the National Forest Institute (*Instituto Nacional de Bosques* (INAB)). It also related to a proposal for the implementation of REDD+ strategies, within a context of community and municipal management, based on the National Strategy for Reducing Deforestation in Guatemala, in line with and recognized by the country-specific Emission Reduction

[3] ITTO PD 721/13 Rev.3 (F) "Building a participatory and inclusive sustainable forest management process for the reduction of deforestation and forest degradation in the Ixil forest areas of the Municipality of Nebaj, Quiché, Guatemala."
[4] 12th National Population Census and 7th Housing Census. Results Census 2018, Guatemala, December 2018.
[5] Map of Guatemala's forest cover and forest cover dynamics 2006–2010.
[6] Biota S.A. y The Nature Conservancy, 2014. Estudio sobre vulnerabilidad ante el cambio climático en el altiplano occidental de Guatemala (Study on vulnerability to climate change in the western altiplano of Guatemala)
[7] Under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), REDD+ refers to reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation and the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks in developing countries. For more on REDD+, see https://redd.unfccc.int/
[8] Forest Incentive Programme for Small Forest and Agroforestry Landholders *(Programa de Incentivos Forestales para Pequeños Poseedores de Tierras de Vocación Forestal o Agroforestal*–PINPEP) and the Incentive Programme for Forest Establishment, Restoration, Management, Production and Protection (*Programa de Incentivos para el Establecimiento, Recuperación, Manejo, Producción Protección de Bosques*–PROBOSQUE).

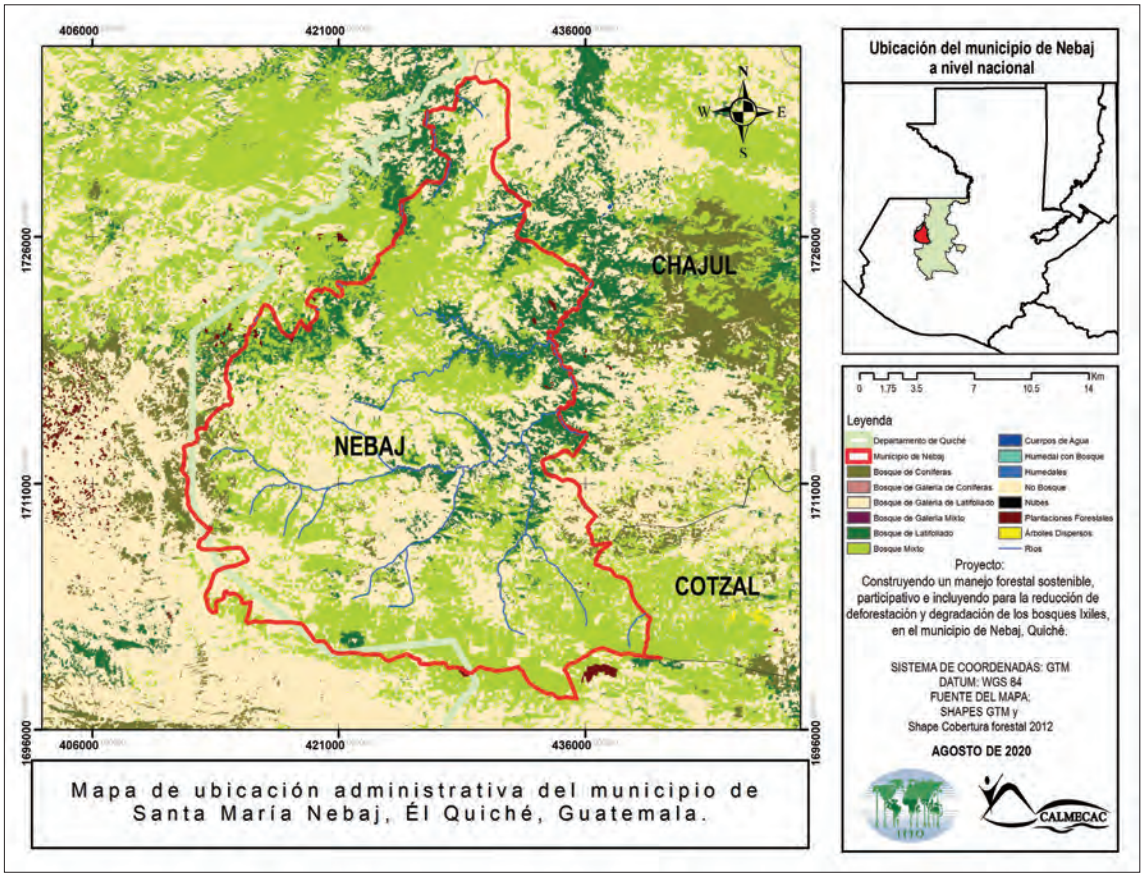


Figure 1: Map showing Santa Maria Nebaj, in the department of El Quiché, Guatemala

Program. The latter was endorsed by the government and the World Bank with the support of the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF) in October 2021.

The project successfully developed participatory processes based on organizational structures related to resource management and the use and tenure of forests by the population, municipalities and other stakeholders. It established agreements on forest management and trade and at the same time strengthened the collection of quantitative and qualitative information needed for forest management and planning, including deforestation projections, estimates of environmental service provision, and analysis of vulnerability to climate change.

Sustainable forest management plans

The project had three main outputs. Firstly, it developed and implemented sustainable forest management (SFM) plans for the conservation of community forests. To this end, fourteen training workshops were held on the Forest Incentive Programme for Small Forest and Agroforestry Landholders (*Programa de Incentivos Forestales para Pequeños Poseedores de Tierras de Vocación Forestal o Agroforestal*, or PINPEP) and the Incentive Programme for Forest Establishment, Restoration, Management, Production and Protection (*Programa de Incentivos para el Establecimiento, Recuperación, Manejo, Producción Protección de Bosques,* or PROBOSQUE). Ten of the workshops were held for groups involved in reforestation activities, while four workshops were held for groups of male and female village leaders.

Areas incorporated into the forest incentive programmes included 12 ha earmarked as plantation forest (mostly as part of agroforestry systems), and about 65 ha of natural forests for protection purposes.

Good community forest management practices

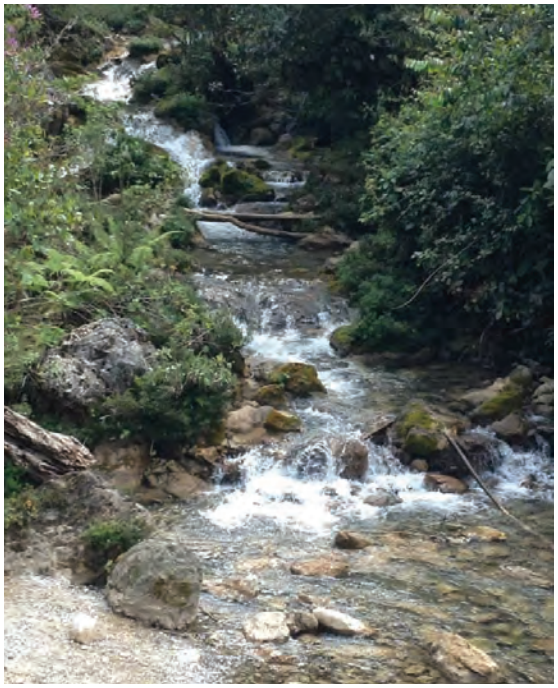
The second main output of the project was the agreement and development of good forest management practices to reduce forest degradation and deforestation in community forests.

Training in management practices was based on a "learning by doing" approach and included translation into the Ixil language with the support of local staff. The aim was to build enough capacity to sustain forest conservation efforts after the project's completion.

The project supported and strengthened the knowledge of existing organized groups and community forest associations, in coordination with the technical offices of the Municipality of Santa María Nebaj and INAB.

Specific achievements of the project included:

- **The establishment of a forest nursery**
  The Nebaj municipal forest nursery is currently operational with an annual production of 45 000 seedlings of *Alnus acuminata*, *Cupressus lusitanica*, *Casuarina cunninghamiana*, *Prunus* spp., *Quercus* spp., *Pinus ayacahuite* and *Pinus maximinoi*. Technical assistance was provided on management, monitoring and maintenance to strengthen the capacities of the forest technical staff of the municipality as well as nursery staff.
- **Capacity building for municipal forestry staff**
  Experts from the Calmecac Foundation provided training to strengthen the capacity of the technical and nursery staff of the Municipal Forest Office of Santa María Nebaj, specifically in the establishment, management and administration of forest nurseries. This was supplemented by an experience-sharing tour to both technically equipped and traditional nurseries of the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Food in the departments of Chimaltenango and Totonicapán.
- **Reforestation actions**
  Reforestation actions were carried out with 73 beneficiaries and partners, including leaders from different communities, the municipality of Santa María Nebaj, educational institutions, churches and organized groups. A total of 35 758 seedlings were planted, covering 32.19 ha, with a density of 1 111 plants per ha.
- **Enhanced protection against forest fires**
  Five training workshops were held with community groups from 20 villages. In addition, a course on basic techniques for forest fire control was held in the municipality of Nebaj for municipal technicians, army reserves and civil society groups; this activity was coordinated with INAB's Forest Protection Department and the Calmecac Foundation.



Flow of services: A stream in the upper Xaclbal river basin.
Photo: Walter Carrillo

Sourcing seedlings: The project established a forest nursery in Nebaj.
Photo: Hugo Mendoza

- **Efforts against illegal logging**
  An inter-institutional panel to reduce and prevent illegal logging in the municipality was established in 2020. The panel has met regularly and already produced documents including plans to operate a forest monitoring and control system, a protocol for the transport of forest products, and an agreement to decentralize the authorization of forest harvesting for household consumption.

A REDD+ project with benefits for the whole community

The third and final main outcome of the project was the design of a REDD+ project with the potential to benefit the entire community. The ITTO project area was included along with 11 other municipalities in the departments of Quiché, Huehuetenango and Alta Verapaz. In the REDD+ project "*Reddes Locales para el Desarrollo*", the Calmecac Foundation is the project proponent and the municipalities and communities are co-proponents. In the 12 municipalities, participatory processes with local stakeholders were at the centre of the design of interventions for inclusion in the REDD+ proposal and in the national Emissions Reduction Program.

In Nebaj and the other locations, meetings and discussions were organized to examine the current state of forest resources and environmental goods and services, and to develop a common vision with the involvement of stakeholders and beneficiaries, including their specific interests and their articulation with project actions.

This process also identified the activities required to address the causes of deforestation and achieve greenhouse gas emissions with the potential to generate carbon credits and thus become self-financing. The project's mechanisms for decision-making and for the distribution of benefits were also presented at the workshops.

Experts used a methodology based on Voluntary Carbon Standard (VCS) and Climate, Community, and Biodiversity (CCB) Standards, and reference levels established by the government, to measure the potential emissions reductions from project activities.

Risk reducers: A course on basic techniques for forest fire prevention, management and control was held in coordination with national and local authorities. *Photo: Hugo Mendoza*

If implemented, the REDD+ project would provide employment in the monitoring and control of forest resources under community management. Revenues from the sale of carbon credits could be invested in the management of production concessions and community lands, ensuring the sustainability of ecosystem services and the resulting benefits. The forest conservation activities required by the REDD+ project would ensure the continuity of other ecosystem services valued by the community, such as the protection of wildlife habitats and the production of non-timber forest products. As a result of conserving existing resources, communities will also be able to maintain their natural capital and capitalize on any future market for payments for ecosystem services.

It has been established that the REDD+ project has the potential to generate more than 800 000 tonnes of carbon credits and thus access payments from the national Emissions Reduction Program and the voluntary market under the VCS and CCB standard.

Currently the "*Reddes Locales para el Desarrollo*" project is included in the monitoring and verification process of the National Emissions Reduction Program, where it will present its activities promoting SFM and its community development strategies.

Strengthening sustainability

In conclusion, this project made a valuable contribution to government-led efforts to establish sustainable forest planning systems and to create financial mechanisms derived from the management and conservation of resources and environmental services in the department of Quiché which can also serve as a climate-change adaptation measure. The project also contributed to achieving key goals and objectives of ITTO, including those reflected in ITTO guidelines on tropical forest management and restoration[9].

As such, the project has helped to counter the trend of accelerated deforestation and forest degradation in Guatemala and provides lessons for the tropics as a whole. It addresses the resulting risks, impacts and natural disasters facing tropical forests, and their aggravation by climate change and poverty. It can also help in the identification of policies and mechanisms capable of preserving Guatemala's still-extensive forest areas and strengthening their sustainable management, including by indigenous communities.

Project outputs can be found by inserting the project code 721/13 Rev.3 (F) into the ITTO project search function at www.itto.int/project_search. This ITTO project was made possible by funding from the Government of Japan.

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Supporting well-informed legal timber trade

A new phase of the Timber Trade Portal helps timber operators and traders to prove the legality of their timber

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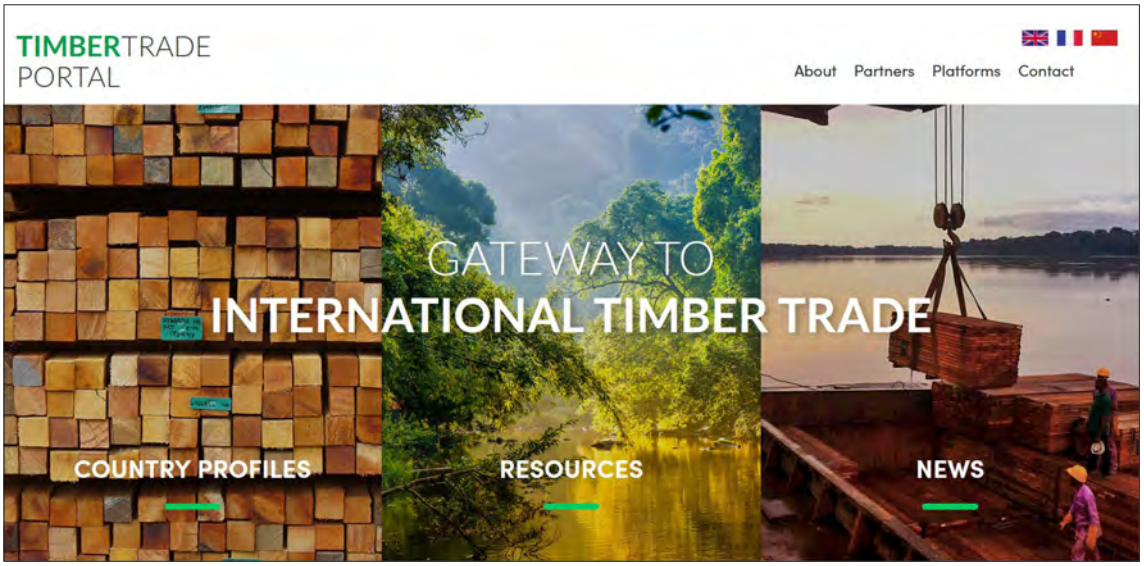

A homepage for timber: The upgraded Timber Trade Portal provides comprehensive information for legal timber trading. *Photo: ATIBT*

Despite global awareness of the need to restore and conserve forest landscapes, the world's forests face unrelenting pressure from deforestation and degradation. At the same time, global timber consumption continues to rise, fuelled by increases in population and the use of timber as a building material. This has already led to a gap between timber supply and demand that is expected to grow in the next decades if not addressed properly. The need to protect our forests while also supporting the supply of timber is what makes sustainable and legal timber products so important.

Sustainable forest management and timber certification have come a long way in ensuring that timber can be sourced sustainably in accordance with internationally accepted environmental and social standards. Yet timber traders and operators face many challenges when they try to prove the legality of their timber. Operators have to meet strict due diligence demands. Moreover, the country requirements for proving legality are not always easy to find or understand. Timber traders and operators also struggle with the often-complex due diligence rules and processes. To ease these difficulties, the Timber Trade Portal (TTP)[1] was developed. The portal answers many of the questions that operators and traders have when it comes to legal timber trade, due diligence, country requirements and key documents required for export.

A unique global resource

The TTP was first developed in 2015 by the European Timber Trade Federation (ETTF) and supported by ITTO and IDH's Sustainable Tropical Timber Coalition. In 2017, ETTF and the International Tropical Timber Technical Association (ATIBT) agreed to merge their respective timber legality websites to create the current TTP. Since then, ATIBT and Form International have worked in partnership to maintain and update the website.

The TTP is a unique platform with objective, in-depth information on the timber legality frameworks of countries that play a role in the international timber trade. The strength of the TTP is the provision of up-to-date country information and required documents for value-chain actors, businesses, and economic operators in the forestry and timber sector. This is supported with downloadable examples of key documents (such as national licences) that show what these documents should look like. The website has world-wide scope, is independent, factual and unbiased.

The upgraded TTP

In 2021, ITTO supported the expansion and update of the portal. While the TTP was already well established, continuous updates are needed to keep it relevant, modern and user-friendly. Several areas of improvement were identified to enhance the website's usability, expand its audience, and increase the number of visitors.

The 2021 TTP project had four main outputs. The first was the complete re-design and modernization of the TTP website. The second output was the creation of six new profiles for timber-producing countries, namely Cambodia, Colombia, Japan, Thailand, the Philippines, and Solomon Islands. The country profiles of the Republic of the Congo and Côte d'Ivoire were to be updated. The other two outputs were the translation of the portal's content into Chinese, and various promotional activities to reach a wider audience in support of worldwide legal timber trade.

The 2021 TTP project was able to achieve all of its objectives. The website now contains 29 country profiles, and all of its content is available in three languages: English, French and Chinese. The website has been completely redesigned and become more dynamic and user-friendly with easier access to information. An important upgrade was the structuring of the country profiles into clear sections describing the forestry context and timber sector, the legal and regulatory framework, the key documents needed to prove legality, and sources of information and contacts. The new website also includes a resources page with information on certification schemes, international regulations, and other

[1] www. timbertradeportal.com

Wood processing in Kisangani: The TTP includes profiles for 29 countries, including Democratic Republic of Congo. *Photo: Axel Fassio/CIFOR*

ITTO resources on timber legality. There is more information on other platforms that support legal timber trade, and news on global and country-related timber trade and legality. As a result of presentations at events and other promotional activities, the TTP's visitor numbers have increased steadily, and a wider audience has been reached.

ITTO's supply-chain programme

ITTO supported the TTP project through its Legal and Sustainable Supply Chain for Tropical Wood and Forest Products (LSSC) programme. Funded by the German Ministry of Food and Agriculture, the LSSC programme took an integrated approach to creating legal and sustainable supply chains that included enabling frameworks, private sector initiatives and capacity building.

TTP's overarching objectives are a close fit with those of the LSSC programme. In particular, the TTP project contributed to the LSSC objective of establishing the Global Green Supply Chains (GGSC) platform[2]. The platform was launched in 2018 to promote business information exchange on trade in legal and sustainable timber and forest products. Under the GGSC initiative, a group of progressive Chinese wood trading and processing enterprises committed to increase their sustainable wood sourcing. The content of the TTP and its translation into Chinese will greatly support these efforts by making information on timber legality and sustainability accessible to the Chinese audience.

Timber legality: a dynamic field

Timber legality is in constant evolution; laws and regulations that govern legal timber trade regularly change[3]. A good example of this are upcoming changes in the EU Timber Regulation (EUTR). The due-diligence requirements for the import of timber into the European Union under the EUTR have always been a main focus of the TTP. In November 2021, the European Commission proposed a new draft regulation on deforestation-free products designed to limit forest loss due to commodities like soy, palm oil and wood. The proposed regulation will eventually replace the EUTR and could translate into tighter rules and due diligence requirements for timber operators and traders. One proposed change is that due-diligence requirements will also apply to the export of timber products from the EU. Such changes can easily be added to the TTP, making it an effective and flexible portal to display information to timber exporting operators. Through regular updates of the country profiles and general content on regulations, the TTP aims to stay on top of these kind of changes and provide the up-to-date country information necessary to meet due-diligence requirements.

With the TTP successfully upgraded, the partnership will continue to look for opportunities to keep the website relevant to enforcement authorities and timber traders. The information contained in the country profiles on this website is regularly reviewed and refined by independent experts. Further, the partnership continues to search for and establish linkages with other applicable timber legality information sources.

For more information on the TTP, visit www.timbertradeportal.com or contact the authors of this article.

ITTO supported the TTP project through its LSSC programme which received funding from the German Ministry of Food and Agriculture (BMEL).

[2] www.itto-ggsc.org

[3] For more information, see "Comparing recent deforestation measures" by Weiss et al. in TFU No. 31/1 at https://www.itto.int/tfu/2022/05/19/itto_s_next_five_years/

Improving supply chains in Central Africa

An ITTO activity has created a comprehensive training programme for all timber stakeholders in the Congo Basin

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Building capacity: Forestry students, such as these from CRESA Forêt-Bois, University of Dschang, Cameroon, are a key target group of the new ITTO supply-chains training programme. *Photo: University of Dschang*

Given continuing deforestation and forest degradation, and rising awareness of the important role that forests play in countering climate change, ITTO is implementing a programme on Legal and Sustainable Supply Chains for Tropical Timber and Forest Products (LSSC) that aims to harness the benefits of legal and sustainable supply chains for climate mitigation, biodiversity, and development. Under the capacity-building component of the LSSC programme[1], ITTO engaged the Network of Forestry and Environmental Training Institutions in Central Africa (*Réseau des Institutions de Formation Forestière et Environnementale de l'Afrique Centrale* (RIFFEAC)) to produce a four-module training programme aimed at managers and technical staff in the Congo Basin to facilitate their understanding and appropriate management of LSSCs for tropical timber products. Each module is accompanied by a simplified guide to help promote its wider use. The training programme is already being disseminated across the region.

Pressure for sustainable timber

The need to strengthen sustainable timber supply chains has been growing for some time. Market requirements for legal and sustainable timber have expanded rapidly in recent years, and many tropical timber-producing countries face difficulties in meeting such provisions and demonstrating that their timber is legal and sustainable. Shortcomings in forest governance, policies and legal frameworks have compounded those challenges in some countries.

Meanwhile, the European Union, through the Voluntary Partnership Agreements of its Action Plan for Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT-VPA) and the United States of America, through the Lacey Act in particular, launched political processes aimed at promoting the legal harvesting and trade of timber and timber products across their markets as well as the improvement of forest governance.

Environmental non-governmental organizations (NGOs), through calls for a boycott of tropical timber, have also helped spur the development and promotion of forest certification systems based on compliance with requirements for the legality, traceability and sustainability of timber and timber product supply sources.

In the meantime, the concepts of accountability and sustainability have been updated, enhanced, and reinforced through various forest certification schemes. Government authorities responsible for forest management, the private sector, which constitutes the professionals engaged in forest logging, and environmental NGOs have all advocated for the sustainability of forest ecosystems, requirements for the integral documentation of all timber channels, and rules for transparent, responsible, and sustainable forest management (SFM). The link between monitoring, timber traceability, and forest legality is now a criterion for good forest management.

National legal frameworks, which are key to the implementation of any certification system, have further evolved by moving toward the sustainable management of tropical forests. The traceability of forest products has increased with the development of new and innovative technologies for the certification of the timber chain of custody.

[1] PP-A/55-334 BMEL-LSSC Actjivity 5: "Development of Training Modules on Legal and Sustainable Supply Chains (LSSC)"

Tracing timber: Understanding forest certification systems is an important part of legal and sustainable timber supply chains. *Photo: L. Qiang/ITTO*

Developing the training programme

Development of the training modules began with a review of literature regarding different aspects of sustainable supply chains for tropical timber, both globally and in relation to the Congo Basin. To define the objectives or learning outcomes of the modules, we assessed the training needs among targeted beneficiaries in terms of knowledge, know-how, and interpersonal skills.

The expected beneficiaries of the training include: decision-makers in government and the private sector; forestry experts in government, the private sector, NGOs, and municipal/community forests; tax/customs personnel; salespeople, freight forwarders, and traders; specialized company workers (e.g. prospectors, fellers, haulers, transporters); artisans; members of forest-adjacent communities; parliamentarians; and students from RIFFEAC member institutions.

As well as developing the course structure and content, we had to select pedagogical approaches, including for practical work and tutorials, and methods to assess knowledge. We also prepared a presentation for the project inception workshop and training module validation workshops, which were held in Brazzaville, the Congo, in October 2020 for Modules 3 and 4, and in Libreville, Gabon, in January 2021 for Modules 1 and 2.

The resulting programme comprises four modules:

1) Understanding the "zero-deforestation" concept
2) Assessing legality and achieving accountability
3) From legality to sustainability
4) Markets and market access.

Together, the four modules comprise a total of 1 200 hours of learning, split roughly equally between taught theory, practical work and individual work. Module 3, "From legality to sustainability", accounts for half of the total learning time and bundles much of the knowledge and skills essential for the implementation of LSSCs.

Table 1: Contents of Module 1, "Understanding the 'zero-deforestation' concept"

Sessions	1A International developments in forests and climate change	1B Role of production forests and timber and forest products in addressing climate change (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, substitution, etc.)	1C International regulations and legislation intended to ensure trade from legal and sustainable sources	1D Role of domestic markets in Central African countries and intra-African trade in meeting Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs)	1E Forest landscape restoration (FLR): initiative for achieving zero-deforestation and SFM
Chapter 1	Earth Summits on environment and sustainable development	Basic knowledge of production forests and climate change	General information on tropical forest logging and trade of tropical timber	Timber trade, 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, African Union 2063 Agenda and NDCs	Basic knowledge of FLR
Chapter 2	International legal instruments in the field of climate change	Role of forests in climate change mitigation and adaptation	Principles of the European Union Timber Regulation (EUTR), of the Revised Lacey Act in US and Japan's Clean Wood Act	Timber trade in Central Africa	National and international policy frameworks for forest restoration
Chapter 3	International legal instruments on forests and biodiversity	Monitoring, evaluation, policy and governance in SFM for addressing climate change	Regulation of the tropical timber trade	Opportunities and challenges (SDGs and NDCs) related to the timber trade in Central Africa	Terms of FLR
Chapter 4	Other multilateral conventions pertaining to forests and climate change		Future challenges in terms of adapting treaties and legislation on the legal and sustainable trade of timber to national contexts		FLR impacts

Understanding zero-deforestation

Module 1, "Understanding the 'zero-deforestation' concept", consists of five sessions, totalling 225 hours of learning (Table 1). The module explores the scale and impact of forest loss, and the initiatives and strategies developed to counter it, including SFM, nature and biodiversity conservation programmes, forest certification, promotion of sustainable agriculture, good governance in forestry, and the production and marketing of zero-deforestation forest products. The zero-deforestation concept is often associated with the production of (agricultural) commodities, with sourcing and financial investments that do not contribute to deforestation of natural forests. However, to date, there is a lack of consensus regarding this in both consumer countries and in countries that produce timber and other forest products. Therefore, it is important to refine the concept and to understand its implications in terms of climate change, SFM, international regulations, legislation aimed at ensuring trade from legal and sustainable sources, and the role of domestic markets in Central African countries and intra-African trade.

Legality and accountability

Module 2, which consists of five sessions for a total of 123 hours of learning (Table 2), focuses on ensuring implementation of and compliance with legal frameworks by stakeholders such as government administrators and the forestry industry, as well as private professionals in the timber trade. It explores the concepts of legality and accountability; legal, regulatory, and technological resources; the use of innovative and modern technologies; and their role and importance in planning, accounting, trade and market transparency. The experience of the subregion in monitoring and tracking the flow of forest products from the supply source to the final consumer in the market is introduced to illustrate general points made in the module with a practical example.

Table 2: Contents of Module 2, "Assessing legality and achieving accountability"

Sessions	2A Concepts of legality and accountability: definitions, scope, attributes, legal and sustainable supply chains	2B Monitoring and traceability of the flow of products from the tree in the forest to the end user in the markets	2C Use of innovative technologies in chain of custody certification	2D Role of modern technology in modern information systems: from planning to accounting	2E Trade regulations under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)	2F Importance of bar-coding for trade and market transparency
Chapter 1	Concept of legality	Various sources of legal timber in Central Africa (cases of different logging permits found in Central Africa)	Various tools and their roles in timber traceability	Technology used for the Computer-based Legality Assurance System (*Système Informatisé de Vérification de la Légalité—SIVL*)	General information on CITES	General information on the principle of bar-coding for forest logging
Chapter 2	Accountability	How traceability works for different logging permits	Use of innovative technologies	Accounts management	CITES trade regulations	Bar-coding timber for markets
Chapter 3	Definition and various stages of forest product traceability	Case study: Monitoring the traceability of harvested timber based on logging permits in Congo		Legality	CITES litigation	
Chapter 4	Legal and sustainable supply chains	Monitoring and traceability of harvested timber based on logging agreements		Bar codes		
Chapter 5		Monitoring and traceability of timber harvested in forest plantations		Pre-logging		
Chapter 6		Monitoring and traceability of timber harvested based on Special Permits (*Permis Spécial*)		Forest logging		
Chapter 7				Transportation		
Chapter 8				Storing		
Chapter 9				Processing		
Chapter 10				Output		
Chapter 11				Tax		
Chapter 12				FLEGT licenses		
Chapter 13				Track record		
Chapter 14				Statistic data production		

From legality to sustainability

Module 3, "From legality to sustainability", the biggest element of the course with 665 hours of learning, aims to clarify the link between legality and sustainability in sourcing timber from Congo Basin forests. It draws on the outputs of previous ITTO projects implemented in partnership with RIFFEAC and ITTO member countries in Africa. In particular, it draws on projects "Capacity building for sustainable management of tropical rainforests and biodiversity conservation in the ITTO Congo Basin countries" [PD 456/07 Rev.4 (F)], and "Promotion of sustainable management of African forests" [PD 124/01 Rev.2 (M)], as well as others that enabled us to produce guidelines on reduced impact logging (RIL). Module 3 also takes into account emerging concerns raised by VPA/FLEGT and ITTO in the context of legal timber trade between its member countries and buyer countries such as China, Japan, Australia, and the United States of America.

Field class: Students from the Democratic Republic of the Congo's Regional Postgraduate School for Integrated Development and Management of Tropical Forests and Land (*École Régionale Postuniversitaire d'Aménagement et de Gestion Intégrés des Forêts et Territoires Tropicaux*—ERAIFT) during field training on SFM. *Photo: I. Diansambu/ERAIFT*

Table 3: Contents of Module 3, "From legality to sustainability"

Sessions	3A Issues related to legal and sustainable timber supply chains	3B Forest taxation and customs procedures in timber-producing and timber-consuming countries	3C Role of SFM criteria and indicators—ITTO guidelines and others, including on reduced impact logging	3D Forest management and planning tools and technologies	3E Certification schemes and their requirements
Chapter 1	Definition of SFM	Forest taxation in Central Africa	ITTO criteria and indicators for SFM: the case of ATO/ITTO principles, criteria and indicators	Integrated landscape management planning	Concepts of forest certification and traceability
Chapter 2	Definitions of timber legality according to Central African countries	Customs procedures in Central African timber producing and consuming countries	Reduced impact logging	Basic information for the development of forest management plans	Baseline information for forest certification
Chapter 3	Relationship between sustainability and legality in Central Africa		Conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in tropical production forests	Synthesis of information relating to the development of SFM plans	Monitoring and traceability system for harvested timber
Chapter 4	Characterization of legal and sustainable timber supply chains			Socio-economic and environmental issues in SFM plans	Design, monitoring and assessment of socio-economic and environmental aspects
Chapter 5	International requirements for timber and timber products (EUTR, Revised Lacey Act, Clean Wood Act, CITES, etc.)			Consultations and negotiations for developing SFM plans	Certification auditing of forest management units (FMUs)/timber-processing units
Chapter 6				Strategy for developing SFM plans	

Table 4: Contents of Module 4, "Markets and market access"

Sessions	4A Trade statistics and market information	4B Global Green Supply Chains Platform	4C Innovative marketing devices	4D Customs, tariff/non-tariff measures in international and intra-African trade in timber and timber products
Chapter 1	Market challenges and developments	Issues and challenges of supply chain platforms	E-commerce of timber and forest products	Tariffs and timber trade
Chapter 2	Trade statistics and SFM	Strategy for establishing a supply chain platform	Processing technologies for lesser-used species	Tariff and non-tariff measures and trade for timber and timber products
Chapter 3	Demand in species and market volumes	Strategic analysis of actors' roles and duties	Diversification and processing of products for markets	Ongoing reform in countries and tariff-related incentives
Chapter 4	Trade control system for timber and timber products in Central Africa	Knowledge and capitalization of information networks	Marketing approach for timber and timber products	Trade agreements and national policies

Spreading the word: The training programme is being disseminated in several countries in the Congo Basin, including at this event in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. *Photo: Toussaint Mbangu*

Markets and market access

The final module, "Markets and market access" (Table 4), aims to improve understanding and promote the trade of legal and sustainable timber and forest products through a better grasp of the challenges posed by sensitive markets and their access. Contextual aspects related to environmental issues, climate change, and COVID-19 are also taken into consideration. Over a total of 240 hours, module 4 specifically explores the above-mentioned concerns by focusing on two interrelated questions: how can improving SFM influence the timber trade, and how can the timber trade influence the improvement of SFM? In practical terms, completing the module will provide learners with the knowledge and know-how to perform their functions in the value chain for the marketing of timber and timber products in Central Africa. The module addresses the accessibility and use of market statistics and information, the challenges of the Global Green Supply Chains platform[2], the relevance of innovative marketing mechanisms, and issues related to the application of customs duties and measures, both tariff- and non-tariff-related.

Long-lasting impact

The training modules on LSSCs developed under this ITTO activity hold the potential to have a positive and lasting impact on timber supply chains in Central Africa. One strength is that they are targeted at all stakeholders across every link in the chain. Secondly, to facilitate their uptake, the modules have been integrated into a single training course. This is currently being disseminated in five countries that are members of both the Central African Forest Commission (COMIFAC), and ITTO: Cameroon, Gabon, Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and the Congo. Importantly, the courses are also aimed at students at RIFFEAC member institutions, who will have a key role to play in making supply chains more sustainable for many years to come.

This ITTO activity was made possible by funding from the German Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture (BMEL).

The training modules are available in English, French and Spanish on ITTO's website at www.itto.int/resources/learning-materials

[2] www.itto-ggsc.org

Fellowship report

ITTO support rescued the pandemic-disrupted fieldwork of an Indonesia PhD student, enabling fresh insights on managing conflicts in protected areas

By Sri Mulyati

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Finally in the field: The author during a data-gathering trip to a village near the Kateri Wildlife Sanctuary. *Photo: S. Mulyati*

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected many people, including postgraduate students like me, who must conduct fieldwork to collect data for our research. I am an Indonesian studying for my doctoral degree at the School of Biological Sciences, University of Aberdeen, Scotland, with a scholarship from my government. I am focusing my study on conservation conflicts, specifically park–human conflicts related to protected areas.

I had just finished a four-month field trip to collect data in Indonesia when news of the new virus broke in December 2019. I planned to return to Indonesia to collect more data in mid-2020. But as the global pandemic unfolded, I had to adjust my plans. When overseas travel opened up again in 2020, I decided to take the chance because the regulations related to COVID-19 rules kept changing and who knew when lockdowns might be reimposed.

I planned the fieldwork in detail. However, I couldn't fund the trip from my scholarship due to the delay of my study schedule. Then I remembered the ITTO Fellowship Programme. I had read about it back in 2010 when looking for funding to attend a course. Now, amid the uncertainty of the pandemic, I prepared my proposal and submitted it online. The verdict came a few months later, and I was delighted to be granted the Fellowship for my fieldwork.

Despite more delay because of tensions around disputed local election results in Indonesia, and COVID-19-related limits on gatherings, I was finally able to hold focus-group discussions in five villages in January 2021.

Receiving the ITTO Fellowship is something that I treasure because it has helped me accomplish fieldwork crucial for my PhD study. In the meantime, I have submitted my thesis, thanks to data collected during the second field trip.

Before studying for my PhD, I worked for the Indonesian Ministry of Environment and Forestry. My undergraduate major was forest resource conservation in the Faculty of Forestry, Bogor Agricultural University, Indonesia. After my undergraduate studies, I passed the examination to be a civil servant in the (then) Ministry of Forestry and was assigned to a national park. I am a conservationist at heart, and could not have been more excited!

My undergraduate time taught me that nature conservation often conflicts with people's livelihoods. As a student and then junior staff member in a national park, I had embraced the romantic idea of preserving nature and wildlife. But it was not all sunshine and rainbows. As in many developing countries, local people's dependency on resources from the protected area often led to conflicts with authorities. In some cases, it concerns wildlife poaching or the illegal harvesting of plants. In others it is about people cultivating land in protected areas, or wildlife raiding crops and even killing villagers. In parts of Indonesia, it is also about tenure, with

Research in a pandemic: Focus-group meetings could only take place with precautions against COVID-19. *Photo: S. Mulyati*

Pandemic-postponed: Organizing field work, such as this focus-group discussion, was a challenge during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Photo: S. Mulyati*

local and traditional communities, and companies who hold concessions, getting into disputes over forests designated as protected areas.

Protected areas are critical for biodiversity conservation and essential for human well-being by providing ecosystem services such as fresh water and climate regulation (Borrini-Feyerabend et al. 2013). However, protected areas are under pressure due to human activities, causing biodiversity loss and ecosystem service degradation. Poverty, increasing population, and the need for more farmland are causing conflicts between protected areas and people (Adams et al. 2004; Brockington and Wilkie 2015; McNeely 2020).

Conflicts related to protected areas are prevalent, persistent and disastrous, and are often wicked problems (De Pourcq et al. 2017; Mason et al. 2018). They are often caused by deep-rooted underlying social, political, historical, economic, and ecological issues embedded in local cultural systems, making them challenging to resolve (Engel and Korf 2005; Redpath et al. 2015).

My thesis aims to understand underlying aspects of these conflicts. Specifically, it seeks to understand people's attitudes towards protected areas; their perceptions of benefits and problems of protected areas; substantive, procedural, and relationship dimensions of the conflict; and the role of formal and informal community institutions in people's engagement with conflict management.

To contextualize my study aims, I explored a long-standing park-human conflict in Kateri Wildlife Sanctuary, a protected area of 4 699 ha in Indonesia's East Nusa Tenggara Province, at the border with Timor-Leste. This complex conflict involves actors including authorities, long-term residents, and newcomer residents—mostly people who fled Timor-Leste as refugees after the 1999 referendum that led to the territory's independence from Indonesia.

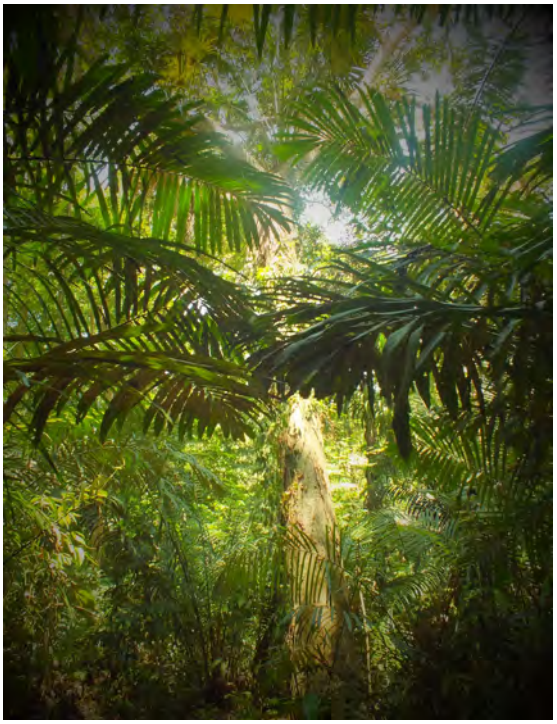
The Government of Indonesia provided settlements in villages adjacent to the sanctuary for refugees living in the surrounding Malaka District. Most were farmers and, to establish croplands for their livelihoods, they encroached on the protected area. This has resulted in massive deforestation, with more than half of the protected area cleared for cultivation.

My study found that local people have a positive attitude towards protected areas, and landholdings, level of education, and residency duration are significant predictors of these attitudes. Moreover, although provisioning and regulation services are the main perceived benefits for local people, they also saw protected areas as providers of cultivation lands.

The cultivation of land inside the protected area is the substantial dimension of the Kateri conflict. The procedural dimensions lie in the political element in terms of the history of the newcomer residents as ex-refugees, the nature of the formal institutions and the bureaucracy. The relationship dimensions are seen in the context of a lack of trust in government handling of the conflict, feelings of inequality and injustice among the community, and stereotyping. Formal-informal institutions play an essential role in mediating local people's voices and engagement with conflict management but this role is limited by the socio-political dimensions of the conflict.

My findings suggest that constructive conflict management should be focused on understanding the underlying dimensions of the conflict, addressing landholdings issues, and improving the capacity of formal and informal institutions in the community.

Burning clear: A hillside cleared for farming with the use of fire. *Photo: S. Mulyati*



Contested area: A forest in Malaka District, Indonesia, where the ITTO Fellow studied conflict over a protected area. *Photo: S. Mulyati*

My post-graduate journey has enabled me to enhance my critical thinking about conflicts related to protected areas, which is a valuable complement to my professional experience. While tacit knowledge as a practitioner is essential to get a sense of reality when making policy, it must be supported with evidence-based scientific research so that robust and constructive approaches can be developed.

I want to express my sincere gratitude to ITTO for the Fellowship. Such support is a great help for students even under normal circumstances, let alone during a pandemic. When I have finished my study, I will return to work for the Ministry of Environment and Forestry in Indonesia. I will then have the privilege of using what I have learned to hopefully improve the management of conflicts related to protected areas in Indonesia. This is hard work that will take time. Still, I am optimistic that every little effort counts.

Recent donors to the ITTO Fellowship Programme have been the governments of Japan, the Netherlands and the USA. For more information see www.itto.int/fellowship

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Market trends

Russia's invasion of Ukraine has upended global timber markets, bringing supply and price shocks

Compiled by Mike Adams from ITTO's Market Information Service and other sources

(mis@itto.int)

A crisis also for commodities: The Russian Federation has pressed on with its military campaign in Ukraine despite widespread protests. *Photo: P.-J. Walewski*

At the time of writing, the Russian invasion of Ukraine has been going on for more than 100 days. As well as unleashing a humanitarian crisis, the war has added to mounting concerns of a sharp global economic slowdown. Inflation and debt are surging, and poverty levels are spiking as the shocks from the conflict compound the damage from the COVID-19 pandemic.

The economic impact has reverberated through multiple channels, including commodity and financial markets, and trade and migration flows, and has undermined business confidence. No sector, it seems, will be immune from the impact of this man-made catastrophe.

Countries around the world have imposed sanctions on Russia and Belarus, who have retaliated by banning some trade—including in wood products—with what Moscow calls "unfriendly" countries. These include major timber importers the European Union (EU), the United Kingdom, the United States of America (US) and Japan. Trade continues with China and India at an increased pace as prices for commodities such as oil and timber from Russia and Belarus are heavily discounted.

Before the war, Russia was the world's largest exporter of sawnwood and the fourth-largest exporter of wood products. While China is the largest recipient of Russian timber, absorbing roughly 40% of the total, Japan and EU-member Finland are also among the major importers. Moreover, a sizable share of imports of wood products into so-called "unfriendly" countries also came from Russia.

"Conflict timber"

Timber trade flows changed almost instantly when Russia invaded Ukraine in late February. Trade sanctions and restrictions on financial transactions imposed by governments in Europe, North America and Asia halted shipments from Russia and Belarus. Exports from Ukraine were also disrupted.

Table 1: Russian exports of wood products in 2021

Product	Value (USD billions)
Sawn softwood	5.8
Paper products	2
Wood panels	1.9
Wood pulp	1.3
Hardwood logs	0.5
Softwood logs	0.5
Wood pellets	0.3
Total	**12.3**

Data source: Comtrade

In addition, the two major wood certification organizations, the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) and the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC), have labeled all timber from the two countries as "conflict timber". This timber can no longer be used in products deemed certified, which will impact any country buying wood from Russia or Belarus to manufacture products for the international market.

Russia is a significant player in world markets for both softwood and hardwood products. In 2020 Russia exported over USD 8 billion in wood products, making it the world's fourth largest exporter; in 2021 that number rose to USD 12 billion (Table 1). Asia and Europe were Russia's primary markets.

Russia is the largest supplier of birch plywood, a product in great demand in global markets. In recent years annual imports of Russian birch plywood into Europe have been at around 1.5 million m^3, with smaller but significant volumes going into the US market either directly from Russia or indirectly as plywood manufactured in China or Viet Nam from imported Russian logs or veneer.

Table 2: EU27 wood and wood furniture imports from Russia and Belarus in the first quarters of 2020, 2021 and 2022

Source	EU imports (1 000 tonnes)		
	Q1 2020	Q1 2021	Q1 2022
All sources	6151.3	5955.4	6178.1
Russia	1743.3	1853.4	1576.1
Belarus	1040.9	828.8	698.2
Sub total	2784.2	2682.2	2274.3
% Russia and Belarus	45%	45%	37%

Source: ITTO analysis of Eurostat data.

In 2021 Belarus exported wood and wood products worth USD 3 billion. More than half of sales were to the EU. Exports included furniture worth USD 891 million (43% to the EU), sawnwood of USD 802 million (86% to the EU), chipboard and fibreboard of USD 411.5 million (27% to the EU) and USD 369 million (35% to the EU), respectively.

The trade embargoes by timber importing countries and the export bans by Russia and Belarus have disrupted supply chains but the impact in the affected importing countries varies depending on the wood product and level of dependency on imports and is only beginning to emerge.

Europe bears the brunt of sanctions

The EU has progressively imposed trade sanctions on Russia. Initially introduced in response to the annexation of Crimea and Sevastopol in 2014, the sanctions regime was expanded massively in February 2022 after Russia formally recognized separatist-held areas of Ukraine's Donbas region and then sent its own forces over the border.[1] The wood sector is specifically identified in the EU sanctions so that all imports of wood products from Russia are now banned.

In addition, in response to the role of Belarus in support of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the EU has banned all trade in wood products with Belarus, and all trans-shipment of Belarus wood products to other countries via the EU.

Overall, the measures are expected to add to the volatility of wood markets in the EU and contribute to a significant wood supply deficit because around 45% of wood imports, by tonnage, into the EU from outside the bloc were formerly derived from Russia and Belarus. Data for the first quarter of 2022 suggest that the two countries' share of EU imports is already falling sharply (Table 2).

Japanese plywood manufacturers seek alternatives

Russia stopped exporting veneer and wood chips to Japan in March, a big blow to Japanese softwood plywood manufacturers. Those companies began frantically looking for alternatives but it will be very difficult to quickly replace the large volume that came from Russia (annual imports of Russian larch veneer were about 250 000 m^3).

An option is to switch to domestic logs to manufacture veneer but this would lead to a surge in local prices as log supplies are tight. Japan Lumber Reports suggests that domestic manufacturers don't have the capacity to produce and dry more veneer to replace imports, even if log supplies could be secured. Other possible alternatives include North American Douglas fir, New Zealand radiata pine, and Australian and Brazilian eucalyptus, along with domestic larch.

As a result, plywood production in Japan is forecast to fall by 20 000–30 000 m^3 a month—a 20% decline.

Substituting with tropical hardwood plywood would be a challenge as the main suppliers are struggling with log supplies and there are challenges in increasing imports from China.

In January, even before the invasion of Ukraine, Russia banned log exports, which hit Japanese millers hard. However, it stopped short of a sawnwood ban. In 2021, Japan's imports of Russian sawnwood were 848 000 m^3 and have been over 800 000 m^3 since 2016 (Table 3), an indication of the strong demand for Russian sawnwood.

In April, The Japanese government cancelled the most-favored-nation trade arrangement for Russia, which meant import duties on all products almost doubled. To support the sawnwood sector, the Forestry Agency has reportedly decided to give financial aid to building companies changing to domestic sawnwood. This follows the government's ban on sawnwood imports from Russia. It is reported that about JPY 4 billion (USD 30 million) will be made available from the government's reserve fund for transport subsidies.[2]

Setback for Russian exports to US

Until it invaded Ukraine, Russia benefitted from booming exports of manufactured wood products to the US. Direct US imports from Russia were mainly hardwood plywood (74%), oriented strand board/waferboard (10%) and softwood lumber (10%).

Russia was suppling only about 10% of the hardwood plywood America uses, the vast majority being birch plywood. However, some of the hardwood plywood shipped to the US by major suppliers China and Viet Nam is also undoubtedly manufactured from imported Russian birch logs.

In early April, the US suspended its normal trade relations with Russia and Belarus, which meant import tariffs were then applied, with Russian birch plywood attracting a very high tariff. In March, imports of hardwood plywood from Russia had increased and were 16% up in the first quarter of 2022. In the same quarter, imports from Viet Nam more than doubled.

US hardwood plywood imports from tropical countries have grown sharply in recent years, along with imports of birch plywood from Russia. On the other hand, from over 100 000 m^3 a month in 2017, China's plywood exports to the US were only about 10 000 m^3 per month in 2021 (Figure 1).

[1] https://ec.europa.eu/info/business-economy-euro/banking-and-finance/international-relations/restrictive-measures-sanctions/sanctions-adopted-following-russias-military-aggression-against-ukraine_en

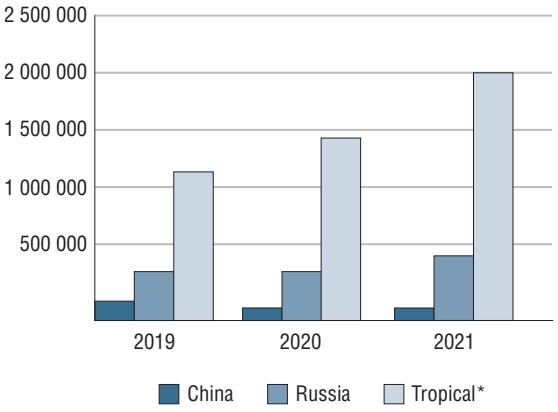
[2] https://www.nippon.com/en/news/yjj2022051600695/?cx_recs_click=true

Table 3: Japanese imports of logs and sawnwood from Russia 2017–2021

Year	Imports (1 000 m^3)	
	Logs	Sawnwood
2017	156	855
2018	124	860
2019	109	823
2020	49	816
2021	32	848

Data source: Japan Lumber Reports

Figure 1: US hardwood plywood imports from major suppliers in 2019–2021 (m^3)



*Indonesia, Malaysia, Cambodia, Viet Nam and Ecuador
Data source: US Census Bureau.

The change in Russia's trade status following its invasion of Ukraine seems not to be the end of the issue, as US congressional leaders have reportedly drafted legislation to ban imports of wood products from Russia and Belarus.[3]

Addressing the shortages

It is slowly becoming clearer how sanctions over Ukraine are affecting the global economy but ongoing disruptions in global supply chains and financial markets are already complicating the outlook. Freight costs, even before the war started, were 5–10 times their historical averages, driving up consumer prices and import costs across the board.

As sanctions removed Russian commodity exports from world markets, prices were driven higher, putting pressure on import bills and public finances in net-commodity-importing emerging market and developing economies. Unsurprisingly, these are precisely the countries that have not joined the sanctions against Russia since they are most at risk of a balance of payments crisis if sanctions on Russian exports are tightened over an extended period.

Global timber markets are not immune from the direct and indirect impact of sanctions. Around 10–15 million m^3 of wood products, or just over 30% of the volume shipped from Belarus, Russia and Ukraine in 2021, has been removed from markets in Europe and Asia (except China) because of sanctions. Europe, which imported 8.5 million m^3 of sawn softwood (around 10% of total consumption) from the three countries in 2021, will be the hardest hit.

European net exporters of sawnwood to the global market could make up for the deficit in Europe. But that may mean cutting shipments to other markets—a concern for sawn softwood importers in the US, which accounted for roughly 20% of EU sawn softwood exports in 2021. Supply shortages are already adding upward pressure on sawnwood prices in the US, where house-building costs have become so high that the government is introducing measures to stem the price surge.

Chinese importers can still secure imports from Russia and Belarus. But because FSC and PEFC have stopped certifying timber from the two countries, they will not be able to export products manufactured from Russian and Belarussian "conflict timber" to Europe or other countries that recognize FSC and/or PEFC labels.

Japan is in a particularly precarious situation as it has to find alternatives to the huge volume of sawn softwood and veneer previously imported from Russia.

Volatile markets are not good for business, so a priority for the global timber sector must be to stabilize international markets by adjusting trade flows. It is here that tropical wood product producers could contribute.

Few tropical countries have the possibility to increase sawn softwood output to meet the structural specifications of importing countries. However, there are possibilities when it comes to demand for veneer and plywood. Producers in Southeast Asia, Latin America and West Africa produce plywood to international standards. If they can ramp up production for export they will contribute to stabilizing international trade in these products.

The ITTO Tropical Timber Market Report, an output of the ITTO Market Information Service, is published in English every two weeks with the aim of increasing transparency in international tropical timber markets. The report provides market trends and trade news from around the world, as well as indicative prices for over 400 tropical timber and added-value products. Subscription is free at www.itto.int/market_information_service/registration

[3] https://healthyforests.org/2022/03/conflict-shines-light-on-russian-wood-imports-to-u-s/

Tropical and topical

Compiled by Ken Sato

Trade can support conservation of mahogany and other valuable tree species

The conservation of high-value timber such as mahogany and other forest products will be more successful when sustainable trade produces decent returns for forest owners and managers, argues ITTO Executive Director Sheam Satkuru in an opinion piece. While mahogany is classified as "vulnerable to extinction"—the same category as iconic species such as cheetahs or polar bears—its plight receives relatively little attention, Ms Satkuru notes in the article published on Mongabay.

Read the opinion piece: https://news.mongabay.com/2022/06/mahogany-a-pillar-of-the-rainforest-needs-support-commentary/

G7 countries to accelerate decoupling of trade and deforestation, encourage sustainable tropical forestry through ITTO

Ministers responsible for climate, energy and the environment in the G7 countries have agreed to accelerate the transition to sustainable supply chains that decouple trade and agricultural production from deforestation and forest degradation and to promote sustainably produced wood and wood products, including through ITTO. After discussions in Berlin, the ministers said they will work with producer and consumer countries, Indigenous Peoples, the private sector, non-governmental organizations, academia, international organizations and local communities to find coherent approaches.

Read the full story: https://www.itto.int/news/2022/06/10/g7_countries_to_accelerate_decoupling_of_trade_and_deforestation_encourage_sustainable_tropical_forestry_through_itto/

Land and nature restoration requires big investment, action on indigenous land rights, says UN report

A major new United Nations report underlines the importance of recognizing the land rights of Indigenous Peoples and local communities for the global drive to restore nature and land, Mongabay reports. In the second edition of its Global Land Outlook, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) also reportedly found that, by 2030, it will cost USD 300 billion a year to restore 1 billion ha of degraded land. The UNCCD estimates that food systems are responsible for 40% of the planet's degraded land, 70% of freshwater use, and 80% of global deforestation.

Read the full story: https://news.mongabay.com/2022/05/land-restoration-requires-immediate-action-and-indigenous-land-rights-says-u-n-report/

COP15 biodiversity summit moved to Montreal

The United Nations has announced that talks to secure a global post-2020 biodiversity agreement have been moved from Kunming in China to Montreal, Canada, following multiple pandemic-related delays. Delegates to the summit of the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity, known as COP15, to be held on 5–7 December 2022, will aim to adopt a global framework for biodiversity to halt and reverse losses of the world's plants, animals, and ecosystems.

Read the full story: https://www.reuters.com/world/un-says-global-biodiversity-talks-move-chinas-kunming-montreal-2022-06-21/

In Mexico, a divine bird inspires a community's sustainable forestry efforts

A communally managed forest in the Mexican state of Campeche has demonstrated how the management of forests can enhance both quality of life and the preservation of wild animals and their habitats, Mongabay reports. The Nuevo Bécal community has voluntarily conserved more than 99 percent of its territory, the largest area of its kind in Mexico. The effort includes setting aside 427 ha as a sanctuary for the king vulture, one of the most impressive raptors in the Americas.

Read the full story: https://news.mongabay.com/2022/05/in-mexico-a-divine-bird-inspires-a-communitys-sustainable-forestry-efforts/

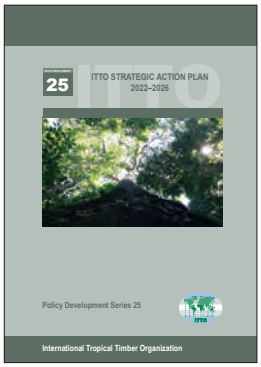
Wildflower believed to be extinct for 40 years spotted in remnant Ecuadorian forest

A South American wildflower long considered extinct as a result of deforestation has reportedly been rediscovered. Biologists found *Gasteranthus extinctus* in the foothills of the Andes mountains and in remnant patches of forest in Ecuador's Centinela region, nearly 40 years after its last sighting, according to *The Guardian* newspaper. Extensive forest loss in western Ecuador in the last century resulted in the presumed extinction of a number of plant species, including *Gasteranthus extinctus*. The still-endangered plant will keep its ominous name.

Read the full story: https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2022/apr/15/wildflower-extinct-ecuador-gasteranthus-extinctus-deforestation

Recent editions

Compiled by Ken Sato



ITTO. 2022. *ITTO Strategic Action Plan 2022–2026. Policy Development Series No. 25.* International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO), Yokohama, Japan.

ISBN: 978-4-86507-081-1

Available at: www.itto.int/council_committees/action_plans/

The ITTO Strategic Action Plan 2022–2026 will guide ITTO's policy and project work over a five-year period. It builds on the achievements made under previous strategic action plans and sets out a clear strategy and guidance. The plan discusses trends and challenges in the tropical forest sector, including in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. The core section of the plan identifies four strategic priorities for the organization—governance and investment; economies and tropical timber trade; resilience, restoration and conservation; and statistics and information—as well as four crosscutting strategies—on capacity building, ITTO's effectiveness, COVID-19 recovery, and gender equality. The plan, which is available in English, Spanish and French, also sets out 38 associated targets to be achieved by 2026.

Cámara Nacional Forestal 2022. *Una Nueva Política Nacional para los bosques del Perú*. Cámara Nacional Forestal, Lima, Peru.

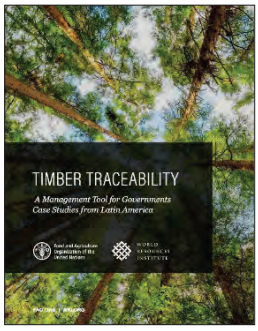
Available in Spanish with an executive summary in English at: www.itto.int/other_technical_reports/

This publication, produced by Peru's Forestry Chamber with ITTO support, takes stock of recent developments in the country's legal framework and makes proposals to modernize the forest sector and increase its capacity to meet current and future challenges. The outcome of a series of thematic discussions in 2019–2021 on ways to improve Peru's forest management, the document proposes a new national forest policy framework capable of ensuring the provision of ecosystem services, increasing forest production and promoting a thriving forest industry based on forest plantations. It recognizes the need for multisectoral approaches to halt deforestation and the advancement of the agricultural frontier, particularly involving the forest, agriculture, mining and transport infrastructure sectors. Other proposed measures include prioritizing forest landscape restoration, combating informality and illegal logging, incentivizing investment in commercial plantations, improving forest education and establishing a coherent administrative structure.

Coordinator of Indigenous Organizations of the Amazon Basin, Conservation International, Environmental Defense Fund, Amazon Environmental Research Institute, The Nature Conservancy, Wildlife Conservation Society, World Resources Institute & WWF. 2022. *Tropical forest credit integrity guide for companies: differentiating tropical forest carbon credit by impact, quality and scale*.

Available at: https://tfciguide.org/

The Tropical Forest Credit Integrity Guide has been developed to help companies interested in purchasing carbon credits in the voluntary carbon market to differentiate between forest carbon credits. The authors, which include some of the world's largest conservation organizations, hope the guide will help move the market toward credits with high social and environmental integrity. Released in May, the guide is designed to assist decision-making by individuals and teams responsible for developing and implementing corporate climate mitigation and net-zero strategies.

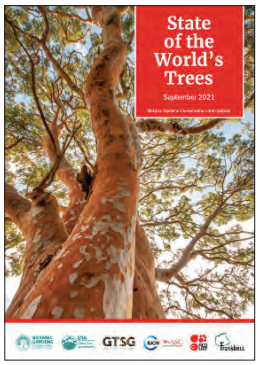


FAO and WRI. 2022. *Timber traceability – A management tool for governments. Case studies from Latin America*. FAO, World Resources Institute (WRI), Rome, Italy.

ISBN: 978-92-5-135864-1

Available at: https://www.fao.org/documents/card/en/c/cb8909en

The World Resources Institute (WRI), and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations have brought together lessons and best practices in the planning of government-led timber traceability systems from seven countries in Latin America. The resulting report provides a reference for government officials in other countries who are tasked with developing and implementing timber traceability systems. This report also seeks to help other audiences recognize that traceability is a global trend and is becoming a new norm for conducting business and trade in international wood markets. It complements an upcoming WRI publication focused on providing practical guidance on building traceability systems.

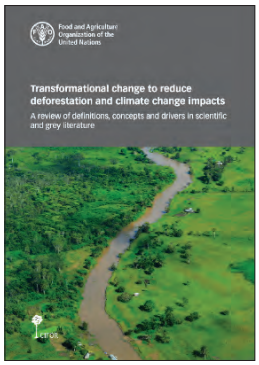


Botanic Gardens Conservation International 2021. *State of the World's Trees*. BGCI, Richmond, UK.

ISBN: 978-1-905164-78-3

Available at: https://www.bgci.org/resources/bgci-tools-and-resources/state-of-the-worlds-trees/

This report summarizing existing conservation measures for tree species finds that more than two-thirds of tree species have been recorded in at least one protected area, and about a third of tree species are found in botanic gardens or seed banks. Nonetheless, it calls for a new focus in biodiversity conservation and ecosystem restoration planning and implementation that recognizes the global importance of tree species. It identifies areas where additional and immediate action is required and calls for the formation of a new coalition to facilitate the necessary resources and expertise. According to the authors, managing, conserving and restoring threatened tree species and tree diversity will prevent extinction both of trees and the associated plants, animals and fungi that depend on them, sustain livelihoods and ensure the ecological health of the planet.



Atmadja, S., Martius, C., Leonard, S. and Sanz Sanchez, M.J. 2021. *Transformational change to reduce deforestation & climate change impacts – a review of definitions, concepts and drivers in scientific and grey literature*. FAO, Rome, Italy.

ISBN 978-92-5-135167-3

Available at: https://www.fao.org/3/cb7314en/cb7314en.pdf

The scale of the critical environmental and climate challenges facing humanity has led to growing calls for "transformational change" in our societies and economies to secure a sustainable future for the planet. The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization and the Center for International Forestry Research have collaborated on a study to investigate how the concept of transformational change is understood in scientific literature. The study focuses on two main questions: what does "transformational change" mean, and what drives it? The study identified and analyzed 111 scientific articles on transformational change in health and business, as well as land use, natural resources and climate change. The authors identified fundamental differences between various definitions of transformational change, specifically around the type of transformations sought, the unit of transformation, the direction of transformation, timescales and the expected leaders of transformational change.

Meetings

ITTO meetings

5–8 September 2022
4th World Teak Conference–Global Teak Market: Challenges and Opportunities for Emerging Markets and Developing Economies
Accra, Ghana
Co-organized by the ITTO, the conference will address the most crucial issues facing the global teak sector, including the sustainable management of smallholder teak farming systems to supply markets with high-quality teakwood; improving existing silvicultural systems and practices for better stand management to achieve high-quality teakwood; market structures and value investments; and evaluating private and public investments in the teak sector and their impacts on socioeconomic conditions and rural livelihoods. The conference will make strategic, conceptual and operational recommendations to support the sustainable development of the teak sector.

More: www.worldteakconference2020.com

7–11 November 2022
58th Session of the International Tropical Timber Council and Sessions of the Associated Committees
Yokohama, Japan (hybrid)
The International Tropical Timber Council is ITTO's governing body. It meets once a year to discuss wide-ranging issues of interest to members, including those related to the legal trade of tropical timber and the sustainable management of tropical forests. Council sessions are open to official delegates and accredited observers.

More: www.itto.int/events

Vacancy announcements at ITTO:

- **Director – Division of Operations**
- **Director – Forest Management**

Deadline for applications is 14 October 2022, 17:00 hrs., Japan Standard Time.

More: www.itto.int

Other meetings

5–7 September 2022
International IUFRO Symposium: Managerial Forest Economics and Accounting as a Base for Decision Making in a Changing World
Hamburg, Germany
More: iufro2022-div405.thuenen.de

6–9 September 2022
IUFRO All Division 7 (Forest Health, Pathology and Entomology) 2022 Conference
Lisbon, Portugal
More: iufro-lisbon2022.com

14–16 September 2022
FORESTRISE 2022
Tokyo, Japan
More: www.forestrise.jp/2022/

20–24 September 2022
Society of American Foresters 2022 Convention: Our Working Mosaic
Baltimore, MD, USA
More: www.eforester.org/Safconvention/Safconvention2022/Home.aspx

21–23 September 2022
All-IUFRO Conference: Forests in a Volatile World – Global Collaboration to Sustain Forests and Their Societal Benefits
Vienna, Austria (hybrid event)
More: iufro.org/events/all-iufro-conference-2022/

3–7 October 2022
26th Session of the FAO Committee on Forestry (COFO26)
Rome, Italy (hybrid event)
More: www.fao.org/events/detail/cofo-26/en

9–14 October 2022
Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) General Assembly
Bali, Indonesia (hybrid event)
More: ga.fsc.org/en

14–15 October 2022
10th International Symposium Forest and Sustainable Development
Brașov, Romania
More: silvic.unitbv.ro/en/cercetare/conferin%C8%9Be/133-international-symposium-forest-and-sustainable-development/616-10fsd.html

26–31 October 2022
IUFRO Small-scale Forestry International Conference 2022: Progress in Small scale Forestry beyond the Pandemic and Global Climate Change
Okinawa, Japan
More: www.iufro2022okinawa.org

14–25 November 2022
Nineteenth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES (COP19)
Panama City, Panama
More: cites.org/eng/cop19

6–18 November 2022
2022 UN Climate Change Conference (COP27)
Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt
More: unfccc.int/cop27

5–17 December 2022
UN Biodiversity Conference (COP15) Part 2
Montreal, Canada
More: www.cbd.int/conferences/2021-2022

15–18 December 2022
Cairo WoodShow
Cairo, Egypt
More: www.woodshowglobal.com/cairo/

16–29 May 2023
8th International Wildland Fire Conference
Porto, Portugal
More: www.wildfire2023.pt

4–8 June 2023
IUFRO Division 5 Conference: The Forest Treasure Chest Delivering Outcomes for Everyone
Cairns, Australia
More: www.iufro-div5-2023.com/

23–29 June 2024
IUFRO World Congress 2024: Forests and Society Towards 2050
Stockholm, Sweden
More: iufro2024.com

Note that all meetings are subject to change or cancellation in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. Please check the contact addresses for the latest information.

ITTO provides this list of international meetings as a public service and is not responsible for changes in date or venue or for other errors.