



**INTERNATIONAL TROPICAL
TIMBER COUNCIL**

**COMMITTEE ON
REFORESTATION AND FOREST MANAGEMENT**

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**REPORT TO THE INTERNATIONAL TROPICAL TIMBER COUNCIL FROM
THE FIFTY-SIXTH SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE ON
REFORESTATION AND FOREST MANAGEMENT**

Item 1 - Opening of the Session

The Fifty-sixth Session of the Committee on Reforestation and Forest Management (CRF) was opened on 8 November 2022 by Ms. Siti Syaliza Mustapha (Malaysia), Chairperson of the CRF. The list of participants is presented in Document ITTC(LVIII)/Info.2.

Item 2 - Adoption of Agenda and Organization of Work

The Provisional Agenda for the CRF, as contained in Document CRF(LVI)/1 Rev.1, was adopted by the Committee. To expedite proceedings, the Agenda items 4, 6, and 9 were considered at the Joint Session of the Committees convened on 8 and 9 November 2022 in order to ensure that all agenda items are covered within the limited time available to the Committee. The Chairperson of the CRF proposed to organize the Session in the following order: Item 3, Item 5, Item 7, Item 8, Item 10, Item 11, Item 12, Item 13, Item 14, Item 15 and Item 16.

Item 3 - Admission of Observers

The Committee admitted the observers listed in Document ITTC(LVIII)/Info.3 Rev.1 as approved by the Council.

Item 4 - ITTO Annual Market Discussion - 2022

The Committee noted the summary of the ITTO Annual Market Discussion – 2022, held in the Joint Session of All Committees on 8 November 2022. The theme of the Market Discussion was “Carbon markets and the timber industry: an opportunity for a paradigm shift?”. Mr. Barney Chan (TAG Co-coordinator) moderated the Market Discussion.

The following feature presentations were made during the Market Discussion (available at <https://www.itto.int/itc-58/presentations/>):

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|---|--|
| Ms. Celina (Kin-Yii) Yong, UNDP | <i>Overview of Forest Carbon Market in the context of Nationally Determined Contributions Implementation in Asia Pacific</i> |
| Mr. Ivan Tomaselli, ABIMCI, Brazil | <i>Is Managing Tropical Forests for Timber and Carbon a Fate or a Fake?</i> |
| Mr. Pierre Schueller, TERE Consultants, France | <i>Feasibility of Carbon Projects in Africa: Examples and Challenges</i> |
| Mr. William Augusto Llactayo León GIS Specialist, Peru | <i>LIDAR Technology and Carbon Inventory in Peru</i> |
| Mr. Nicholas Butcher, CarbonCrop, New Zealand | <i>Scaling New Zealand Native Forest Restoration with Carbon Credits and AI</i> |

The Committee further noted the statement of the Trade Advisory Group (TAG) presented during the Market Discussion as contained in Appendix B to Document CEM-CFI(LVI)/4.

Item 5 - Policy Work

The Committee considered the progress in the implementation of the following policy-related matters:

(i) Promotion of Smallholders' Forest Landscape Restoration in West Africa [ITTO Programme on Legal and Sustainable Supply Chains (LSSC) Activity #3]

The Secretariat reported to the Committee on the progress made in the implementation of this Policy Work related Activity, which was funded by the Ministry of Food and Agriculture (BMEL) of the Government of Germany, as follows:

- The BMEL-LSSC Activity #3 had been implemented as a component of the German-funded BWP Activity, referenced as PP-A/55-334, under the ITTO Programme on Legal and Sustainable Supply Chains

(LSSC). Its implementation is completed with the finalization and submission of the report on the regional strategy on forest landscape restoration (FLR) for promoting FLR-related policies in West Africa, as well as outreach materials, prepared by the team of national consultants working under the leadership of Prof. Juergen BLASER (Bern University of Applied Sciences, Switzerland) assisted by Prof. Kouami KOKOU (University of Lomé, Togo). Main results are summarized, here below.

- Six country-led studies on forest landscape restoration (FLR) had been prepared by national consultants for six ITTO member countries in West Africa (Benin, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Liberia, Mali and Togo) under the guidance of the international lead consultant, Professor Juergen BLASER. National workshops, for the validation of these country-led studies, were held under the leadership of the regional consultant, Professor Kouami KOKOU, as experts from Switzerland could not travel to Africa because of the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions in 2020 and 2021.
- The completion report on the main achievements was submitted to the ITTO Secretariat.
- The TFU article titled "*Integrating smallholders into forest landscape restoration*" was published in the Issue 30 No.3/4 by the ITTO Communication and Outreach Unit, while other outreach materials (short video and PowerPoint presentations on country-led studies) were submitted to the ITTO Secretariat and forwarded to the financial donor (BMEL-Germany) as supporting documents of the abovementioned final report.

The Committee took note of the results and outcomes of this Policy Work related Activity showing the importance of promoting forest landscape restoration in relation to some relevant challenges linked to the climate change in West African countries.

(ii) Development of training curricula for Central African countries on Legal and Sustainable supply Chains (LSSC)
[ITTO Programme on Legal and Sustainable Supply Chains (LSSC) Activity #5]

The Secretariat reported to the Committee on the progress made in the implementation of this Policy Work related Activity, which was funded by the Ministry of Food and Agriculture (BMEL) of the Government of Germany, as follows:

- The BMEL-LSSC Activity #5 had been implemented as a component of the German-funded BWP Activity, referenced as PP-A/55-334, under the ITTO Programme on Legal and Sustainable Supply Chains (LSSC). Its implementation is completed with the finalization and submission of four training modules prepared by four consultants working under the supervision of Prof. Claude KACHAKA SUDI, regional coordinator of the network of forestry and environmental training institutions in Central Africa (RIFFEAC in French acronym).
- The BMEL-LSSC Activity #5 had been implemented on LSSC-related issues in ITTO member countries in the Congo Basin region (Cameroon, Central African Republic, Congo-Brazzaville, Congo-Kinshasa and Gabon) through the preparation of four training modules/curricula, which were reviewed by experts during the holding of validation workshops. These four LSSC-related training modules/curricula and related four consultants are, as follows:
 - Module/curriculum 1: Understanding deforestation-free [by Dr. Bonaventure LELE NYAMI]
 - Module/curriculum 2: Assessing legality and achieving accountability [by Dr. Felix KOUBOUANA]
 - Module/curricula 3: From legality to sustainability [by Dr. François HIOL HIOL]
 - Module/curriculum 4: Markets and access to markets [by Dr. Jean Marcial BELL]
- These four LSSC-related training modules/curricula are available in English, French and Spanish, on ITTO website, since 26 July 2022.
- The TFU article titled "Improving supply chains in Central Africa" was published in the Issue 31 No.2 by the ITTO Communication and Outreach Unit, while the validation workshop reports were submitted to the ITTO Secretariat and forwarded to the financial donor (BMEL-Germany) as supporting documents of the final report on the implementation of PP-A/55-334.

The Delegation of the United States of America (USA) acknowledged the important role played by legal and sustainable supply chains (LSSC) as a way for strengthening sustainable forest management (SFM) through the use LSSC-related training modules for capacity building in Congo Basin countries. Following the question from the Delegation of USA, the Secretariat informed the Committee that the impact of the outcomes of this BMEL-LSSC Activity #5 is beyond five ITTO member countries in Congo Basin (Cameroon, Central African Republic, Congo-Brazzaville, Congo-Kinshasa and Gabon) because the implementing agency (RIFFEAC) had disseminated the training modules to all forestry training institutions operating in 11 Central African countries. The Delegation from Indonesia expressed the interest in having access to these LSSC-related training modules which could be considered as complementary to the criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management. The link facilitating to get access to these LSSC-related training modules in the ITTO website could be sent by

the Secretariat to anyone upon written request. The Delegation from Papua New Guinea (PNG) virtually participated and congratulated the implementing agency (RIFFEAC) and the Secretariat for the development of these LSSC-related training modules that PNG could replicate and adapt to its context, as a contribution to promoting SFM and forest certification.

(iii) Dissemination of the ITTO Guidelines for Forest Landscape Restoration in the Tropics [Activity 11 (b), ITTO Biennial Work Programme 2021-2022]

The Secretariat reported to the Committee on the progress made in the implementation of this Activity as follows:

- The ITTO Guidelines for Forest Landscape Restoration in the Tropics were developed in 2020 with the support of many members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF), including CIFOR, FAO, IUCN and IUFRO. To increase awareness and understanding of the ITTO FLR Guidelines a series of webinars was organized for Latin America and the Caribbean and the Asia-Pacific region in 2021 and 2022.
- The “ITTO FLR Guidelines” were well received and attracted the attention of the participants who attended the fifteenth meeting of the World Forestry Congress hosted by the Republic of Korea in May 2022 under the theme of “building a green, healthy and resilient future with forests.” During the 15th World Forestry Congress some ITTO projects on restoration were highlighted. These include the SFM project in Belem, Brazil showcasing the initiatives for timber production in community forests in the Amazon. This project emphasized the value of sound forest management practices, such as reduced impact logging, while also promoting entrepreneurship in the community. The mangrove project in Fiji featured the role of empowered women in the restoration of degraded mangrove forests in the Rewa Delta through community training and awareness-raising in six villages.
- In September 2022, in collaboration with the Asian Forest Cooperation Organization (AFoCO), a workshop on ‘Forest Landscape Restoration in the Asia-Pacific Region: Accessing Climate Change Finance and Carbon Benefits for FLR’ was virtually organized. This workshop was attended by 49 FLR policy and planning makers from 14 countries. It covered 2 keynote addresses and 6 sessions regarding Article 6 of the Paris Agreement, climate change financing mechanisms and carbon benefits synergized by FLR intervention by experts from Korea Forest Research Institute, Green Climate Fund (GCF), Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), Kasetsart University, and Waseda University.

The Secretariat made a presentation on global teak supply chains highlighting the following:

- The Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture of the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany (BMEL) established a partnership with ITTO to improve the conservation and sustainable management of teak forests and legal and sustainable teakwood supply chains in the Mekong region.
- The ITTO Mekong Teak Project Team actively participated in the 4th World Teak Conference which was held during 5 to 8 September 2022 in Accra, Ghana to share lessons learned from the implementation of the BMEL sponsored teak project in Mekong. During the 4th World Teak Conference, a special session was organized to launch a new teak book entitled “Teak in Mekong for a Sustainable Future.”
- In an overview of global teak supply chains, the highlights include:
 - Sustainable supply chains from plantation teaks will dominate global teak markets: Natural teak-growing countries contribute small portions in global supply chains.
 - Smallholders teak plantations will play an increasingly important role in global teak supply chains (e.g. in Java, Indonesia, 1.5 million smallholders manage 0.4 mil ha): Need to promote more streamlined government regulations and support systems.
 - The new world champion will be based on improved management to produce larger diameter and better-quality logs, high end markets and attractive design for new markets.

In the discussion, the Delegation of Togo said that teak, due to its excellent wood quality, has become a very interesting plantation species in the country and current practices include a 30-year rotation cycle of planted teak. It was noted that the rotation cycle for planted teak could be shortened to around 15 years. Regarding wood properties, he requested information on the quality of teak wood grown in short rotation cycles. The Secretariat responded that there is a growing need for more research on the quality of short-rotation teak wood, adding that the quality of 20 to 25 year old teakwood has been proven to be suitable for a wide range of uses. He also noted that teak plantation owners would consider diversifying teak rotations to short, medium or long term, depending on the end user markets for teak products.

The Delegation of the United States acknowledged the promotional activities of the ITTO FLR guidelines at the 15th World Forestry Congress and the organization of ITTO FLR webinars. He said that the US Forest

Service would be happy to share its public-private FLR models at future ITTO FLR events. He encouraged ITTO to work with the organizers of the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration 2021-2030 to ensure wider use of the ITTO FLR guidelines as a valuable input to contribute to ecosystem restoration.

The Delegation of Germany commended the Secretariat for the comprehensive report of the Mekong teak project working in several countries and the report of the 4th World Teak Conference in Ghana. He said that the challenge not only for teak, but also for other species, remains to produce the best possible quality in the shortest time. From the perspective of a consumer country, he said consumers are looking for the highest quality teak. As natural teak forests are disappearing, he highlighted the challenge of establishing plantations while sustainably managing the remaining forests. He commented that the properties of short rotation teak which have a high proportion of juvenile wood cannot be compared to teak grown in 40 or 50 years. He expressed interest in expanding the current Mekong teak project to improve silvicultural methods and tools to produce high quality timber as well as to improve economic models, especially to support smallholders to adopt longer rotations.

He pointed out that the German Development Agency has implemented numerous projects over the last decade in West Africa and elsewhere with the aim of producing high quality teak from long rotations. To solve the problem of the economic pressure on small holders and community forests for short rotations, he highlighted the importance of improving quality through silviculture and genetic improvements, as well as establishing economic models for teak growers that support the standing of part of their plantations for at least 30 years. He looked forward to the Secretariat's work in developing and promoting model plantation forestry in landscape restoration to help smallholders.

The Committee recommended that the Secretariat proactively promote the ITTO FLR guidelines to contribute to the achievement of the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration 2021-2030.

(iv) Joint ITTO-CBD Collaborative Initiative for Tropical Forest Biodiversity [Decision 6(XLVI)]

The Secretariat reported to the Committee on the progress made in the implementation of this Activity as follows:

- In February 2021 ITTO and CBD renewed a MoU for a further five years until 2025 with the aim of supporting CBD Parties and ITTO member countries in the tropics in their efforts to conserve biodiversity, implement sustainable forest management, restore degraded forest landscapes and encourage the sustainable use of forest resources.
- The renewed collaboration between the CBD and ITTO will help countries develop technical expertise to enhance tropical biodiversity and the provision of ecosystem services in forest landscapes. The joint collaboration will also support capacity building to implement the ITTO/IUCN Guidelines for the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biodiversity in Tropical Timber Production Forests and other relevant guidelines and policies of the CBD and ITTO.
- The Secretariat carried out a technical assessment of 16 projects implemented under the ITTO/CBD Joint Initiative. The results of the technical assessment of the ITTO/CBD Joint Initiative were reported at the pre-session of the CRF in 2021.
- ITTO will organize a side event with the CBD Secretariat at CBD COP 15 at its second part in Montreal, Canada in December 2022 in order to share lessons learned from the implementation of the ITTO-CBD Collaborative Initiative. After COP 15, ITTO will revise the Programme Document on the ITTO-CBD Collaborative Initiative to support the achievement of the tropical forest-related goals and targets of the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework.

The Committee recommend the effective implementation of the ITTO-CBD Collaborative Initiative for Tropical Forest Biodiversity in support of the achievement of the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework.

**(v) Adapting the 2006 ITTO Criteria and Indicators (C&I) for Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) to African context
[Decision 2(LIII)] [Activity 7 (b), ITTO Biennial Work Programme 2021-2022] [PP-A/55-336 / BWP 18-19/8b C&I Africa]**

The Secretariat reported to the Committee on the progress made in the implementation of this Policy Work related Activity as follows:

- The draft set of ITTO C&I for sustainable forest management adapted to Africa context, was made available on the ITTO website, as Document CRF(LV)/6, for comments, until mid-December 2021. Based

on the comments of the Secretariat, the final version was prepared by the international consultant (Richard EBA'A ATYI) and regional consultant (Olivier AHIMIN ADJE).

- The final version of the revised/adapted C&I was posted on the ITTO website for comments by ITTO Members, and by the deadline of 1 November 2022 there were no comments. The ITTO Secretariat is currently undergoing the translation (English/French, two ITTO working languages used by ITTO member countries in Africa) with final editing, layout, design and publication (in e-version due to the lack of funds for printing) to be completed by the end of 2022.
- The Secretariat informed the Committee that despite no new funding being made available for implementing this activity under the BWP 2021-2022, for revising and updating the 2006 ITTO Criteria and Indicators (C&I) for Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) to African context, the progress had been made using limited resources remaining from similar activities funded under previous BWPs.
- The ITTO Secretariat is seeking additional funds, for an amount estimated to US\$25,000, under the approved BWP activity (which was only partially funded) to cover the slight overspending as well as additional costs for final lay-out and printing of hard copies which are useful for the dissemination purpose in ITTO member countries in Africa.
- If additional funds are made available, the revised/adapted ITTO policy-related document on C&I will be used for additional work to disseminate and promote ITTO C&I for SFM in Africa.

The Chairperson commended the work of the international consultant (Richard EBA'A ATYI) and regional consultant (Olivier AHIMIN ADJE), and encouraged the ITTO donors to provide the Secretariat with additional funds for the publication of this important ITTO policy-related document and its dissemination in ITTO member countries in Africa.

(vi) Prevention and management of forest fires
[PP-A/56-340-1 in Indonesia and PP-A/56-340-2 in Peru]

The Secretariat reported to the Committee on the progress made in the implementation of this Policy Work related Activity as follows:

- The Government of Japan financed two BWP-based forest fire activities in Indonesia and Peru for the continuation of the fire-related work in 2021 and 2022. These BWP-based forest fires activities have contributed to improving coordination and cooperation between national, regional authorities and local communities in the work to prevent and respond to forest fires while strengthening the capacity of government agencies, fire brigades and local communities.
- The forest fire activity in the ITTO Biennial Work Programme 2021-2022 aims to enhance synergies between ITTO forest fire projects and international mechanisms. More specifically this activity intends to assist the participation of ITTO forest fire related project teams/stakeholders in international forest fire meetings.
- ITTO is currently a member of the Global Wildland Advisory Group of the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR) and International Liaison Committee (ILC) of International Wildland Fire Conferences. ITTO provided support to the 6th International Wildland Fire Conference held in October 2015 in Korea by assisting the participation of 14 participants from ITTO member countries as well to the 7th International Wildland Fire Conference held in October 2019 in Campo Grande, Mato Grosso do Sul, Brazil.
- The 8th International Wildland Fire Conference will take place from 16 to 19 May 2023 in Porto, Portugal. This event aims to facilitate the sharing of knowledge and expertise concerning wildland fire policies, research and management. It will give guidance for national and cross-boundary policies to reduce the negative impacts of wildland fire on the environment and humanity.
- The ITTO Secretariat has continued its close collaboration with global forest fire institutes. ITTO developed Guidelines on Fire Management in Tropical Forests in 1997, which is an excellent attempt from the past. The ITTO Guidelines have served in the past and will continue in future with other guidelines developed later by WHO, FAO, and GFMC.
- ITTO will continue to seek support for capacity building in fire management in Producer Member Countries through strengthening partnerships to develop a tropical forest fire prevention and management programme of the forest fire activity in the BWP 2021-2022 to be extended to 2023 and ITTO looks forward to providing support to the 8th International Wildland Fire Conference (IWFC) in Portugal in May 2023 by assisting the participation of ITTO forest fire related project teams and organizing a side event to share ITTO experience in integrated forest management.

The Delegation of Germany enquired on ITTO's participation in the FAO/UNEP Global Fire Management Platform to promote integrated fire management and encouraged ITTO to partner with this Platform. The Secretariat responded that ITTO is working with partners as a member of the International Liaison Committee

(ILC) of the 8th International Wildland Fire Conference and looks forward to the opportunity to collaborate with the Global Fire Management Platform.

The Committee was informed that the completion of the two BWP-based forest fire activities will be presented under the CRF agenda item 8 (Report on Completed Projects and Pre-projects).

Item 6 - Report of the Expert Panel for Technical Appraisal of Project Proposals

The Joint Session of All Committees considered the report of the Fifty-seventh Virtual Expert Panel for Technical Appraisal of Project Proposals presented by panel member Mr. John Leigh (Peru), as contained in document ITTC/EP-57.

The Fifty-seventh Panel appraised 11 proposals, including three proposals i.e., PD 926/22 (I) 'Promotion of Sustainable Domestic Consumption of Wood Products in Thailand', PD 927/22 (F) 'Development of an Information System on the Potential for Wood and Carbon to Support Sustainable Forest Management in South Kalimantan, Indonesia', and PD 928/22 (I) 'Development of Sustainable Domestic Market for Wood Products', resulting from concept notes submitted under calls for concept notes under ITTO's new financing architecture in accordance with Decision 4(LVI). The Panel noted that:

- Five (5) project proposals (45 percent of the total) were commended to the Committee for final appraisal with minor modifications required (category 1);
- Five (5) project proposals (45 percent of the total) will be sent back to proponents for essential revisions, rated as category 2; and
- One (1) project proposal (10 percent of the total) received a category 4, indicating that the Expert Panel does not commend it to the Committee for approval as it requires complete reformulation.

The delegate of Australia expressed appreciation for the comprehensive and clear presentation delivered by the Chair of the 57th Expert Panel for Technical Appraisal of Project Proposals. He noted the intention of Australia to propose an expert for the Expert Panel in 2023 for one of the positions to be filled by the consumer caucus.

Item 7 - New Projects and Pre-projects

The Committee noted the projects and pre-projects that were approved under the time-bound electronic no objection procedures to accept the Expert Panel's ratings and circulated to member countries pursuant to Decision 6(XLIII), as contained in Annex to Document ITTC/EP-57, following the recommendations of the Expert Panel at its Fifty-seventh Meeting as follows:

Fifty-seventh Expert Panel

Category 1:

| PD/PPD NUMBER | TITLE | SUBMITTING COUNTRY |
|---------------------|--|--------------------|
| PD 915/21 Rev.2 (F) | Strengthening the Rehabilitation and Sustainable Management of Sacred Forests in Ramsar Sites 1017 and 1018 in Benin | Benin |
| PD 921/21 Rev.2 (F) | Support for the Conservation and Promotion of Forest Tree Seeds in Benin | Benin |
| PD 929/22 Rev.1 (F) | Developing Silvicultural Management Models for Forest Restoration Based on the Use of Seed Trees for the Establishment of Natural and Artificial Regeneration in the Province of Tahuamanu, Peru | Peru |

Category 4:

| PD/PPD NUMBER | TITLE | SUBMITTING COUNTRY |
|---------------|--|--------------------|
| PD 923/22 (F) | Development and Sustainable Use of Green Areas with Tropical and Desert Native Species in the Mexicali Municipality of Baja California, Mexico | Mexico |

Item 8 - Report on Completed Projects and Pre-projects

The Committee considered the completed projects contained in Document CRF(LVI)/2 and noted that seven projects, two pre-projects and four Biennial Work Programme-based activities were to be declared complete by the Council.

8.1 Completed Projects

1) PD 552/09 Rev.1 (F) Encouraging Customary Landowners in the Lowlands of Papua New Guinea's Central Province to Reforest their Grasslands with High Value Trees (PNG)

The Committee took note that the project, which was funded by the Government of Japan, had been implemented by Papua New Guinea Forest Authority. The project aimed to create a model reforestation framework that encourages customary landowners in the lowlands of Central Province to reforest their grasslands with high value trees.

The Delegation of PNG made a presentation on the achievements of the project. He said that the project was able to create a reforestation framework that will continue to expand over time both within and beyond Central Province, leading to the gradual rehabilitation of under-utilized grasslands across PNG. The project contributed to the development of reforestation enterprises to promote an appropriate set of business models and production systems. In terms of implementing the project activities, the project performance was slow and lacked continuity, due to a series of internal and external administrative problems. For the efficient implementation of the project, it was noted that project implementation constraints should be clearly highlighted in regular progress reports and frequent review meetings are essential.

The Secretariat informed the Committee that the Completion Report, and Technical Reports had been delivered by the Executing Agency in accordance with the Project Agreement. The Final Financial Audit Report was submitted to the Secretariat, but this Audit Report received some inquiries from the Secretariat's assessment. The Committee therefore decided to consider the project PD 552/09 Rev.1 (F) as completed, subject to the satisfactory completion of the Final Financial Audit Report.

2) PD 653/12 Rev.1 (F) Sustainable, Mixed and Pure Forest Plantation Development in the Transitional Zone of Ghana's Biakoye District Assembly, Employing Poverty Reduction Strategies (Ghana)

The Committee took note that the implementation of this project, which was funded by the Government of Japan, had mainly contributed to the capacity building of targeted youth stakeholders for their involvement in the entire process of forest landscape restoration (FLR): identification and selection of degraded forest landscape sites, establishment of nurseries for seedlings production, land preparation, reforestation with tree planting combined with selected food crops (using modified taungya agroforestry system), etc. These skills acquired through the project implementation had contributed to empower young women and men, involved in the project implementation, on FLR-related issues while contributing to the improvement of their livelihoods. The Committee also took note that the project intervention had sharpened the awareness and behaviour of young women and men with respect to FLR-related issues, enabling them to continue being part of the solution regarding FLR-related actions and activities in the Biakoye District, Volta Region, Ghana.

The Secretariat informed the Committee that the Completion Report, Technical Reports and the Final Financial Audit Report had been delivered by the Executing Agency in accordance with the Project Agreement. The Committee therefore decided to consider the project PD 653/12 Rev.1 (F) as completed.

3) PD 696/13 Rev.2 (F) Community Based Restoration and Sustainable Management of Vulnerable Forest of the Rewa Delta, Viti Levu, Fiji (Fiji)

The Committee noted that the project, which was funded by the Government of Japan, had been implemented by the Forest Department of Fiji to restore and sustainably manage degraded coastal and mangrove forests in the Rewa Delta (35,238 ha). The project trained and empowered six local communities to implement livelihood improvement activities to reduce overdependence on coastal and mangrove wetland resources. An area of 137 ha of degraded and deforested coastal mangrove wetlands had been rehabilitated through afforestation and reforestation using appropriate native species. Traditional knowledge and skills for the harvesting and conservation of main food sources found in mangrove ecosystems were well documented.

The Secretariat informed the Committee that the Completion Report, Technical Reports and the Final Financial Audit Report had been delivered by the Executing Agency in accordance with the Project Agreement. The Committee therefore decided to consider the project PD 696/13 Rev.2 (F) as completed.

4) PD 740/14 Rev.2 (F) Sustainable Forest Management Through REDD+ Mechanisms in Kampong Thom Province (Cambodia)

The Committee noted that the project, which was funded by the Government of Japan, had contributed to strengthening the capacity of government staff at the national and local levels to advance the monitoring of sustainable forest management to reduce deforestation and forest degradation in Tomring Forest in Kampong Thom province. In particular, the project increased the capacity of monitoring, reporting and verification (MRV) at the Cantonment level of the Forestry Administration and Community Forests through a series of training courses. Several technical reports and project leaflets were published in English and Khmer. Policy briefs highlighting the key findings of the project were published include:

- Assessment of existing benefit-sharing mechanisms in forestry and REDD+ projects for an effective national REDD+ incentive mechanism in Cambodia
- Design, implement and monitor REDD+ safeguards in Kampong Thom Province
- Development of a sustainable financing strategy for REDD+ in Cambodia
- Development of default values and adjustment of forest reference emission levels in Kampong Thom province

The Secretariat informed the Committee that the Completion Report, Technical Reports and the Final Financial Audit Report had been delivered by the Executing Agency in accordance with the Project Agreement. The Committee therefore decided to consider the project PD 740/14 Rev.2 (F) as completed.

5) PD 765/14 Rev.4 (F) Development of A Forest Landscape Restoration Program for Guatemala Based on ITTO Guidelines – Phase I (Guatemala)

The Committee noted that the project, which was funded by the Government of USA and CBD Secretariat, had been implemented by National Forest Institute (INAB), Guatemala. The project undertook forest landscape restoration actions in pilot restoration sites established in accordance with the guidance of the "ITTO Guidelines for the Restoration, Management and Rehabilitation of Degraded and Secondary Tropical Forests". The project focused on four strategic forest ecosystems that have been prioritized by the National Forest Institute (INAB) and the National Council for Protected Areas - cloud forests, dry forests, pine-oak forests and mangrove forests. The project achieved all its objectives and provided an example of how to apply the ITTO restoration guidelines at an operational level. The main lesson learnt during the implementation of the project was the importance of engaging with local communities and stakeholders to ensure the success of forest landscape restoration activities. Continued government support to the communities involved in the project will be required to assist them to manage and market products from the restored forests; once revenues from marketed products start to benefit local communities, restoration activities will be sustained into the future.

The Secretariat informed the Committee that the Completion Report, Technical Reports and the Final Financial Audit Report had been delivered by the Executing Agency in accordance with the Project Agreement. The Committee therefore decided to consider the project PD 765/14 Rev.4 (F) as completed.

6) PD 777/15 Rev.3 (F) Accelerating the Restoration of Cibodas Biosphere Reserve (CBR) Functions through Proper Management of Landscapes Involving Local Stakeholders (Indonesia)

The Committee noted that the project, which was funded by the Government of Japan, had been implemented by the Gunung Gede Pangrango National Park Authority, Indonesian Ministry of Environment and Forestry. The project aimed to restore the conservation and development functions of the Cibodas Biosphere Reserve (CBR) in West Java province of Indonesia. The CBR, which covers a total area of approximately 114,779 hectares, is one of the most important biosphere reserves in Indonesia, mainly due to its rich and unique biodiversity.

The Delegation of Indonesia made a presentation on the achievements of the project. He stated that the project had improved the conservation and sustainable management of biodiversity and ecosystems of the Cibodas Biosphere Reserve through reducing the threat to biodiversity in the core area, and promoting of the best land use practices in the buffer and transition zones. He highlighted that the commitments of the participating

local communities have been substantially enhanced towards sustainable management of the CBR, recognizing that its landscapes are the sites for biodiversity conservation and sustainable livelihoods.

The Committee further noted that all requirements for the completion of this project have been met in accordance with the rules and procedures of ITTO. The Committee therefore decided to consider the project PD 777/15 Rev.3 (F) as completed.

7) PD 852/17 Rev.4 (F) Development of a Regional Strategy for the Restoration and Rehabilitation of Degraded Areas on the South Coast of Peru (Peru)

The Committee took note that the implementation of this project, which was funded by the Government of USA, had mainly contributed to improve the awareness and behavior of women and men with respect to the forest landscape restoration (FLR) issues in the project target areas in the South Coast of Peru, through the establishment of agroforestry plantations. The project also contributed to solve the problem of water supply through the installation of drip irrigation systems, as a way for improving the soil moisture retention capacity, which was crucial for the successful establishment of agroforestry plantations in the project target areas. The Committee also took note that the project implementation was an opportunity to demonstrate economic alternative opportunities for small farmers to be involved in the forest landscape restoration activities at a bigger scale with the support of SERFOR and other national and international donors.

The project coordinator, Mr. Jorge MALLEUX, made a presentation summarizing the main results and outcomes of this project. His presentation led to the comments made by the Delegation from Guatemala congratulating the project coordinator for sharing interesting lessons learnt which could be used by her country, while the Delegation from USA commended the project's emphasis on gender equality and thoughtful inclusion of women for the project's activities. The United States called on ITTO to promote gender equality in all its project work, consistent with ITTO's guidelines on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. The Delegation from Colombia expressed the interest on *Caesalpinia spinosa* and its multiple uses for communities involved in the project implementation. All these inquiries were addressed by the project coordinator.

The Secretariat informed the Committee that the Completion Report, Technical Reports and the Final Financial Audit Report had been delivered by the Executing Agency in accordance with the Project Agreement. The Committee therefore decided to consider the project PD 852/17 Rev.4 (F) as completed.

8.2 Completed Pre-project

1) PPD 189/17 Rev.3 (F) Development of A Full Project Proposal to Generate Tools to Ensure the Establishment of Timber Forest Species through Natural Regeneration in the Province of Tahuamanu, Peru (Peru)

The Committee took note that this pre-project, which was funded by the Government of USA, had been implemented to carry out the study on selected species which was carried out in the Tahuamanu province, Madre de Dios region, in Peru. The findings have been summarized in a technical report providing useful information and data on the key species to be used for forest regeneration activities in the target area of the future project. The database of seedlings, with their characteristics, location within the area and the corresponding maps, as well as which concession or community they depend on, had been developed and compiled in the technical report submitted to the Secretariat. The Committee also took note that the participation of the future beneficiaries and stakeholders, a project proposal had been prepared with the following tentative title "*Generating silviculture management models for the restoration of forests based on the use of seedlings for natural and artificial regeneration, in the Tahuamanu Province, Republic of Peru*" and it is expected to be submitted in the ITTO project cycle in due time.

The Secretariat informed the Committee that the Completion Report, Technical Reports and the Final Financial Audit Report had been delivered by the Executing Agency in accordance with the Pre-project Agreement. The Committee therefore decided to consider the pre-project PPD 189/17 Rev.3 (F) as completed.

2) PPD 196/19 Rev.1 (F) Support for Operational and Planning Capacity-building for Stakeholders in the Private and Community Forestry Sector in Togo (Togo)

The Committee took note that this pre-project, which was funded by the Government of USA, had been the opportunity to gather main stakeholders in a preliminary consultation process for the purpose of sharing information on the pre-project and selecting the relevant ideas to be converted into the development of full

projects to be submitted to Togo's bilateral and multilateral partners, and international institutions. The Five out of six forest-related project proposals had been developed compliance with the international commitments of Togo in the areas linked with the country's forest national policies and development programs, as well as in compliance the objectives and priorities of international partners, including international institutions like ITTO. These project proposals are considered as contribution to the list of projects to be subject to validation by the Government of Togo for submission to Togo's bilateral (France, Germany, Japan, etc.) and multilateral cooperation partners (European Union, UNDP, etc.), as well as international institutions (FAO, GEF, ITTO, etc.), in due time for each Togo's partner.

The Secretariat informed the Committee that the Completion Report, Technical Reports and the Final Financial Audit Report had been delivered by the Executing Agency in accordance with the Pre-project Agreement. The Committee therefore decided to consider the pre-project PPD 196/19 Rev.1 (F) as completed.

8.3 Completed Biennial Work Programme-based Activities

1) PP-A/53-323 Capacity building for the implementation of "Legal and Sustainable Supply Chains (LSSC)" by stakeholders in the Congo Basin countries

The Committee took note that the implementation of this BWP-based Activity, which was funded by the Government of Japan (JFA), had mainly contributed to the compilation of four LSSC-related training modules, developed during the implementation of the BWP activity funded by Germany and referenced as PP-A/55-334 Activity #5, into a single module, through the work of the consultant François HIOL HIOL. The single module, validated by key LSSC-related stakeholders, had been disseminated in ITTO member countries in the Congo Basin (Cameroon, Central African Republic, Gabon, Congo-Brazzaville, and Congo-Kinshasa) through meetings organized by RIFFEAC and led by the abovementioned consultant. The Committee also took note that the draft TFU article tentatively titled "Dissemination of the unique module on legal and sustainable supply chains (LSSC) in Congo Basin countries" was submitted for publication by the ITTO Communication and Outreach Unit, in due time.

The Secretariat informed the Committee that the Completion Report, Technical Reports and the Final Financial Audit Report had been delivered by the Executing Agency in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding governing the implementation of this BWP-based Activity. The Committee therefore decided to consider the activity PP-A/53-323 as completed.

2) PP-A/56-340-1 Capacity Building on Forest and Land Fire Management in Indonesia

The Committee noted that the Government of Japan (MoFA) funded this project through its emergency assistance for the effective management of forest fires in the tropics. The project had been implemented by intensive efforts of the Directorate of Forest and Land Fire Management, Directorate General of Climate change, Ministry of Environment and Forestry since January 2021.

Dr Israr Albar from the Executing Agency made a presentation on the main achievements of the project. He introduced that the project aimed to improve the prevention of forest and land fires through strengthening the management and technical capacity of stakeholders at the national level and three targeted provinces: South Sumatera, Central Kalimantan and South Kalimantan. His highlights include the following key outcomes of the project:

- Fire Care Community (Masyarakat Peduli Api) groups become the agent of change in forest and land fire prevention through best agriculture practices/sustainable agricultural and silvicultural management to their neighbourhoods and implementing zero burning practices.
- Improved performance of Forest and Land Fire Brigade (Manggala Agni) and government officials in forest and land fire management, and effective response to forest and land fires.
- Participation of all stakeholders in forest and land fire prevention is increased with improved coordination and communications on forest and land fire issues.

Dr Israr expressed the Executing Agency's gratitude to the Government of Japan for financing the project and to the Secretariat for close cooperation. The Delegation of Japan commented on the importance of the project in strengthening the capacity building of key stakeholders in addressing forest fires. She commended the achievements of the project despite the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Committee further noted that all requirements for the completion of this project have been met in accordance with the rules and procedures of ITTO. The Committee therefore decided to consider the activity PP-A/56-340-1 as completed.

3) **PP-A/56-340-2 Forest Fire Prevention and Response in Tropical Forests and Forest Plantations in Peru**

The Committee took note that the implementation of this BWP-based Activity, which was funded by the Government of Japan (MoFA), had mainly contributed to increasing/enhancing the motivation and ability of selected organizations and entities, involving hundreds of people, on the ways and means to prevent and respond to forest fires. Local community members had been sensitized and trained during the project implementation on awareness-raising and on relevant capacity building activities making them agents of change regarding fire prevention and response attitudes, which in turn should contribute to reduce human-induced forest fire and fire damage.

The Committee also took note that the consultant, Dr. Manoel SOBRAL FILHO, carried out the mid-term evaluation for supporting and guiding the implementing agency (SERFOR of Peru) leading to a smooth completion of this BWP-based Activity. He presented the main findings of the mid-term evaluation which can be summarized as follows:

- capacity building for stakeholders was impacted by the restrictions linked to the COVID-19 pandemic but the over 200 members had been trained and had their capacity enhanced to respond to forest fires
- increased capacity of the SERFOR and other Peruvian state agencies to plan and implement prospective, correctional and response measures to improve their forest fire management work
- The training and capacity building may also lead to economic gains to local producers that adopt alternatives to fire to deal with residues, such as using waste for composting/fertilizers, as taught/promoted in the project
- SERFOR's enhanced capacity and the training tools and platforms strengthened/developed will facilitate scaling up of training/capacity building, including for the country departments not covered by the project
- High rotation of the key project implementing team members also impacted the smooth implementation of this BWP-based activity, in addition to the restrictions linked to the COVID-19 pandemic in Peru.

For a 12-month project, the duration is not enough for a final judgment on the abovementioned effectiveness and impacts of the training/capacity building. An in-depth assessment of effectiveness and impact could be conducted in an ex- post evaluation which, if deemed desirable, may be planned for some time after the completion of this BWP Activity.

Then, the consultant, Mr. Jorge MALLEUX, made a presentation on the main outcomes of the BWP-based Activity PP-A/56-340-2 which can be summarized as follows:

- improving coordination and cooperation between national, regional authorities and local communities in the work to prevent and respond to forest fires.
- increasing awareness on the value of forests and on the importance of forest fire prevention and response, particularly among rural communities.
- strengthening the capacity of government agencies, fire brigades and local communities to prevent and respond to forest fires.
- elaborating, validating, and making available protocols on forest fire prevention and forest fire response.
- strengthening the volunteer fire brigades in the 5 departments covered by the project, through training focused on forest fire response and provision of appropriate vestments.
- involving local and/or indigenous communities in fire prevention and response networks.
- Strengthening SERFOR'S Geographical Information and Remote Sensing systems and services and enhancing and improving the overall efficiency and effectiveness of the country's forest fire monitoring system.
- The training offered to fire brigades was successfully implemented, attracting a large number of participants, with 287 people initially registered to attend the virtual and presential training events. Moreover, out of the 287 registered people, 209 attended all 4 training events conducted in this training/capacitation component.

Both presentations were followed by the comments made by the Delegation from Japan congratulating both consultant for contributing to the smooth completion of this BWP-based Activity, and then by the Delegation from USA suggesting improved communication between implementing agencies through the existing interagency fire management working group, consisting of SERFOR, the Volunteer Fire Department,

Natural Protected Areas Service, and the National Institute of Civil Defense, as well as connecting with existing partner initiatives, such as the USAID/US Forest Service South American Regional Fire program.

The Secretariat informed the Committee that the Completion Report and Technical Reports have been submitted. However, an independent financial auditor is interacting with the implementing agency (SERFOR) for the finalization of a satisfactory Final Financial Audit Report. This is a pre-requisite to declare the BWP-based Activity PP-A/56-340-2 as completed in accordance with the rules of ITTO. Upon receipt of a satisfactory Final Financial Audit Report by the Secretariat, the BWP-based Activity PP-A/56-340-2 will be considered as completed.

4) PP-A/56-341 Support for Women’s Groups with the Restoration of Forest Landscapes in the Prefectures of Blitta and Lacs, Togo

The Committee took note that the implementation of this 12-month BWP-based Activity, funded by Soka Gakkai, had mainly contributed to the sensitization of main relevant stakeholders in both target prefectures (Blitta and Lacs) to share with them the objectives of this BWP-based Activity. Thus, the administrative and traditional authorities were informed about the importance of restoring forest landscapes degraded by human activities. The Committee also took note that the training sessions had been organized for more than 100 women on nursery for seedlings production and reforestation techniques, allowing them to establish 8 ha of modified Taungya-based plantations and 12 ha of agroforestry plantations combined with selected food crops. The committee further took note that the reforestation associated with food crops had not been only a tool for forest landscape restoration but also a way for improving food security and household incomes in women’s communities.

The Secretariat informed the Committee that the Completion Report, Technical Reports and the Final Financial Audit Report had been delivered by the Executing Agency in accordance with the with the Memorandum of Understanding governing the implementation of this BWP-based Activity. The Committee therefore decided to consider the activity PP-A/56-341 as completed.

Item 9 - Ex-post Evaluation

(A) Ex-post Evaluation Reports
[Document ITTC-JC(LVI)/2]

The Joint Session of Committees considered this item. The Committees recalled the Secretariat’s report at their last Session about a proposal from the Government of Japan to fund an ex-post evaluation of ITTO projects recently implemented and completed in Africa under the ITTO Strategic Action Plan 2013-2018 (extended to 2021), as a contribution for the Eighth Tokyo International Conference for African Development (TICAD-8) held on 27-28 August 2022, in Tunisia. A regional ex-post evaluation of 10 ITTO projects was accordingly carried out to assess achievements of completed ITTO projects in Africa with the aim to synthesize main relevant findings and outcomes for future forestry-related interventions by Japan and other donor countries in Africa. The ex-post evaluation work examined ten projects including five projects under oversight of CEM-CFI and five projects under oversight of CRF. It was carried out by Prof. Juergen BLASER as international consultant and Mr. Olivier AHIMIN as regional consultant. The following projects under the oversight of CRF were included in the regional ex-post evaluation:

| Project ID | Title | Country/countries | Duration | ITTO budget (USD) |
|---------------------|---|--|-----------|-------------------|
| PD 456/07 Rev.4 (F) | Capacity building for sustainable management of tropical rainforests and biodiversity conservation in the ITTO Congo Basin countries | Cameroon, Central African Republic, Congo, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Gabon | 2012–2019 | 3,890,681 |
| PD 754/14 Rev.3 (F) | Rehabilitation and sustainable management of sacred forests on Ramsar sites 1017 and 1028 in Benin | Benin | 2017–2020 | 541,031 |
| PD725/13 Rev.2 (F) | Rehabilitation of degraded forest land in the Ahua forest reserve by the women members of association MALEBI in compensation for the forest resources removed to meet the need for fuelwood (charcoal and firewood) | Côte d’Ivoire | 2016–2018 | 149,408 |

| | | | | |
|---|--|---------------|-----------|-----------|
| PD 419/06 Rev.3 (F)-Ext- TICAD5-Rev.1 | Forest seeds management and conservation: rehabilitation and restoration of degraded forests with the involvement of local communities (refugees, internally displaced people and local populations) | Côte d'Ivoire | 2013–2018 | 1,800,000 |
| PD 530/08 Rev.3 (F) | Management of forests established through rehabilitation of degraded forests by local communities in Ghana (Phase 2 of PD 30/97 Rev.6) | Ghana | 2012–2018 | 569,665 |

The Policy Brief titled “*Lessons for working well together in African forests*”, which summarizes the outcomes of the ex-post evaluation, was published and hundreds of hardcopies were printed out for distribution by the organizers of TICAD-8 to participants.

The Delegation of Japan commended both consultant for their good work which led to the findings presented at the Joint Session of Committees and thanked both consultants and the Secretariat for the publication of the abovementioned policy-brief to be largely disseminated.

The Committees took note of the report of the ex-post evaluation of these projects contained in document ITTC/JC-02, as virtually presented by the consultant Prof. Jurgen Blaser. The impact of these ITTO's relatively small-size projects (compared to much larger projects funded by bodies like the GEF) was highlighted by the Chairperson of the Joint Session of Committees.

(B) Selection of Projects for Ex-post Evaluations 2022-2023

The Committee took note that shortlist of ex-post evaluations 2022-2023, as contained in document CRF(LV)/5, was approved by the Committee during its 55th Session. Some projects in the shortlist had been subject to assessment under the abovementioned regional group ex-post evaluation work for TICAD-8, including three completed projects dealing with forest landscape restoration (FLR) in African ITTO member countries. Therefore, the planning of the ex-post evaluation, in 2023, will give the priority to the Thematic Group Evaluation on Forest Rehabilitation / Landscape Restoration / Secondary Forest Management, excluding the three completed FLR-related projects already assessed under the abovementioned ex-post evaluation for TICAD-8.

Item 10 – Review of Projects, Pre-projects and Special Biennial Work Programme-based Activities in Progress

[Document CRF(LVI)/3 Rev.1]

The Committee was informed that the Secretariat's report and the Committee's discussion were limited to the following projects, pre-projects and activities in order to expedite proceedings, in accordance with the Section VI of Annex A to Decision 4(XXV):

- Those having implementation problems;
- Those requiring additional funds;
- Those requesting extension of more than six months beyond the original duration; or
- Those requesting essential major modifications of the work plan and budget.

10.1 Projects

The Committee took note of the status of projects that had been approved by the Council, as contained in Document CRF(LVI)/3 Rev.1, categorized as: (A) projects under implementation (four projects); (B) projects awaiting implementation agreement (two projects) and (C) projects awaiting financing (twelve projects).

(A) Projects under implementation

The Committee noted that there were no issues of four projects currently under implementation and looked forward to the effective and successful implementation of these on-going projects in accordance with the rules and procedures of ITTO.

- 1) PD 452/07 Rev.5 (F) Sustainable Management of Production Forests at the Commercial Scale in the Brazilian Amazon – Phase II (Brazil)

The Delegation of Brazil thanked the Secretariat for the extension of the project implementation period until January 2023 allowing the implementing agency to complete some activities delayed by the restrictions linked to the COVID-19 pandemic in Brazil.

- 2) PD 764/14 Rev.3 (F) Enabling Customary Landowners to Participate Effectively in Community Forest Management Schemes Within 6 Pilot Areas of PNG (PNG)
- 3) PD 836/17 Rev.2 (F) Enhancing Capacity of Local Communities and Forest Administration to Effectively Implement Community Forestry Programme (CFP) in Kratie and Mondulkiri Provinces of Cambodia (Cambodia)
- 4) PD 849/17 Rev.2 (F) Increasing Commercial Reforestation Competitiveness in Costa Rica (Costa Rica)

(B) Projects awaiting implementation agreement

- 1) **PD 712/13 Rev.3 (F) Enhancing the Implementation of Landscape Management of Giam Siak Kecil-Bukit Batu Biosphere Reserve (GSK-BR) in Riau Province of Sumatra Island, Sumatra - Phase I (Indonesia)**

The Secretariat reported to the Committee on the progress made in establishing the project agreement as follows:

- This project was approved under the project cycle of 2014 and funded by the Government of Korea. The project aims to promote the effective implementation of sustainable management and conservation of the Giam Siak Kecil-Bukit Batu Biosphere Reserve (GSK-BR).
- The draft project agreement regulating the implementation of the project was sent to the Ministry of Environment and Forestry in April this year for review and signature.
- However, the Secretariat was informed that the review of all project agreements not only from ITTO but also from other international organizations has been delayed due to the lengthy internal procedure of the Ministry and the reorganization of the Ministry's institutions.
- The Secretariat was recently informed that the Minister of Environment and Forestry completed her initial review of the draft project agreement.
- The Korea Forest Service, the donor, has been concerned about the delay in project implementation. Therefore, the Secretariat looks forward to the early conclusion of the project agreement to facilitate the start of project activities before the end of this year.

The Delegation of Indonesia informed the Committee that the Implementing Agency revised the project document in Phase I and Phase II, taking into account the project funds available for immediate implementation. He looked forward to the implementation of Phase I and the funding of Phase II.

The Committee urged the Executing Agency to expedite the prompt conclusion of the signing of the project agreement for the start of the project.

- 2) **PD 902/19 Rev.3 (F) Management of Upper Baram Forest Area for Conservation and Sustainable Development with Involvement of Local Communities, Upper Baram, Sarawak, Malaysia (Malaysia)**

The Secretariat reported to the Committee on the progress made in establishing the project agreement as follows:

- The project was approved under the project cycle of 2020. During 2021, the project was partially financed with an amount of US\$556,083, leaving an outstanding balance of \$258,045. Donors to the project include the Bruno Manser Funds, City of Basel (Switzerland), Japan, and the Unearmarked Fund of the Bali Partnership Funds.
- The project aims to manage the Upper Baram Forest Area, including Penan Peace Park, for biodiversity conservation and socio-economic development for the benefits of local communities.
- The Submitting Agency, Forest Department Sarawak, revised the project document to implement field activities based on the secured funds of US\$556,083 without waiting for full funding. This revised project document was approved in October 2022 through an online no-objection procedure.

- The draft project agreement governing the implementation of the project was sent to the Malaysian Ministry of Plantation Industries and Commodities in October 2022. The project will start as soon as the project agreement is finalized.

The Committee urged the Executing Agency to expedite the prompt conclusion of the signing of the project agreement for the immediate commencement of the project.

(C) Projects awaiting financing

The Committee noted that the following twelve projects approved at earlier and current sessions were still awaiting funding, out of which five projects with an asterisk (*) will be sunset between the 56th and 57th CRF Sessions if funding is not made available.

The Committee noted that PD 903/19 Rev.2 (F) in Malaysia and PD 916/21 Rev.1 (F) in Columbia were partially funded. The Delegation of Columbia informed the Committee that Colombia is fully committed to improving sustainable forest management and that PD 916/21 Rev.1 (F) had been prepared to support the conservation, restoration and management of strategic ecosystems in the region of the Colombian Pacific. He thanked the United States for its partial funding to PD 916/21 Rev.1 (F) and looked forward to more donor support for the implementation of project activities with local communities and academic groups. The Delegation of Guatemala acknowledged ITTO's support in promoting SFM and the marketing of forest products. He drew the attention of the Committee to the multiple benefits of forestry projects that help achieve SDGs and climate change. He encouraged donors to continue their support to the implementation of projects that contribute to conservation and sustainable development.

- 1) PD 712/13 Rev.3 (F) Enhancing the Implementation of Landscape Management of Giam Siak Kecil-Bukit Batu Biosphere Reserve (GSK-BR) in Riau Province of Sumatra Island, Sumatra - Phase II (Indonesia)
- 2) PD 723/13 Rev.2 (F)* Capacity Building for Strengthening Transboundary Biodiversity Conservation of the Taninthayi Range in Myanmar – Phase I Stage 2 (Myanmar)
- 3) PD 765/14 Rev.4 (F) Development of A Forest Landscape Restoration Program for Guatemala Based on ITTO Guidelines – Phase II (Guatemala)
- 4) PD 808/16 Rev.4 (F)* Conservation of African Barwood (*Pterocarpus Erinaceus Poir*) in the Gazetted Forests of La Palee and Boundiali in Northern Côte d'Ivoire with the Participation of Local Communities (Côte d'Ivoire)
- 5) PD 818/16 Rev.4 (F)* “BOSS - CUSHABATAY” Project – Forest Management and Restoration in the Cushabatay Basin on the Eastern Slope of the Cordillera Azul National Park (PNCAZ), Peru (Peru)
- 6) PD 890/18 Rev.3 (F)* Rehabilitation of the Upper Bandama Gazetted Forest in the North of Côte d'Ivoire with the Participation of the Local People (Côte d'Ivoire)
- 7) PD 903/19 Rev.2 (F) Management of Sungai Menyang Conservation Area for Orangutan Protection and Uplifting Community Livelihood, Sarawak, Malaysia (Malaysia)
[Partial funding \$121,903.50]
- 8) PD 905/19 Rev.2 (F)* Providing Support for the Sustainable Management of the Fosse-aux-Lions Gazetted Forest in the Savanna Region in Togo (Togo)
- 9) PD 915/21 Rev.2 (F) Strengthening the Rehabilitation and Sustainable Management of Sacred Forests in Ramsar Sites 1017 and 1018 in Benin (Benin)
- 10) PD 916/21 Rev.1 (F) Pilot Sustainable Management Systems for Secondary Natural Forests in the Collective Afro-descendant Community Territory of the Bajo Calima Community Council, Municipality of Buenaventura, Colombia (Colombia)
[Partial funding \$150,000.00]
- 11) PD 921/21 Rev.2 (F) Support for the Conservation and Promotion of Forest Tree Seeds in Benin (Benin)

- 12) PD 929/22 Rev.1 (F) Developing Silvicultural Management Models for Forest Restoration Based on the Use of Seed Trees for the Establishment of Natural and Artificial Regeneration in the Province of Tahuamanu, Peru (Peru)

10.2 Pre-projects

The Committee took note of the status of approved pre-projects, as contained in Document CRF(LVI)/3 Rev.1.

(A) Pre-projects under implementation

The Committee noted that there were no issues of one pre-project currently under implementation.

- 1) PPD 201/21 Rev.1 (F) Study for Capacity Building of Private and Community Tree Farmers in Benin (Benin)

(B) Pre-projects awaiting implementation agreement

None.

(C) Pre-projects awaiting financing

The Committee noted that one pre-project was still awaiting funding. This pre-project will become sunset between the 56th and 57th CRF Sessions.

- 1) PPD 198/21 Rev.1 (F)* Study for the Restoration and Sustainable Management of Gallery Forests in the Mono Delta Biosphere Reserve in Benin (Benin)

10.3 Biennial Work Programme-based Activities

The Committee noted that there were no issues of the two BWP-based activities currently under implementation.

- 1) PP-A/56-341-A Support for Women's Groups with the Restoration of Forest Landscapes in the Prefectures of Blitta and Lacs, Togo – Phase II
- 2) PP-A/56-342-A Strengthening SFM Standards and Timber Legality Framework in Myanmar

Item 11 - Biennial Work Programme of the Committee for 2023-2024

The Committee noted that in order to align the BWP with the biennial administrative budget approval process, the Secretariat proposed a one-year extension of the ITTO Biennial Work Programme for 2021-2022, which includes the strategic policy activities of the Committee.

Item 12 - Election of Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson for 2023

Ms. Alicia Grimes (USA) was elected as the Chairperson of the CRF for 2023. The Vice-Chairperson of the Committee for 2023 will be announced by the Producer Caucus at a later date.

Item 13 - Dates and Venues of the Fifty-seventh and Fifty-eighth Sessions of the Committee

The Fifty-seventh Session of the Committee will be held in conjunction with the Fifty-ninth Session of the International Tropical Timber Council in 2023.

The Fifty-eighth Session of the Committee will be held in conjunction with the Sixtieth Session of the International Tropical Timber Council in 2024.

Item 14 - Other Business

None.

Item 15 - Recommendations to the International Tropical Timber Council

- (A) The Committee recommended that funding be made immediately available for the following projects approved under the Project Cycle 2022:

Projects

| | |
|---------------------|---|
| PD 915/21 Rev.2 (F) | Strengthening the Rehabilitation and Sustainable Management of Sacred Forests in Ramsar Sites 1017 and 1018 in Benin [ITTO Budget: US\$ 512,402] |
| PD 921/21 Rev.2 (F) | Support for the Conservation and Promotion of Forest Tree Seeds in Benin [ITTO Budget: US\$ 447,072] |
| PD 929/22 Rev.1 (F) | Developing Silvicultural Management Models for Forest Restoration Based on the Use of Seed Trees for the Establishment of Natural and Artificial Regeneration in the Province of Tahuamanu, Peru [ITTO Budget: US\$ 1,061,040] |

- (B) The Committee recommended that an additional fund of US\$25,000 be made immediately available to support the publication of the ITTO C&I for sustainable forest management adapted to Africa context for wider dissemination.

Item 16 - Report of the Session

The Committee accepted this Report for submission to the Council.

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