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REPORT ON

PROJECT AND PRE-PROJECT WORK IN PROGRESS

IN THE FIELD OF REFORESTATION AND FOREST MANAGEMENT

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PROJECT WORK IN PROGRESS

A total of eight (8) approved projects are currently under implementation while five (5) projects are awaiting the signing of an agreement to initiate activities. There are nine (9) approved projects still awaiting full financing. In this report, the projects are grouped into three categories:

- A. Projects under active implementation;
- B. Projects which have financing allocated, but for which the contract or agreement regulating implementation has still not been concluded; and
- C. Projects which still do not have full financing secured

A. PROJECTS UNDER IMPLEMENTATION

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

Budget and Funding Sources:

Total Budget:		US\$	1,447,891
ITTO Budget:		US\$	556,963
Government of Japan (MoFA):	US\$	556,963	
EMBRAPA:		US\$	576,807
MMA:		US\$	263,271
IFT:		US\$	50,850

Implementing Agency: Embrapa Amazônia Oriental (EMBRAPA), Belém, Pará

Period of Approval: Rev. 5: Approved in November 2014

Starting Date and Duration: August 2017 / 36 months

Approved Revised Date of Project Completion: First Extension until 31 January 2022 (NOLF.20-0020)
Second Extension until 31 January 2023 (NOLF.21-0074)
Third Extension until 31 January 2024 (NOLF.23-0008)

This project, initially approved under the Spring 2008 Project Cycle, underwent several modifications. The Government of Brazil resubmitted the proposal with a modified budget in 2011 seeking another opportunity for funding for 20 months. In 2013, the proposal was further modified in its budget and resubmitted for funding for an additional period of 20 months. The project was fully financed at the Fiftieth Session of the Council in November 2014, and the Project Agreement was duly signed in December 2015. The Executing Agency, however, came to request the Secretariat for the further modification of the project in its development objective, specific objective and expected outputs in order to focus its activities on the community forests and non-timber forest products (NTFP) in addition to the timber producing forests at a commercial scale. It was stressed by the Executing Agency that both categories of forests require interventions to advance sustainable forest management in the Brazilian Amazon.

In early 2016, the Inception Report was prepared by the Executing Agency based on the aforementioned modified objectives and outputs and submitted to the ITTO Secretariat, together with a request for the first instalment of funds. However, all instalments of funds to ITTO projects were suspended from June to December 2016 due to ITTO financial issues and the implementation of the project based on a reduced budget was reviewed in early 2017. After finalizing an addendum to the project agreement in June 2017, the first instalment was transferred in July 2017. With conclusion of all necessary administrative arrangements, the project became operational in August 2017. The project duration has been extended until the end of January 2024 to fully complete all activities, some of which were delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The development objective of the project aims to strengthen the adoption of good forest management practices by medium and large scale timber enterprises in the Brazilian Amazon through the transfer of the tools developed under its first phase PD 57/99 Rev.2 (F) "Sustainable Management of Production Forests at the Commercial Scale in the Brazilian Amazon – Phase I". In particular, this project intends to: consolidate the Tools for Sustainable Forest Management (SFM Tools); build capacity of training centres and universities of the Amazon region to transfer the SFM Tools to timber enterprises and government agencies responsible for forest management; evaluate the direct and indirect impacts of transferring the SFM Tools to timber enterprises; and disseminate project achievements and products to a large audience of relevant stakeholders.

Expected project outputs include: a set of SFM computer tools consolidated; guidelines to support SFM prepared; capacity of project collaborators for implementing training of SFM Tools strengthened; project clients trained in the use of SFM Tools; strategies for transfer of SFM Tools evaluated; and technical, social, financial and environmental impacts of changes caused by SFM adoption in selected timber enterprises evaluated.

Since the Fifty-sixth Session of the Committee, the project has been making progress mainly in the following areas:

- Continue with training for the installation and inventory of permanent plots in the AMAPÁ State Forest area.
- Strengthen efforts to ensure accurate botanical species identification, a crucial factor for conserving biodiversity in tropical forest management, aligning with international conventions such as CBD and CITES.
- Expand partnerships with regional initiatives to promote sustainable timber production. Collaborations now include the Observatory of Community and Family Forest Management and the Amazon Forest Forum, a coalition of more than 40 members, including private companies, research institutions, associations, cooperatives, and indigenous representatives. This collective partnership promotes responsible forest management in the forestry sector.
- Health challenges in community-based forest management target sites were examined. One of the recommendations includes great support for the sustainable production of non-timber forest products, vital for the medicinal treatments of local populations in a difficult situation of hospital access such as that experienced during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The project team actively shared experiences from field activities at various events, including the IUFRO Latin America Meeting in Curitiba in October 2023.
- Ongoing efforts include the implementation of delayed activities such as Activity 6.4 (Baseline studies in collaborating timber enterprises, applying ITTO criteria and indicators) and Activity 6.6 (Organization of field days and dissemination events).

The final PSC meeting is expected to take place in December 2023 with participation of relevant stakeholders to review the implementation of remaining project activities for the successful completion of the project in early 2024.

(2) 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, Indonesia – Phase I

Budget and Funding Sources:

Total Budget:		US\$	492,014
ITTO Budget:		US\$	250,000
Government of Republic of Korea	US\$	250,000	
Government of Indonesia		US\$	11,424
Sinarmas Forestry & Partners		US\$	230,590

Implementing Agency: Forest Research and Development Centre, Forestry and Environment Research, Development and Innovation Agency (FOERDIA), Ministry of Environment and Forestry (MOEF), Indonesia

Period of Approval: Rev.3: Approved in September 2021

Starting Date and Duration: April 2023 / Phase I - 24 months

The project was approved in the Spring 2014 Project Cycle and received an extension at the request of the Ministry of Environment and Forestry, in compliance with ITTO rules. It secured partial funding: \$100,000 from the Republic of Korea during ITTC 54 in November 2018, and an additional \$150,000 during ITTC 55 in December 2019 from the Republic of Korea. The Implementing Agency subsequently divided the project into Phase I and Phase II to align with available funds for immediate implementation. The revised proposal received approval in September 2021 through the online no-objection procedure. The project agreement for Phase I was finalized in December 2022, and the first instalment of project funds was disbursed in April 2023, following the necessary administrative arrangements.

The Giam Siak Kecil Bukit Batu Biosphere Reserve (GSK-BR) covering an area of approximately 705,000 ha in the province of Riau, Sumatra has been recognized as a public-private partnership biosphere reserve by the UNESCO World Monitoring Networks in 2009.

The project aims to strengthen the effective implementation framework of sustainable management and conservation of GSK-BR by addressing the weaknesses in planning framework of GSK-BR without an integrated strategic management plan, weak capacity of concerned institutions in implementing the biosphere reserve concept and poor participation of local communities in management operations.

Since the beginning of the project in April 2023, the project has been making progress mainly in the following areas:

- Conducted focus group discussions with key stakeholders on planning framework of GSK-BR with the assistance of a national consultant (Dr. Dolly Priatna). Highlights of these discussions included: the importance of collaboration, accurate mapping, and good data management in formulating a better and more sustainable GSK-BR Planning Framework; increasing support from all stakeholders in the management of the biosphere reserve; and the need for periodic monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of this Planning Framework to ensure the achievement of goals and continuous improvement.
- The first PSC meeting was held in Bogor on 2 May 2023 under the chairmanship of Director General of the Agency for Standardization of Environment and Forestry Instrument (ASEFI) of MoEF. Attendees included representatives from the donor, UNESCO Indonesia National Man of Biosphere Committee, the Center for Natural Resource Conservation Riau, Sinar Mas, and the Riau Provincial Government. This meeting endorsed the detailed workplan for the project's first year implementation and encouraged proactive stakeholder consultation for the sustainability of the project.
- Published an article relating to "BSILHK Starts New Action for Landscape-Based Protection in the Giam Siak Kecil Biosphere Reserve, Involving All Stakeholders" in several media, such as Agro Indonesia, Suara Karya.co.id, Forest Insight, Riau Antra News, and more.
- The project team is currently engaged in reviewing and updating bio-physical and socio-economic data on biosphere reserve, operating a database system for the biosphere reserve, and providing training on biosphere management knowledge and skills.

(3) PD 764/14 Rev.3 (F) Enabling Customary Landowners to Participate Effectively in Community Forest Management Schemes Within 6 Pilot Areas of PNG

Budget and Funding Sources:

Total Budget:		US\$	668,313
ITTO Budget:		US\$	606,313
Government of Japan:	US\$	606,313	
Government of PNG:		US\$	62,000

Implementing Agency: Papua New Guinea Forest Authority

Period of Approval: Rev.3: Approved in March 2017

Starting Date and Duration: March 2020 / 36 months

Approved Revised Date of Project Completion: First Extension until 31 May 2023 (NOLF.22-0037)
Second Extension until 30 November 2023 (NOLF.23-0022)

The revised project document, which had been adjusted to accommodate a reduced budget, was approved in March 2017 through the electronic approval system in March 2017. Financing for the project was secured in the same year. The project agreement was duly signed in February 2019 after a long consultation with the relevant legal authorities and institutions in the country. The Implementing Agency prepared administrative arrangements for the commencement of the project in accordance with the rules and procedures of ITTO and PNG FA. After such arrangements, the project officially commenced in March 2020.

The project aims to enhance sustainable forest management practices through improved community livelihoods and social stability, aligning with the PNG Forest Authority's Forestry and Climate Change Framework for Action (2009-2015) which promotes a multi-stakeholder approach to community forest management (CFM) programming by engaging customary landowners at the local level and enhances the capacity of government institutions at the national level. Specifically, the project seeks to establish a model community-based land ownership mapping and forest resource assessment system to support CFM initiatives, including PES and REDD+, while increasing landowner understanding about the goods and services that forests provide. Project activities will be working in collaboration with 6 CFM partners and their pilot landowner groups at the local level. This arrangement holds potential for future replication.

The project has focused on achieving four specific outputs, namely i) Participatory data collection technology is improving CFM practices at community, district and provincial levels; ii) Clan groups are participating appropriately in the National Land Development Program; iii) A data management system is engaging landowners in feasible CFM schemes (including PES and REDD+); and iv) Policy and planning guidelines for CFM are in place.

Since the Fifty-sixth Session of the Committee, the project has been making progress mainly in the following areas:

- Published two final reports documenting the software development process initiated in August 2020, enabling the digitization of key variables for CFM in PNG, followed by the field testing of data collection forms and data management software using KoboCollect and KoboToolbox.
- In April 2023, the Project Monitoring Team conducted a site visit to FORCERT's target community at Ainbul to assess how the CFM Project's impact on their land-use planning and monitoring activities.
- In May 2023, the Project Monitoring Team visited the Milne Bay Provincial Administration's target community at Gibara Ward (in Huhu LLG, Alotau District) to evaluate how the CFM Project was supporting the Gibara Ward Development Committee with their socio-economic development activities.
- The project's land-use survey forms are assisting the community in managing their land-use plans, whilst the socio-economic monitoring forms are enhancing people's understanding of how their income generation activities contribute to their land-use objective.
- The project team is currently focused on completing any remaining data collection activities and improving existing community land-use plans to support their CFM project. Additionally, they are finalizing awareness videos for the National Sustainable Land Use Policy (NSLUP) and CFM Topics 1-5; identifying CFM opportunities and engagement of landowners in feasible CFM programmes; and finishing the CFM Policy & Planning Guidelines.

(4) PD 808/16 Rev.5 (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 - Phase I

Budget and Funding Sources:

Total Budget:		US\$	828,718
ITTO Budget:		US\$	566,488
Government of Japan:	US\$	320,000	
Government of Côte d'Ivoire:		US\$	262,230

Implementing Agency: FOREST DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION (SOCIÉTÉ DE DÉVELOPPEMENT DES FORÊTS—SODEFOR)

Period of Approval: Rev.5: Approved in March 2023

Starting Date and Duration: To be determined / 36 months

The first approval of this 36-month project was in September 2019 through the electronic approval system for the project cycle of 2019. This Project was revised and resubmitted by the proponent to the ITTO Secretariat, in compliance with the provisions of the Council Decision 2(X), for the extension of the validity period of its status as an Approved Project, in 2021. The project was partially financed with an amount of US\$320,000 thanks to the generous contribution of Japan during the inter-session period between ITTC 58 and ITTC 59. As the project was partially funded, it was revised into a phased project, which was approved in March 2023, with the Phase 1 to be implemented with the abovementioned amount. The Project Agreement governing Phase 1 of the project PD 808/16 Rev.5 (F) had been signed by all parties in September 2023.

The African barwood tree (*Pterocarpus erinaceus Poir*) is a multipurpose tree having a direct role as a source of additional household income. In fact, its technological qualities are such that this timber species is one of the most sought-after in West Africa, much appreciated for cabinet-making, heavy carpentry, outdoor carpentry (Duvall, 2008). In addition, African barwood yields a diverse range of non-timber products including food for human consumption, cattle fodder (Petit and Mallet, 2001), medicines and raw materials for handicrafts (tannins, dyes, sap, resin, etc.). Given these values, African barwood has been overexploited (fraudulently and illegally), especially during the crisis experienced by the country. The development objective of the project is to contribute to the sustainable management of the African barwood tree (*Pterocarpus erinaceus Poir*) ecosystems in Côte d'Ivoire in the Bagoué region. The project specifically intends to safeguard the African barwood tree (*Pterocarpus erinaceus Poir*) in the Gazetted Forests of Palée and Boundiali in the Bagoué region of northern Côte d'Ivoire.

The disbursement of the first installment of ITTO funds, needed for the commencement of the project implementation, is pending until the reception by the ITTO Secretariat of an acceptable Inception Report and its associated Detailed Work Plan.

(5) PD 836/17 Rev.2 (F) Enhancing Capacity of Local Communities and Forest Administration to Effectively Implement Community Forestry Programme (CFP) in Kratie and Mondulhiri Provinces of Cambodia (Cambodia)

Budget and Funding Sources:

Total Budget:		US\$	480,758
ITTO Budget:		US\$	417,558
Government of Republic of Korea	US\$	267,557	
Government of USA:	US\$	100,000	
Government of Japan:	US\$	50,000	
Government of Cambodia		US\$	63,200

Implementing Agency: Forest Administration, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Cambodia

Period of Approval: Rev.2: Approved in February 2021

Starting Date and Duration: October 2021 / 36 months

This project was initially approved in the 2017 Project Cycle and received partial funding of US\$100,000 from the Republic of Korea at ITTC 54 in November 2018. Additional funding was secured during subsequent ITTC meetings, with contributions from the Republic of Korea (US\$ 167,557) and the USA (US\$50,000) at the ITTC 55 in December 2019, and further support from the USA (US\$50,000) and Japan (US\$50,000) at the ITTC 56 in November 2020. The Implementing Agency revised the approved project document based on the available project funds, and this revised project document was approved in February 2021. Following the completion of the project agreement regulating project implementation in June 2021, the Implementing Agency initiated project activities in October 2021.

The project aims to promote the sustainable development of community forestry program (CFP) with increased livelihoods of local communities in support of the effective implementation of SFM in Cambodia in an effort to promote community-based SFM and alleviate poverty in local communities. Its specific objective is to enhance the capacity of local communities and the Forest Administration to effectively implement CFP in the Kratie and Mondulhiri provinces, among the richest regions with forest resource and the highest deforestation rate at the same time. The expected outputs of the project are: i) improvement of the capacity of local communities and forest administration in forest management planning, ii) promotion of the capacity of

local communities to operationalize approved forest management plans, and iii) improvement of the capacity of Forest Administration in monitoring and reporting of forest operations by individual Community Forestry Management Units (CFMUs).

Since the Fifty-sixth Session of the Committee, the project has been making progress mainly in the following areas:

- Organized the Second PSC Meeting in hybrid format on 9 May 2023 at the Forestry Administration of Cambodia. Attendees included representatives from the donor countries, ITTO, the Forestry Administration, Cantonments of Kratie and Mondulhiri provinces. Field visits to Mondulhiri province on 7 May 2023 discussed the challenges of community forestry management committees.
- Produced Guidelines on the Preparation of Community Forest Management and Development Plans, endorsed by the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) in late June 2023. Distributed 300 copies of the Guidelines to the Forestry Administration at national and provincial levels and other stakeholders.
- Established a working group in Mondulhiri province, comprising various authorities and committees. The working group will meet quarterly to discuss a wide range of issues associated with management and protection of community forests and provide interventions and solutions.
- Reviewed the management and distribution of small seed funds in Kratie and Mondulhiri provinces through monitoring and meetings with four Community Forestry programs. The distribution aligns with established terms and regulations, with satisfactory record keeping of the distribution and repayment of funds.
- Collaborated with Chet Borey district CF Network and CF Management Committees of Chamreun, Tava, and Phnom Meas, involving 22 individuals (including 4 females), for joint patrolling in community forests. The operation resulted in the demarcation of 36 ha of illegally encroached land, removal of 300 meters of electric wire, and a warning issued against illegal charcoal production in community forests.
- Conducted two training courses in Kratie and Mondulhiri provinces, with 57 participants from 18 Community Forestry organizations. The training focused on data collection and processing, specifically for CF forest inventory and the collection of social and biophysical information for CF management and development plans. Additionally, 27 project-related articles were posted on the Project Facebook page (FA-ITTO CFP), and two articles were uploaded on the FA Facebook Site.

(6) PD 849/17 Rev.2 (F) Increasing Commercial Reforestation Competitiveness in Costa Rica

Budget and Funding Sources:

Total Budget:		US\$	422,165
ITTO Budget:		US\$	335,765
Government of Japan:	US\$	235,765	
Government of USA:	US\$	100,000	
Government of Costa Rica:		US\$	86,400

Implementing Agency: COSTA RICAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY, SCHOOL OF FORESTRY/RESEARCH CENTRE FOR FORESTRY INNOVATION (CIF)

Period of Approval: Rev.2: Approved in November 2020

Starting Date and Duration: June 2022 / 36 months

The first approval of this 36-month project was in September 2018 through the electronic approval system and its validity was extended in November 2020 for additional 20 months. The project was partially financed with an amount of US\$100,000 thanks to the generous contribution of USA during the ITTC 54 in November 2018 and its validity was extended in November 2020 for the duration of 20 months. Additional fund of US\$235,765 was pledged by Japan during the ITTC 57 in November 2021. With the total amount of US\$335,765 secured by the ITTO Secretariat, the project can initiate its activities. The Project Agreement had been signed by all parties in April 2022, and the first disbursement of ITTO funds was made in June 2022.

The Development Objective of the project is to fulfil the needs of Costa Rican communities through commercial reforestation. The project specifically intends to increase the competitiveness of commercial reforestation in Costa Rica through the development and testing of an effective reforestation financing system

that promotes management of forest plantations in the country, increases their m³/hectare/year productivity, and develops high value-added timber products to improve forest producers' income.

Based on information from the project executing agency and in accordance with the project's most recent report, the progress in its implementation can be mainly summarized as follows:

- Continuation of meetings with forest organizations, which had been initiated to collect existing information required to prepare a draft on working protocol for forest inventory and mapping of sites for testing of seed provenance in coordination with CATIE Research Centre located in Turrialba, Costa Rica, in relation to the establishment of competitive forest plantations in Costa Rica,
- Consultation of relevant stakeholders has been undertaken for the Identification of relevant species requiring identified genetic improvement for the purpose of reforestation activities in the project target zone,
- List of potential wood products with the highest demand and potential in Costa Rica, being prepared in collaboration with main stakeholders involved in reforestation activities in Costa Rica, is in its final stage. It should be subject to validation by relevant stakeholders involved in reforestation activities implemented in the project areas.
- The maintenance of the genetic improvement trials (progeny trials) of balsa (*Ochroma piramydale*) and laurel (*Cordia alliodora*) has continued, in collaboration with *the* subcontractor GENFORES which has been also preparing the protocol for the genetic improvement trials of a third species to be selected in due time.
- Delivery of two vehicles, required for the project implementation, has been delayed due to communication problems between the Ministry of Finance (the highest authority) and the Customs Department (a department that belongs to the Treasury). The situation is that when you purchase the vehicles, you pay a reduced VAT of 2%. However, although the Treasury has already issued the document that attests that what applies is a VAT of 2%, the Customs Department asks that an exemption be processed. The Treasury maintains that Customs cannot ask for an exemption and that what it must apply is the abovementioned reduced VAT, but the customs systems only have two options: either the project executing agency is exempted or it is not exempted. There is a bureaucratic problem among governmental institutions to be addressed regarding the delivery of two vehicles.

The Executing Agency of the project PD 849/17 Rev.2 (F) was informed that the ITTO project monitoring mission will be carried out from 20 to 22 November 2023 for the assessment of the progress made in its implementation in Costa Rica.

(7) 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

Budget and Funding Sources:

Total Budget:		US\$	1,358,783
ITTO Budget:		US\$	556,083
The City of Basel, Switzerland:	US\$	200,000	
The Bruno Manser Funds:	US\$	200,000	
Government of Japan:	US\$	100,000	
Unearmarked:	US\$	56,083	
Government of Malaysia:		US\$	802,700
Implementing Agency:	FOREST DEPARTMENT SARAWAK		
Period of Approval:	Rev.3: Approved in October 2022		
Starting Date and Duration:	September 2023 / 24 months		

The project was approved in October 2020. In terms of financing, the Bruno Manser Funds and the City of Basel, Switzerland pledged an amount of US\$ 200,000 each (total US\$ 400,000). Additionally, additional funds were provided from Japan, the USA and the Bali Partnership Funds at ITTC 57 in December 2021. The Implementing Agency revised the project document to implement field activities based on the secured funds. This revised project document was approved in October 2022 through the online no-objection procedure. The

project agreement governing the implementation of the project was duly signed in March 2023 and the Executing Agency initiated project activities in September 2023.

The project aims to manage the Upper Baram Forest Area for biodiversity conservation and socio-economic development for the benefits of local communities. The Upper Baram Forest Area (UBFA) covers 283 500 ha in northeastern Sarawak, Malaysia, and encompasses primary forests, farm areas, settlements, timber concessions and agricultural lands. The four ethnic groups in the area—Penan, Kenyah, Kelabit and Saban—all rely heavily on forests for their subsistence. Specifically, the project seeks to enhance rural transformation through conservation and sustainable development with good governance. Integrated management plan will be delivered through three outputs to achieve the following, namely, (i) forest resource base sufficiently secured, and threats significantly reduced, (ii) integrated land management and utilization by zoning carried out, (iii) multi-stakeholder institutional arrangement for the UBFA development established, and (iv) sustainable economic development models introduced and demonstrated in line with government's rural transformation programme.

Since the project's inception in September 2023, the project has been making progress mainly in the following areas:

- Organized the first meeting of the project steering committee (PSC) on 25 September 2023 in the Sarawak town of Miri. This meeting brought together all key stakeholders, including representatives from the donors such as the Government of Japan, the City of Basel (Switzerland) and the Bruno Manser Fonds, alongside government agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and nearly 30 community representatives from the UBFA. The collective spirit during the meeting underscored the significance of the shared mission among stakeholders, while their diversity illuminated the complex nature of advancing sustainable forest management in tropical countries.
- Following the PSC meeting, an engaging meet-and-greet consultation session was held with local communities on the evening of 26 September at Long Semiyang. This gathering was attended by nearly 60 enthusiastic community members, all eagerly awaiting the implementation of the project.
- The project team is focused on key activities, including the comprehensive collection of baseline data on ecosystems, flora and fauna. They are also commencing enrichment planting on idle community lands. Furthermore, the team is conducting capacity building and awareness programs for local communities on forest management, forest management certification, and the resolution of conflicts.

(8) PD 905/19 Rev.3 (F) Providing Support for the Sustainable Management of the Fosse-aux-Lions Gazetted Forest in the Savanna Region in Togo - Phase I

Budget and Funding Sources:

Total Budget (Phase I):		US\$	260,268
ITTO Budget (Phase I):		US\$	200,000
Government of Japan (MoFA):	US\$	200,000	
Government of Togo (Phase I):		US\$	60,268

Implementing Agency: AGENCY FOR FOREST DEVELOPMENT AND USE (*OFFICE DE DÉVELOPPEMENT ET D'EXPLOITATION DES FORÊTS—ODEF*)

Period of Approval: Rev.3: Approved in March 2023

Starting Date and Duration: To be determined / 18 months

The first approval of this 36-month project was in September 2019 through the electronic approval system for the project cycle of 2019. The project was partially financed with an amount of US\$200,000 thanks to the generous contribution of Japan during the inter-session period between ITTC 58 and ITTC 59. As the project was partially funded, it was revised into a phased project, which was approved in March 2023, with the Phase 1 to be implemented with the abovementioned amount. The Project Agreement governing the Phase 1 of the project PD 905/19 Rev.3 (F) had been signed by all parties in May 2023. The disbursement of the first installment of ITTO funds, needed for the commencement of the project implementation, was made in August 2023 after the reception by the ITTO Secretariat of an acceptable Inception Report and its associated Detailed Work Plan.

The Fosse-aux-Lions Gazetted Forest was once a superb reserve for fauna and flora. However, as a result of the socio-political unrest that Togo experienced during the 1990s, the gazetted forest, as most of the protected areas, has been invaded and devastated by local people, thereby questioning the non-participatory, unilateral management processes applied by the Forest Administration since the colonial era. Over the decades this has led to significant changes, particularly in relation to the degradation of forest resources, biodiversity, uncontrolled exploitation, and worsening impoverishment of local populations. The overall aim of the project is to improve the living conditions of the population of the prefecture of Tône and Tandjoaré through the sustainable management of the Fosse-aux-Lions Gazetted Forest. This project specifically aims at sustainably managing the Fosse-aux-Lions Gazetted Forest in order to improve the living conditions and environment of local populations.

Based on information from the implementing agency (ODEF-Togo), the progress in the implementation of the Phase 1 of this project was mainly focused on the consultation and sensitization campaigns which have been initiated to ensure the involvement of relevant stakeholders (local communities, traditional chieftaincies, national and local forestry administration, ODEF, etc.), for a smooth project implementation started in August 2023 with the disbursement of the first installment of ITTO funds.

B. PROJECTS AWAITING IMPLEMENTATION AGREEMENT

(1) PD 916/21 Rev.2 (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

Budget and Funding Sources:

Total Budget:		US\$	599,582
ITTO Budget:		US\$	450,000
Government of Japan (MoFA):	US\$	200,000	
Government of USA	US\$	250,000	
Government of Colombia – University of Tolima:		US\$	102,152
Community Council of the Bajo Calima Black Ethnic Group:		US\$	47,430
Implementing Agency:	UNIVERSITY OF TOLIMA - COMMUNITY COUNCIL OF THE BAJO CALIMA BLACK ETHNIC GROUP		
Collaborating Agency:	MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT		
Period of Approval:	Rev.2: Approved in March 2023		
Starting Date and Duration:	To be determined / 24 months		

The first approval of this 24-month project was in September 2019 through the electronic approval system for the project cycle of 2021. The project was partially financed with an amount of US\$200,000 thanks to the generous contribution of Japan during the inter-session period between ITTC 58 and ITTC 59, in addition to the amount of US\$250,000 secured from USA in two tranches (US\$150,000 at ITTC 57 and US\$100,000 at ITTC 58). As the project was partially funded, with the amount of US\$450,000 out of US\$578,185, it was revised to reduce the ITTO budget to the secured total amount of US\$450,000 by appropriately adjusting planned project activities. The revised project was approved through the electronic approval system in March 2023, for its implementation in two stages as follows:

- Stage 1 of 12 months with the ITTO budget of US\$200,000 from the Japan's supplementary budget (with the compulsory pre-condition/requirement allowing to use the funds of the Japan's supplementary budget within a maximum period not exceeding 12 months until March 2024),
- Stage 2 of 12 months with the ITTO budget of US\$250,000 from the US contribution through ITTO project regular cycle.

This proposal stems from a recommendation of Project PD 415/06 Rev. 2 (M) "Systematization and Modelling of Economic and Technical Information to Train Professionals Related to the Production, Processing

and Marketing of Timber Products”, implemented by the University of Tolima under an Agreement with ITTO and the Ministry for the Environment and Sustainable Development (MADS) of the Republic of Colombia. The project intends to contribute to the implementation of management, conservation, and restoration programs for the strategic ecosystems of the Colombian Pacific region based on enrichment planting and agroforestry systems established under a sustainable management approach. Specifically, the project aims to launch a participatory process helping to raise the living standards of the communities with a gender focus to achieve sustainable management of secondary natural forests and collective lands in Bajo Calima, Republic of Colombia.

The draft Agreement governing the implementation of the project PD 916/21 Rev.2 (F) had been circulated for signing process by all parties in April 2023. It is still being subject to review by Colombian project contracting parties until mid-October 2023 the time for finalizing CRF-57 working documents.

(2) PD 927/22 Rev.2 (F) Development of an Information System on the Potential of Wood and Carbon to Support Sustainable Forest Management in South Kalimantan, Indonesia

Budget and Funding Sources:

Total Budget:		US\$	268,320
ITTO Budget:		US\$	233,300
Government of USA:	US\$	150,300	
Government of Australia:	US\$	83,000	
Government of South Kalimantan:		US\$	35,020
Implementing Agency:	Regional Planning Board of South Kalimantan (BAPPEDA), Ministry of Environment and Forestry (MOEF), Indonesia		
Period of Approval:	August 2023		
Starting Date and Duration:	To be determined / 30 months		

The project, originated from the concept note (CN-21002/CN-523), obtained approval through the online no-objection procedures in August 2023. Currently, the Ministry of Environment and Forestry is in the process of reviewing the draft project agreement. The project aims to enhance the planning and monitoring sustainable forest management practices in South Kalimantan, Indonesia. Specifically, the project is to establish a comprehensive information and database system on wood production potential and carbon emission/sequestration to facilitate decision-making, identify opportunities and monitor the progress of sustainable forest management in South Kalimantan. The development of a robust information system on the potential of wood production and carbon sequestration is crucial for advancing sustainable forest management in South Kalimantan, where the timber industry is important for economic growth, value-added products, and export potential. This system will play an important role to facilitate evidence-based decision-making, leading to more sustainable forest management practices. This could also lead to the development of new forest-based industries, job creation, and income generation for local communities.

To ensure the effective achievement of sustainable forest management in South Kalimantan, the project seeks to delivering three outputs:

- 1) Strengthening the data and information collection system to assess changes in forest cover, forest growth, carbon stocks, wood production, and social information as a solid foundation for sustainable forest management.
- 2) Improving the wood and carbon information systems to support decision-making tools and monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to track progress towards achieving sustainable forest management goals.
- 3) Enhancing the coordination of SFM policy information network systems with engagement of forest managers, policymakers, local communities, academics and other relevant stakeholders to facilitate the dissemination of essential information and engagement of key stakeholders in sustainable forest management process.

(3) PD 931/23 (F) Promoting SFM and Local Wood Consumption through Capacity Building and Improving Regulation in the North Zone, Costa Rica

Budget and Funding Sources:

Total Budget:		US\$	198,260
ITTO Budget:		US\$	138,260
Government of Korea:	US\$	138,370	
CODEFORSA:		US\$	60,000
Implementing Agency:	San Carlos Forestry Development Commission Association (CODEFORSA)		
Period of Approval:	August 2023		
Starting Date and Duration:	To be determined / 24 months		

The 24-month project, which is derived from the Concept Note CN-21005 after the expression of interest of Korea in financing it at ITTC 58 in November 2022, was approved through the electronic time-bound system, as the ITTO Secretariat did not receive any objection from ITTO Members by 7 August 2023. In Costa Rica's northern forest region, where most of Costa Rica's wood is produced, pressure on agricultural reclamation rather than forest management is increasing, escalating the threat of severe deforestation and deforestation. The project's development objective is to contribute to the conservation of forest resources and biodiversity through sustainable management of forests and increased income of forest owners in northern Costa Rica. The project's specific objective is the promotion of sustainable forest management through capacity development of forests owner, regulation and procedure improvement, and increased demand for local Wood.

The draft Agreement governing the implementation of the project PD 931/23 (F) [CN-21005] had been circulated with relevant associated Questionnaire for review by all parties in September 2023. The signing process will be launched after the completion of the review of the abovementioned documents.

(4) PD 932/23 (F) Assessment and Dissemination of Knowledge and Experience for Ex-Situ Conservation and Plantation of Caoba in Northern Coastal Area, Peru

Budget and Funding Sources:

Total Budget:		US\$	123,294
ITTO Budget:		US\$	84,784
Government of Korea:	US\$	84,784	
COSTA VERDE:		US\$	38,510
Implementing Agency:	COSTA VERDE INICIATIVA 20X20		
Period of Approval:	August 2023		
Starting Date and Duration:	To be determined / 12 months		

The 12-month project, which is derived from the Concept Note CN-22014 after the expression of interest of Korea in financing it at ITTC 58 in November 2022, was approved through the electronic time-bound system, as the ITTO Secretariat did not receive any objection from ITTO Members by 7 August 2023. The Caoba (*Swietenia macrophylla*; King), which grows in the tropical rainforest, is of great commercial value, but is now listed as an endangered species on CITES due to illegal logging and forest pests and diseases. Peru was a major exporter of the tree in the 1990s, but now imports it. The project's development objective is to promote the conservation and sustainable use of endangered Caoba in the Northern coastal area of Peru. The project's specific objective is to conduct a comprehensive analysis of successful experiences and valuable lessons learned from ex-situ conservation and plantations of Caoba in the northern coastal area of Peru.

The draft Agreement governing the implementation of the project PD 932/23 (F) [CN-22014] had been circulated with relevant associated Questionnaire for review by all parties in September 2023. The signing process will be launched after the completion of the review of the abovementioned documents.

(5) PD 934/23 Rev.1 (F) Strengthening the Conservation of the Critically Endangered Rosewood (*Dalbergia spp.*) in Dakrong Nature Reserve and Dong Nai Conservation Landscape, Vietnam

Budget and Funding Sources:

Total Budget:		US\$	160,826
ITTO Budget:		US\$	148,976
Government of Australia:	US\$	100,000	
Government of USA:	US\$	48,976	
CCD:		US\$	11,850
Implementing Agency:	CENTER FOR NATURE CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT (CCD)		
Period of Approval:	October 2023		
Starting Date and Duration:	To be determined / 24 months		

The project, originated from the concept note (CN-21007), received approval through the online no-objection procedures in October 2023. In terms of funding, the project secured US\$48,976 from the USA in October 2022 and an additional US\$100,000 from Australia in June 2023. Currently, the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development is in the process of reviewing the draft project agreement.

The project aims to significantly enhance the long-term conservation of the threatened rosewood species in Vietnam by actively engaging local communities in the protection, restoration, and sustainable management of *D. oliveri* and *D. cochinchinensis* populations in Dakrong nature reserve and Dong Nai conservation landscape. The critically endangered Tamalan (*Dalbergia oliveri*) and Siamese rosewood (*Dalbergia cochinchinensis*) are currently among the most threatened plants in Vietnam. Due to high demand from trade and illegal logging for a long time, the wild populations of these two species have been reduced dramatically and are locally extinct in many known distribution areas. The remaining populations are small, fragmented, and mainly distributed in protected areas, but they lack effective conservation efforts.

This project outcomes will be achieved through building the capacity of forest rangers, protected areas personnel, and local communities in forest protection, the conservation of endangered plants, and sustainable forest management. It will also develop and implement a comprehensive management and conservation plan for *D. oliveri* and *D. cochinchinensis*. Furthermore, it will implement measures to restore rosewood populations through natural regeneration and replanting in degraded habitats. The Government of Vietnam will benefit from the preservation and restoration of rosewood populations as well as capacity building of relevant personnel. The successful models developed during this project will also be replicated in other protected areas and with other threatened plant species.

C. PROJECTS AWAITING FINANCING

(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, Indonesia – Phase II

Budget and Funding Sources:

Total Budget:	US\$	380,246
ITTO Budget:	US\$	248,154
Government of Indonesia :	US\$	6,272
Sinarmas Forestry & Partners	US\$	125,820

Implementing Agency:	Forest Research and Development Centre, Forestry and Environment Research, Development and Innovation Agency (FOERDIA), Ministry of Environment and Forestry (MOEF), Indonesia
Period of Approval:	Rev.3: Approved in October 2021
Starting Date and Duration:	To be determined / Phase II - 12 months

The project was approved under the Spring 2014 Project Cycle and was revised in two Phases, taking into account the funds available for immediate implementation. Phase I focuses on the enhanced planning framework and institutional capacity of the Giam Siak Kecil Bukit Batu Biosphere Reserve (GSK-BR) and is currently operational with funding from the government of the Republic of Korea. Phase II, focusing on promoting partnerships among key stakeholders for the operational management of GSK-BR, is securing funding and is currently pending.

GSK-BR covering an area of approximately 705,000 ha in the province of Riau, Sumatra has been recognized as a public-private partnership biosphere reserve by the UNESCO World Monitoring Networks in 2009. However, this biosphere reserve has not been sustainably managed. The main problems include weaknesses in planning framework of GSK-BR without an integrated strategic management plan, weak capacity of concerned institutions in implementing the biosphere reserve concept and poor participation of local communities in management operations. Therefore, the project is designed to initiate an effective implementation framework of sustainable management and conservation of GSK-BR by realizing the management objectives and basic functions of GSK-BR. More specifically, it aims at promoting the sustainable management and conservation of the reserve in an effective manner.

(2) PD 765/14 Rev.4 (F) Development of a Forest Landscape Restoration Program for Guatemala Based on ITTO Guidelines - Phase II

Budget and Funding Sources:

Total Budget:	US\$	460,124
ITTO Budget:	US\$	351,944
FCG:	US\$	108,180

Implementing Agency:	FUNDACIÓN PARA LA CONSERVACIÓN DE LOS RECURSOS NATURALES Y AMBIENTE EN GUATEMALA (FCG) IN COLLABORATION WITH NATIONAL FOREST INSTITUTE (INAB)
Period of Approval:	Rev.4: Approved in Fall 2017
Starting Date and Duration:	To be determined / Phase II - 24 months

This project was approved under the Spring 2015 Project Cycle through the electronic approval system, and partial financing was pledged by CBD and USA at the 51st and 52nd ITTC Sessions in 2015 and 2016. Following revision of the proposal into two Phases to take account of the partial funding available, INAB decided that it wished to oversee the project but not to act as the Executing Agency (EA), and it nominated FUNDACIÓN PARA LA CONSERVACIÓN DE LOS RECURSOS NATURALES Y AMBIENTE EN GUATEMALA (FCG) as the new EA. The project document was therefore revised a final time and was approved through ITTO's online no-objection procedure in September 2017. The project agreement for Phase I was finally signed in May 2018 following delays in finalizing the CBD contribution to the project and implementation commenced the following month.

The ITTO Secretariat proposed to report the project PD 765/14 Rev.4 (F) Phase I under the Committee's "Completed Projects" agenda item during its 56th Session in 2022 because the completion report was submitted beyond the time of finalization of Committee documents due to several members of the project team being directly impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic. Phase II of the project will commence, if funded, following completion of Phase I.

(3) PD 808/16 Rev.5 (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 – Phase II

Budget and Funding Sources:

Total Budget:	US\$	330,736
ITTO Budget:	US\$	246,488
Government of Côte d'Ivoire:	US\$	84,248

Implementing Agency: Société de Développement des Forêts (SODEFOR)

Period of Approval: Rev.5: Approved in March 2023

Starting Date and Duration: To be determined / 12 months

The first approval of this 36-month project was in September 2019 through the electronic approval system for the project cycle of 2019. This Project was revised and resubmitted by the proponent to the ITTO Secretariat, in compliance with the provisions of the Council Decision 2(X), for the extension of the validity period of its status as an Approved Project, in 2021. The project was partially financed with an amount of US\$320,000 thanks to the generous contribution of Japan during the inter-session period between ITTC 58 and ITTC 59. As the project was partially funded, it was revised into a phased project, which was approved in March 2023, with the Phase 1 to be implemented with the abovementioned amount. The Project Agreement governing the Phase 1 of the project PD 808/16 Rev.5 (F) had been signed by all parties in September 2023.

The African barwood tree (*Pterocarpus erinaceus Poir*) is a multipurpose tree having a direct role as a source of additional household income. In fact, its technological qualities are such that this timber species is one of the most sought-after in West Africa, much appreciated for cabinet-making, heavy carpentry, outdoor carpentry (Duvall, 2008). In addition, African barwood yields a diverse range of non-timber products including food for human consumption, cattle fodder (Petit and Mallet, 2001), medicines and raw materials for handicrafts (tannins, dyes, sap, resin, etc.). Given these values, African barwood has been overexploited (fraudulently and illegally), especially during the crisis experienced by the country. The development objective of the project is to contribute to the sustainable management of the African barwood tree (*Pterocarpus erinaceus Poir*) ecosystems in Côte d'Ivoire in the Bagoué region. The project specifically intends to safeguard the African barwood tree (*Pterocarpus erinaceus Poir*) in the Gazetted Forests of Palée and Boundiali in the Bagoué region of northern Côte d'Ivoire. Phase II of the project will commence, if funded, following the completion of Phase I.

(4) PD 903/19 Rev.2 (F) Management of Sungai Menyang Conservation Area for Orangutan Protection and Uplifting Community Livelihood, Sarawak, Malaysia

Budget and Funding Sources:

Total Budget:	US\$	1,096,115
ITTO Budget:	US\$	509,040
Government of Malaysia:	US\$	587,075

Implementing Agency: FOREST DEPARTMENT SARAWAK

Period of Approval: October 2020

Starting Date and Duration: To be determined / 24 months

The project was approved in October 2020 and received partial funding of US\$121,903.50 from Australia in June 2022. The project is currently awaiting additional funds for its implementation. Once a minimum of an additional US\$200,000 is secured, the Implementing Agency will commence the project with a revised budget.

The Sungai Menyang Conservation Area (SMCA) in south-western Sarawak covers about 14,000 ha and is occupied by a re-settled Iban community following construction of the Batang Ai Hydro Dam 33 years ago in 1985, with a population of about 500 living permanently in six longhouses. Adjacent to the SMCA is the

Batang Ai National Park (24,000 ha) where over 300 orangutans are found. During the past two decades, the animal has come out of the national park to raid on fruit crops, causing much loss to Iban farmers. A recent survey indicated presence of 87 individuals inside SMCA.

The project's development objective is to enhance biodiversity conservation and rural economic transformation, and the specific objective is to improve community livelihood through sustainable use of forests and biological resources. These objectives will be achieved through three outputs. Output 1 will study to secure forest resource base for integrated management, Output 2 will initiate a process for effective ecosystem management and resource utilization, and Output 3 will encourage community participation in eco-tourism with improved facilities and training. Expected deliverables will be (a) forest resource base with well-defined and harmonized functions identified and secured, (b) orangutan raids on farm crops under control, (c) new activities for uplifting community livelihood initiated, (d) studies on carbon stocks in different forest types carried out and carbon trading schemes developed, (e) nature and culture eco-tourism facilities improved, and (f) stakeholders institutional arrangement for SMCA management established.

(5) PD 905/19 Rev.3 (F) Providing Support for the Sustainable Management of the Fosse-aux-Lions Gazetted Forest in the Savanna Region in Togo - Phase II

Budget and Funding Sources:

Total Budget:	US\$	366,493.00
ITTO Budget:	US\$	282,624.16
Government of Togo	US\$	83,868.45

Implementing Agency: AGENCY FOR FOREST DEVELOPMENT AND USE (*OFFICE DE DÉVELOPPEMENT ET D'EXPLOITATION DES FORÊTS—ODEF*)

Period of Approval: Rev.2: Approved in September 2021

Starting Date and Duration: To be determined / 18 months

The first approval of this 36-month project was in September 2019 through the electronic approval system for the project cycle of 2019. The project was partially financed with an amount of US\$200,000 thanks to the generous contribution of Japan during the inter-session period between ITTC 58 and ITTC 59. As the project was partially funded, it was revised into a phased project, which was approved in March 2023, with the Phase 1 to be implemented with the abovementioned amount. The Project Agreement governing the Phase 1 of the project PD 905/19 Rev.3 (F) had been signed by all parties in May 2023. The disbursement of the first installment of ITTO funds, needed for the commencement of the project implementation, was made in August 2023 after the reception by the ITTO Secretariat of an acceptable Inception Report and its associated Detailed Work Plan.

The Fosse-aux-Lions Gazetted Forest was once a superb reserve for fauna and flora. However, as a result of the socio-political unrest that Togo experienced during the 1990s, the gazetted forest, as most of the protected areas, has been invaded and devastated by local people, thereby questioning the non-participatory, unilateral management processes applied by the Forest Administration since the colonial era. Over the decades this has led to significant changes, particularly in relation to the degradation of forest resources, biodiversity, uncontrolled exploitation, and worsening impoverishment of local populations. The overall aim of the project is to improve the living conditions of the population of the prefecture of Tône and Tandjoaré through the sustainable management of the Fosse-aux-Lions Gazetted Forest. This project specifically aims at sustainably managing the Fosse-aux-Lions Gazetted Forest in order to improve the living conditions and environment of local populations. Phase II of the project will commence, if funded, following the completion of Phase I.

(6) PD 915/21 Rev.2 (F) Strengthening the Rehabilitation and Sustainable Management of Sacred Forests in Ramsar Sites 1017 and 1018 in Benin

Budget and Funding Sources:

Total Budget:	US\$	673 482
ITTO Budget:	US\$	512 402
Ce.Sa.Re.N – NGO	US\$	161 080

Implementing Agency: ASSOCIATION FOR THE PRESERVATION OF NATURAL RESOURCES (CERCLE POUR LA SAUVEGARDE DES RESSOURCES NATURELLES – Ce.Sa.Re.N NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION)

Collaborating Agency: GENERAL DIRECTORATE OF WATER, FORESTS AND HUNTING (DIRECTION GÉNÉRALE DES EAUX, FORÊTS ET CHASSE—DGEFC); BENIN ENVIRONMENT AGENCY (AGENCE BÉNINOISE POUR L'ENVIRONNEMENT—ABE)

Period of Approval: September 2022

Starting Date and Duration: To be determined / 36 months

In addition to their cultural, ritual and socio-economic functions, Benin's sacred forests (SFs) provide a special refuge and a sanctuary for the local biodiversity, which includes several rare species of animals and plants, some of which are listed in the Red List of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). Sacred forests are an exemplary model of traditional management and conservation of biodiversity. Their protection and conservation are based on traditional beliefs rooted in tradition, the power of traditional authority as well as that of local dignitaries and religious leaders.

Over 500 Sacred Forests (SF) are found in RAMSAR Sites 1017 and 1018 in Benin. Regrettably, most sacred forests are subject to overlogging and uncontrolled utilization resulting in their degradation, which varies between Gazetted Forests. To address this trend, major actions were implemented between April 2017 and March 2020 in 40 SFs through PD 754/14 Rev.3 (F) project titled "Rehabilitation and Sustainable Management of Sacred Forests on RAMSAR sites 1017 and 1018 in Benin" with the support of the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO). However, the satisfactory outcomes achieved by this project remain fragile and require improvements and consolidation actions as well as the completion of the process for integrating SFs into Benin's Protected Area System. In view of which, this project proposal titled "Strengthening the rehabilitation and sustainable management of sacred forests in RAMSAR sites 1017 and 1018 in Benin" was developed with the aim to: a) implement the developed Management Plans with efficiency; (b) eradicate conflicts between farmers and SFs; and (c) improve the livelihoods of the populations neighboring sacred forests in Benin.

(7) PD 921/21 Rev.2 (F) Support for the Conservation and Promotion of Forest Tree Seeds in Benin

Budget and Funding Sources:

Total Budget:	US\$	554 322
ITTO Budget:	US\$	447 072
BENIN (DGEFC)	US\$	107 250

Implementing Agency: GENERAL DIRECTORATE OF WATER, FORESTS AND HUNTING (DIRECTION GÉNÉRALE DES EAUX, FORÊTS ET CHASSE—DGEFC)

Collaborating Agency: NATIONAL TIMBER AGENCY (OFFICE NATIONAL DU BOIS—ONAB)

Period of Approval: September 2022

Starting Date and Duration: To be determined / 36 months

The unavailability of forest tree seeds, in particular highly logged natural species, also hinders reforestation and soil conservation efforts. The General Directorate of Water, Forests and Hunting (DGEFC) is responsible for the management of forest resources but lacks any unit for producing seeds displaying strong characteristics. In addition, for the most part, nursery operators collect seeds from uncontrolled origins. As a result, appropriate production cannot be ensured and gene flux dissemination is uncontrolled, which could have serious environmental impacts and need to be addressed. The demand in certified forest tree seeds both at the national and international level is increasing and the poor organization of the forest tree seed industry is hampering the intensive reforestation process and the development of an improved production system in Benin.

The DGEFC initiated this project to establish a seed production unit for the conservation and promotion of forest tree seeds to address this situation in the long term in Benin. This project aims to improve access (farmers, private plantation operators, local populations) to forest tree seeds and meet reforestation needs as well as the necessity to enhance the production system for various stakeholders. Failing resubmission, the Project will lose its status as an approved Project and fall under the sunset provision. The Project will become sunset between the 57th and 58th CRF Sessions.

(8) PD 925/22 Rev.2 (F) Support to the Local Communities of the Mono Plain for the Promotion and Sustainable Management of Community Forests in Togo

Budget and Funding Sources:

Total Budget:	US\$	947,208
ITTO Budget:	US\$	591,808
Government of Togo:	US\$	355,400

Implementing Agency: Friends of the Environment civil society organization
(*Association Les Amis de l'Environnement—AMEN*)

Period of Approval: October 2023

Starting Date and Duration: To be determined / 36 months

Forest resources are subject to continuous degradation, and it jeopardizes the chances of improving local people's living conditions. Faced with this situation, the Government of Togo developed policy, strategy and program documents focusing on the rehabilitation of degraded ecosystems as a major concern in collaboration with the technical and financial partners. As a result, the Government of Togo submitted a pre-project proposal in connection with the Mono plain area for ITTO funding. Pre-project funding made it possible to develop this project proposal for the conservation and sustainable management of the Mono plain natural forests with a view to reducing, or even eradicating, the negative impacts resulting from the considerable destruction of ecosystems in the area, and to contributing to improving the living conditions and environment of the beneficiary populations in order to guarantee sufficient natural resources for the present and future generations based on sustainable development.

The project aims to contribute to the development and sustainable management of national forests. More specifically, the project will enhance forest plantation productivity and promote the management of community forests owned by local communities. The aim of this new initiative is to encourage rural populations as a whole to improve their environment and living conditions through the sustainable management of the natural resources available in their area.

(9) 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

Budget and Funding Sources:

Total Budget:	US\$	1,911,612
ITTO Budget:	US\$	1,061,040
CNF	US\$	850,572

Implementing Agency: NATIONAL FORESTRY CHAMBER (CNF) /NATIONAL AGRARIAN UNIVERSITY OF LA MOLINA (UNALM)

Collaborating Agency: Ministry of Agrarian Development and Irrigation (MIDAGRI)
National Forest and Wildlife Service (SERFOR)
Ministry of the Environment (MINAM)
Associated Nature and Development Consultants (CANDES)
Regional Forest and Wildlife Authority of Madre de Dios
Forest concessions and native communities in the region

Period of Approval: September 2022

Starting Date and Duration: To be determined / 37 months

This project seeks to silviculturally manage seed trees, to find a procedure that will encourage the production of seeds and the establishment of natural and artificial regeneration, which will lead to the restoration of harvested species populations for the next harvesting cycle by ensuring that these trees reach the desired wood quality and quantity in the areas under forest management.

The results of the project will contribute to the development of a silvicultural system to be applied in the restoration of commercial species populations in areas under forest management plans and operational plans, which will directly support forest concessions and native communities. In addition, the methodology developed may be replicated in other forest regions of the country, thus contributing to national forest development. Failing resubmission, the Project will lose its status as an approved Project and fall under the sunset provision. The Project will become sunset between the 57th and 58th CRF Sessions.

PRE-PROJECT WORK IN PROGRESS

There is one (1) approved pre-project currently under implementation. In this report the pre-projects are grouped into three categories:

- A. Pre-projects under active implementation;
- B. Pre-projects which have financing allocated, but for which the contract or agreement regulating implementation has still not been concluded; and
- C. Pre-projects which still do not have full financing secured.

A. PRE-PROJECTS UNDER IMPLEMENTATION

None.

B. PRE-PROJECTS AWAITING IMPLEMENTATION AGREEMENT

None.

C. PRE-PROJECTS AWAITING FINANCING**(1) PPD 203/23 Rev.1 (F) Support for the Promotion and Sustainable Management of Community Forests in the Oti Plain, Togo**

Budget and Funding Sources:

Total Budget:	US\$	170,342
ITTO Budget:	US\$	117,712
Government of Togo:	US\$	52,630

Implementing Agency: Friends of the Environment civil society organization
(*Association Les Amis de l'Environnement—AMEN*)

Period of Approval: October 2023

Starting Date and Duration: To be determined / 10 months

This pre-project aims to draw a baseline study of Ecological Zone I in Togo (see map in annex) in order to produce a Project Document for the conservation and sustainable management of natural plant formations in the Oti Plain, Togo. The overarching concept behind this initiative is to reduce or eliminate the negative impacts resulting from the destruction of the ecosystems in this area and to help improve the living conditions of beneficiary communities. The main outputs will be: (1) data from forest, socio-economic, legal and environmental surveys on the project area are available; (ii) a project proposal for the promotion and sustainable management of community forests in the Oti Plain, Togo, is developed for submission to the ITTO.

BIENNIAL WORK PROGRAMME (BWP)-BASED ACTIVITIES**(1) PP-A/54-331A Promoting Quality Timber Production in Smallholders and Community-based Teak and Other Valuable Species Plantations in the Tropics**

Budget and Funding Sources:

Total Budget:	US\$	1,413,449
ITTO Budget:	US\$	1,413,449
Government of Germany:	US\$	1,413,449

Implementing Agency: Asia- Pacific
 Cambodia: Forestry Administration
 Thailand: Royal Forestry Department/Kasetsart University
 Vietnam: Administration of Forestry/Vietnamese Academy of Forest Sciences
 India: Indian Council of Forestry Research & Education
 Indonesia: Research Centre for Plant Conservation Botanic Garden and Forestry /National Research and Innovation Agency (BRIN)
West Africa
 Togo: University of Lomé

Starting Date and Duration: To be determined / 36 months

This project originated from the concept note (CN-23026) and received financing of US\$1,413,449 from the German Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture (BMEL) in August 2023. The project is currently in the process of concluding project agreements with partner organizations in the participating countries. The project is scheduled to begin its activities in the beginning of November 2023.

Smallholder timber plantations in the tropics have the potential to provide sustainable supply chains of quality timber based on increasing forest landscape restoration initiatives as well as to provide other ecosystem

services such as carbon sequestration and soil conservation, which can benefit both the local community and the wider region. Besides enhancing rural livelihoods, the development of smallholder agroforestry systems with teak and other valuable native tree species has a huge impact on environmental conditions and the supply of timber to the local industry.

The Project aims to significantly improve the production of high-quality timber from teak and other valuable species plantations established by smallholders and communities in the Asia-Pacific and West Africa. This will be achieved by promoting policies to secure high quality planting stock, adoption of best silviculture practices, access to financing to promote longer rotations, value addition, and improved timber legality. Key activities include promoting financial schemes that invest in high-quality teak production with long rotations and provide access to voluntary carbon markets. Tapping into the carbon credit markets would provide additional incentives and support the global effort on climate change mitigation. Furthermore, it facilitates regional and international cooperation for sustainable smallholder plantations. Through the effective implementation of policies and the promotion of collaboration promotion, this Project will contribute to improving the economic outcomes of smallholder and community plantations in the tropics.

(2) PP-A/56-341B Support for Women's Groups with the Restoration of Forest Landscapes in the Prefectures of Blitta and Lacs, Togo – Phase III

Budget and Funding Sources:

Total Budget:		US\$	103,331
ITTO Budget:		US\$	89,581
Soka Gakkai (SG):	US\$	89,581	
REFACOF:		US\$	13,750

Implementing Agency: African Women's Network for Community Management of Forests (REFACOF, in French acronym)

Starting Date and Duration: April 2022 / 12 months

This 12-month BWP Activity is funded as part of the Third Programme Line (PL3) titled "*Forest Landscape Restoration and Resilient Livelihoods*" under the Programmatic Approach of the new financing architecture which is subject to a pilot phase implementation in conformity with some appropriate provisions of Decision 8(LV) calling upon the ITTO Secretariat to play a more proactive role in seeking new funding avenues and partners for the funding of ITTO's work. This third phase of the BWP Activity was fully funded by Soka Gakkai (SG), by the inter-sessional pledge received after the Fifty-eighth Session of the Council through a funding Memorandum of Understanding supported by a Profile-document for the third phase of the BWP Activity. The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) governing the implementation of this third phase of the BWP Activity has been duly signed by all parties (Government of Togo, REFACOF-Togo, Implementing Agency and ITTO Secretariat), in September 2023.

The development objective of phase 3 of the project will be to consolidate and sustain the achievements of the two previous phases implemented in the prefectures of Blitta and Lacs in Togo through the establishment of community forests contributing to the restoration of degraded forest landscapes and improving the livelihoods of communities, including women's groups. While promoting women's participation and empowerment in the restoration of degraded forest landscapes, the specific objective of phase 3 of the project is to further consolidate the achievements of the two previous phases that contributed to increasing the forest potential of the Blitta and Lakes Prefectures through the establishment of community forests, and also to continue supporting alternative sources of livelihoods for local communities, including women's groups.

The disbursement of the first installment of ITTO funds, needed for the commencement of the implementation of the third phase of this BWP Activity, is pending until the reception by the ITTO Secretariat of relevant required supporting documents.

(3) PP-A/56-342A Strengthening SFM Standards and Timber Legality Framework in Myanmar

Budget and Funding Sources:

Total Budget:		US\$	518,790
ITTO Budget:		US\$	378,930
Japan:	US\$	378,930	
MFCC (in-kind):		US\$	139,860
Implementing Agency:	Myanmar Forest Certification Committee (MFCC)		
Starting Date and Duration:	February 2021 / 24 months		

The project agreement was signed in January 2021 by ITTO and Myanmar Forest Certification Committee (MFCC) and the Implementing Agency initiated project activities from February 2021. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and travel restriction until the first quarter of 2022 in the country, the implementation of some activities has been delayed, and the duration of the project has been extended until the end of January 2024.

The project's objective is to significantly advance the achievement of sustainable forest management in Myanmar through strengthening national certification systems of forest management and chain of custody as well as a timber legality verification system. It intends to address the challenges Myanmar faces with market access for timber and focus on the continued improvement of Myanmar Forest Certification System (MFCS), and Myanmar Timber Legality Assurance System (MTLAS) and their efficient and effective implementation. Significant capacity building interventions, including the application of QR codes for log tracking, will be implemented to develop the robustness of the mechanisms and infrastructures that underpin Myanmar's timber certification systems. The development of standards and systems will be facilitated with extensive stakeholder consultation, and with international best practice processes serving to foster an environment of mutual trust and ownership amongst forestry stakeholders.

Since the Fifty-sixth Session of the Committee, the project has been making progress mainly in the following areas:

- MFCS has been approved as National Standard by the National Standard Council. Filed testing is underway in a FMU (Forest Management Unit) under the newly approved MFCS. MTLAS versions in Myanmar and English were approved during the 2nd MFCC meeting on January 11th, 2023. The newly approved MTLAS v.2.00 has been submitted to the DRI (Department of Research and Innovation) for recognition as a National Standard in the country.
- The project management team developed the first draft of MTLAS Audit Form/Checklist based on MTLAS Standard version 2.00. In June 2023, certification bodies (CBs) were notified to discuss the revised Audit form/checklist, MTLAS standard version (2.00) and Compliance rating. In July 2023, a participatory training of MTLAS and MFCS was conducted for CBs to assess against MTLAS and MFCS audit forms.
- Conducted a Digitalization of Timber Tracking System (DTTS) ToT training in June 2023 with 16 participants from FD, MTE, Private Sector and Myanmar Accreditation Body, and DRI. Topics included transportation and storage from forest gate to Yangon depot steps.
- The project team, together with the representatives/delegates from the Forest Department attended the 26th Meeting of the ASEAN Working Group on Forest Products Development (26th AWG-FPD) on 12-13 June 2023, Siem Reap, Cambodia, reporting on the country progress and updating ASEAN level co-operation.
- MFCC-ITTO third newsletter was circulated and uploaded into the MFCC websites and social media in June 2023 and Newsletter No (4) is in its final phase, soon to be published.
- The project's extension will focus on increasing the capacity of key stakeholders in monitoring and verifying the sustainability and legality of timber and timber products. This will involve conducting management system training, integrating the Digitalized Timber Tracking System, certifying FMUs, and providing capacity training.

(4) PP-A/59-351 Community-Based Restoration of Cyclone-Affected Vulnerable Mangrove Forests through the Empowerment of Coastal Communities and Women in the Rewa Delta, Fiji

Budget and Funding Sources:

Total Budget:		US\$	410,000
ITTO Budget:		US\$	350,000
Government of Japan:	US\$	350,000	
Executing Agency:		US\$	60,000
Implementing Agency:	MINISTRY OF FISHERIES AND FORESTRY, FIJI		
Starting Date and Duration:	To be determined / 12 months		

The project was developed in early 2023 through Japan's Emergency Budget Programme, based on the successful completion of PD 696/13 Rev.2 (F) "Community Based Restoration and Sustainable Management of Vulnerable Forests of the Rewa Delta, Fiji" which contributed to the restoration of degraded mangrove ecosystems and offered various income opportunities for local communities, especially women, along with development of Mangrove Management Guideline with the support of the South Pacific Community (SPC). The project agreement was signed in June 2023 by ITTO and the Ministry of Fisheries and Forestry. The Forest Department is finalizing the selection of a project leader and will begin project activities as soon as the administrative arrangements are finalized.

The project aims to promote community-based restoration and management regimes for cyclone-affected degraded mangrove forests in the Rewa Delta, Fiji. Restored mangrove forests will play an important role in providing alternative opportunities for community livelihoods to ensure increased human well-being and improved mangrove ecosystems in the face of natural disasters such as Tropical Cyclone Cody, Tsunami and ash generated by the volcanic eruption in Tonga while contributing to climate mitigation through increased carbon sequestration and adaptation.

The project activities include the production of quality seedlings for indigenous mangroves and other species and the restoration of degraded mangrove forests by empowering local communities particularly, women's groups for livelihood improvement. It also consists of establishing energy forests and providing fuel-saving cook stoves to reduce overdependence on mangrove resources while improving local authority community support facilities. The target community lies within the Provinces of Rewa and the Province of Tailevu. Specific target communities include the villages of Natila, Waicoka, Nasilai, Naivakacau, Narocake and Muanaira; representing the densely populated area in the Rewa Delta.

(5) PP-A/59-352 Community Empowerment in Forest Management and Forest Landscape Restoration in Upper Baram, Sarawak, Malaysia

Budget and Funding Sources:

Total Budget:		US\$	479,500
ITTO Budget:		US\$	258,000
Government of Japan:	US\$	258,000	
Government of Sarawak, Malaysia:		US\$	221,500
Implementing Agency:	FOREST DEPARTMENT SARAWAK		
Starting Date and Duration:	September 2023 / 12 months		

The project was developed in early 2023 through Japan's Emergency Supplementary Budget Programme, complementing the implementation of PD 902/19 Rev.3 (F). The project agreement was signed in March 2023 and the Implementing Agency initiated project activities from the beginning of September 2023.

The project proposal aims to promote community empowerment in forest management and forest landscape restoration within the Upper Baram Forest Area, in order to establish sustainable livelihoods and resilient communities that can help reduce the vulnerability of villages to natural disasters. By promoting

sustainable forest management practices and diversifying livelihoods, villages can adapt to changing conditions and become less reliant on limited income sources. The project's development objective is to contribute to the sustainable management of Upper Baram Forests for resilient local communities and ecosystems. Specifically, the project seeks to empower local communities in forest management and landscape restoration, thereby promoting sustainable livelihoods. To achieve these objectives, the project will focus on two main outputs namely i) empowering and training local communities in sustainable forest management and community-based ecotourism, and ii) enhancing collaborative forest landscape restoration (FLR) through local community participation and supportive policy development.

Since its inception in September 2023, the project organized the first meeting of the project steering committee (PSC) on 25 September 2023 in Miri, Sarawak in conjunction with PD 902/19 Rev.3 (F). Following the PSC meeting, an interactive consultation session was conducted with local communities on the evening of 26 September in Long Semiyang. The project team's current work focuses on enhancing the capacity of local communities in forest management, conservation and community-based ecotourism. Additionally, the project team is planning to organize an Asia-Pacific regional conference on Forest Landscape Restoration (FLR) in July/August 2024 to share project outcomes and discuss the socio-ecological resilience of FLR.

(6) PP-A/59-353 Enhancing the Value of Secondary Natural Forests through their Sustainable Use, Generating Rural Employment in a Post-Covid Context (Costa Rica)

Budget and Funding Sources:

Total Budget:		US\$	364,500
ITTO Budget:		US\$	250,000
Government of Japan:	US\$	250,000	
Government of Costa Rica:		US\$	114,500
Implementing Agency:	FORESTRY TIMBER & INDUSTRY CHAMBER ASSOCIATION OF COSTA RICA		
Collaborating Agency:	CARBON REVENUE SERVICES S.A. (CRS)		
Starting Date and Duration:	July 2023 / 12 months		

The 12-month BWP-based Activity, which is considered as BWP-based Activity 11(f), is derived from the Concept Note CN-21004 after the expression of interest of Japan in financing it under the Japan's emergency supplementary budget for 2023, with the compulsory pre-condition/requirement allowing to use the funds of the Japan's supplementary budget within a maximum period not exceeding 12 months until March 2024. Considering this compulsory condition/requirement, the BWP-based Activity implementation duration was reduced from 18 to 12 months. The Agreement governing the implementation of this BWP-based Activity had been signed by all parties in May 2023. The disbursement of the first installment of ITTO funds, needed for the commencement of the project implementation, was made in July 2023 after the reception by the ITTO Secretariat of an acceptable Inception Report and its associated Detailed Work Plan.

Costa Rica has an internationally recognized track record for forest and biodiversity conservation, as well as effective actions to combat climate change. This has allowed Costa Rica's forests to become a net sink for greenhouse gases since 2014. Despite the progress made in the conservation agenda, the country's forest sector faces several challenges to improve its performance, as the forest industry is currently underdeveloped and obsolete, requiring support in the development of innovation in production processes and forest products. The BWP-base Activity's development objective is to contribute to the conservation of secondary forests and their ecosystem services, while its specific objective is to establish tools to increase the value of secondary forests for their conservation and development.

Based on information from the implementing agency of this BWP-based Activity, the progress in the implementation was mainly focused on the consultation and sensitization of relevant stakeholders for a smooth implementation which started in July 2023 with the disbursement of the first installment of ITTO funds, as there is a need to comply with the compulsory pre-condition/requirement allowing to use the funds of the Japan's supplementary budget within a maximum period not exceeding 12 months until March 2024. The implementing agency of the BWP-based Activity PP-A/59-353 [CN-21004] was informed that the ITTO monitoring mission

will be carried out from 23 to 24 November 2023 for the assessment of the progress made in its implementation in Costa Rica.

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