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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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A total of nineteen (19) approved projects and three (3) BWP project-based activities are currently under implementation. As of the writing of this report, no project and BWP project-based activity are awaiting the signing of an agreement to initiate activities. There are nine (9) approved projects and pre-projects still awaiting full financing. In this report, the projects are grouped into four categories:

- A. Projects and Pre-projects in Implementation;
- B. BWP Project-based Activities in Implementation;
- C. Projects, Pre-projects, and BWP Project-based Activities Awaiting Implementation Agreement; and
- D. Projects and Pre-projects Awaiting Financing

A. PROJECTS AND PRE-PROJECTS IN IMPLEMENTATION

- (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 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:	Agency for Standardization of Environment and Forestry Instruments (ASEFI)		
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 later received an extension at the request of the Ministry of Environment and Forestry, in accordance with ITTO regulations. Partial funding was secured from the Republic of Korea (\$100,000) during ITTC 54 in November 2018, and an additional \$150,000 during ITTC 55 in December 2019.

The Implementing Agency subsequently divided the project into Phase I and Phase II to align with available funding for immediate implementation. The revised proposal was approved in September 2021 through the online no-objection procedure. The project agreement for Phase I was finalized in December 2022, with the first instalment of project funds disbursed in April 2023 following the necessary administrative arrangements.

The Giam Siak Kecil Bukit Batu Biosphere Reserve (GSK-BR) covering approximately 705,000 ha in the Riau province, Sumatra, was designated a public-private partnership biosphere reserve by the UNESCO's World Network of Biosphere Reserves in 2009.

The project's primary goal is to strengthen the framework for sustainable management and conservation of GSK-BR. It addresses several key challenges, including the lack of an integrated strategic management plan, weak institutional capacity for biosphere reserve implementation, and low community participation in management operations.

By 2024, the project had made significant progress in the following implementations:

- Conducted focus group discussions with key stakeholders on the planning framework of GSK-BR. Key outcomes included the need for collaboration, accurate mapping, and robust data management for a

more sustainable planning framework. Stakeholders also emphasized the importance of periodic monitoring and evaluation to achieve continuous improvement.

- Published an article, “BSILHK Starts New Action for Landscape-Based Protection in the Giam Siak Kecil Biosphere Reserve, Involving All Stakeholders,” in several media, including Agro Indonesia, Suara Karya.co.id, Forest Insight, Riau Antra News, and more.
- Developed the “Giam Siak Kecil-Bukit Batu Biosphere Reserve (2024-2028) plan” in January 2024, which focused on biodiversity conservation, sustainable development, and research support. The reserve is divided into core, buffer, and transition zones, each with distinct management goals. Key challenges include deforestation, illegal logging, and peatland fires. The Integrated Management Plan-proposes actions to be implemented collaboratively between the government, private sector, and local communities to address multiple objectives. The reserve also aims to enhance eco-tourism and sustainable livelihoods while strengthening water management and fire prevention efforts.
- In June 2024, the updated report of the bio-physical and socio-economic data on the GSK-BR was published, detailing both ecological and socio-economic data. The report highlighted several critical challenges, including habitat loss, deforestation, and threats to wildlife, particularly endangered species such as Sumatran tigers and elephants, due to land conversion. It recorded over 200 plant species and 172 bird species, emphasizing the urgent need for biodiversity conservation. Human activities, including illegal logging, impact the ecosystem. Recommendations include reforestation, wildlife corridors, sustainable livelihoods, and fire prevention strategies. Collaborative management and community-based conservation programs are key to balancing development with environmental protection.
- From December 2023 to January 2024, the Riau Region FKKM consortium led a series of dialogues with stakeholders in 15 villages across 8 sub-districts in two regencies (Siak and Bengkalis) to raise awareness of the - benefits of the designation of the area as a biosphere reserve.-and surrounding areas, Through the Focus Group Discussion (FGD)s, several income-generating activities were identified, including cattle farming,(which showed high market demand)), beekeeping for honey production, and organic rice cultivation. Other potential income sources included woven handicrafts and fish farming.

(2) 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 was adjusted to accommodate a reduced budget, was approved in March 2017. Financing for the project was secured in the same year. The project agreement was duly signed in February 2019 after a lengthy in-country consultation process, and project implementation officially commenced in March 2020.

The project aims to enhance sustainable forest management practices through improved community livelihoods and social stability. Specifically, it seeks to establish a model community-based land ownership mapping and forest resource assessment system to support community forest management (CFM) initiatives, including payment for ecosystem services (PES) and REDD+, while increasing landowner understanding about the goods and services provided by tropical forests. Project activities were implemented in collaboration with 6 CFM partners.

The project has focused on delivering four specific outputs: i) participatory data collection technology for improving CFM practices at community, district and provincial levels; ii) clan groups participating in the National Land Development Program; iii) a data management system engaging landowners in feasible CFM schemes (including PES and REDD+); and iv) policy and planning guidelines for CFM in place.

At the time of preparation of this report all activities have been completed and a completion report was submitted to the Secretariat in May 2024. The project developed a "Community Foresters Tool Kit" containing all materials developed including data collection forms, training and awareness resources and technical reports, the tool is available at www.pip.com.pg/resources/community-foresters-tool-kit/welcome.html. Other communication products have been placed in a common drive for stakeholders' use at <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1WarSK9TTLx5muvj6N6MLEEeffNOyf3Tn?usp=sharing>.

Unfortunately, despite regular reminders from the Secretariat the Executing Agency has not yet submitted the final financial audit report nor has given any indication of when it can be expected. The project will be reported and considered duly completed after the submission of a satisfactory final financial audit report.

(3) PD 808/16 Rev.5 (F) Conservation of African Barwood (*Pterocarpus Erinaceus Poir*) in the Gazetted Forests of La Palée 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:	December 2023 / 24 months (for Phase I)		

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 project PD 808/16 Rev.5 (F) was signed by all parties in September 2023, and the disbursement of the first installment of ITTO funds -made in December 2023 after the reception by the ITTO Secretariat of an acceptable- Inception Report and its associated Detailed Work Plan.

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. There are three expected outputs of the project: (1) the processes of African barwood propagation are understood and mastered; (2) The use of African barwood is sustainable and under control; and (3) Bushfire outbreaks are under control.

Since the beginning of the project implementation and in accordance with the project's most recent progress report and monthly highlights submitted by the executing agency, progress in project implementation can be mainly summarized as follows:

- 232 900 seedlings of *Pterocarpus erinaceus*, *Tectona grandis*, *Cassia siamea* and various local species (*Khaya senegalensis*, *Ceiba pentandra*, *Azelia africana*) - produced for the rehabilitation of degraded forest landscapes in the project target areas,
- 325 hectares have been the subject of plot prospecting, of which 103.98 hectares - planted (Taungya system and for wood energy) in the Gazetted Forest of La Palée,

- Ethnobotanical surveys on traditional knowledge regarding the *Pterocarpus erinaceus* - carried out in the villages involved in the project implementation,
- The stakeholders' supervisory committee – created to facilitate- regular consultations contributing to their involvement in the project implementation,
- 13 villages - sensitized in five sub-prefectures bordering the Gazetted Forests of La Palé and Boundiali (Bagoue, Kabadougou, Kolia, Kouto and Waradougou) on the objective and expected outcomes of the project,
- Germination tests of *Pterocarpus erinaceus* seeds, carried out by the Peleforo Gon Coulibaly University (UPGC) of Korhogo, provided promising results with 81% of success rate associated with 100% of survival rate of germinated seeds. These good results open new positive prospects for the dissemination of germination methods, with a view to expanding appropriate rehabilitation activities on degraded forest landscapes in the project's target areas, as well as in other areas not covered by the project, in the Northern part of Cote d'Ivoire.

The ITTO Secretariat conducted -a monitoring mission (first project steering committee meeting and field visits in selected project sites) from 24 to 26 September 2024.

(4) PD 836/17 Rev.2 (F) Enhancing Capacity of Local Communities and Forest Administration to Effectively Implement Community Forestry Programme (CFP) in Kratie and Monduliri 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 funds, and this revised project document was approved in February 2021.

Following the completion of the project agreement in June 2021, the Implementing Agency initiated project activities in October 2021. The second PSC meeting took place on 9 May 2023, held in a hybrid format at the Forestry Administration of Cambodia, with 19 participants, including representatives from donor countries. The third PSC meeting was held on 21 March 2024 in Phenom Penh to review the project's progress and provide strategic recommendations for further implementation. The project period is 36 months, scheduled to the end of September 2024. However, the executing agency requested a three-month no-cost extension, which was approved. Thus, the project is set to be completed by December 2024.

The project aims to promote the sustainable development of a community forestry program (CFP), to enhance the livelihoods of local communities while supporting the effective implementation of SFM in Cambodia. Its specific objective is to build the capacity of local communities and the Forest Administration to effectively implement CFP in the Kratie and Monduliri provinces regions, which are rich in forest resource but facing high deforestation rates.

The project's proposed outputs: include: i) Improved capacity of local communities and forest administration in forest management planning, ii) Enhanced capacity of local communities to operationalize

approved forest management plans, and iii) Strengthened capacity of Forest Administration in monitoring and reporting on forest operations conducted by individual Community Forestry Management Units (CFMUs).

As of November 2024, the project has made progress in the following areas:

Output 1: Improved Capacity of Local Communities and Forestry Administration in Forest Management Planning

- In 2023, 100 participants from 34 Community Forestry Management Units (CFMUs) in Kratie and Monduliri provinces received training on how to write community forest management and development plans based on newly developed guidelines.
- 500 copies of the "Guidelines for the Preparation of Community Forest Management and Development Plans" distributed to the Forestry Administration at national and provincial levels, helping communities and the administration to enhance their forest management planning.
- The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) of Cambodia approved the guidelines in June 2023.
- A satellite imagery-based forest cover assessment for Kratie and Monduliri provinces was - completed, with maps distributed to community forestry groups, aiding them in conducting forest inventories.

Output 2: Enhanced Capacity of Local Communities to Operationalize Approved Management Plans

- A total of \$4,000 in small seed funds - distributed to four community forests, with each family receiving approximately \$100 to \$250. This initiative helped local communities operationalize forest management plans by improving livelihoods through agroforestry and microcredit systems.
- In the Sretouk community forest of Monduliri, 4 hectares of land were - cultivated with sweet bamboo, teak, and cassava. Additionally, an irrigation system - installed to enhance the productivity of these crops during the dry season.
- Agroforestry projects, such as mixed planting of crops and trees, have contributed to the operationalization of approved management plans by integrating sustainable livelihood activities.
- In January and February 2024, training on the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for community forest patrolling was held for 52 participants, including community members, provincial forestry officials, and local police. This training improved the capacity of local communities to manage and protect forest areas effectively.

Output 3: Strengthened Capacity of the Forestry Administration in Monitoring and Reporting of Community Forest Operations

- An Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for forest patrolling was developed and distributed, with 250 copies provided to relevant stakeholders. This has improved the monitoring and enforcement capabilities of the Forestry Administration, especially in preventing illegal activities in community forests.
- Joint patrols between community members and the Forestry Administration resulted in the return of 36 hectares of illegally encroached land, the removal of 300 meters of illegal electric fencing, and the prevention of other illegal activities such as charcoal production.
- A monitoring and reporting format for community forestry operations –was developed. Consultation meetings are being planned to discuss the format i with stakeholders from Kratie and Monduliri. This initiative aims to strengthen the ability of the Forestry Administration to monitor the performance of Community Forestry Management Units (CFMUs).

(5) 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 the project was in September 2018. The project was partially financed with an amount of USD100,000 thanks to the generous contribution of the Government of the United States of America during ITTC 54 in November 2018, with an extension of its validity to November 2020. Additional funds of USD 235,765 were pledged by the Government of Japan during ITTC 57 in November 2021. The project agreement was duly signed in April 2022, and the first disbursement of funds was made in June 2022.

The development objective of the project is to strengthen commercial reforestation in Costa Rica. The project specifically intends to increase the competitiveness of commercial reforestation by developing effective financing schemes for forest plantations, increase their productivity, and develop value-added timber products, which in turn will improve forest producers' income.

The second project technical committee (PTC) was convened in October 2024 with participation of representatives of both donors. During the PTC it was noted that project activities are being implemented on schedule. Completed activities - to date include tree species identification for commercial purposes and genetic improvement; identification of value-added timber products and the production of prototypes; training on pest management conducted; maintenance of genetic improvement trials; and drafting of silvicultural manuals crafted for smallholders.

Remaining activities include - validation of the financing schemes developed; printing and disseminating the silvicultural manuals; and validation of value-added product prototypes for forest industry uptake.

The project is on track to finalize project activities towards the end of the first semester of 2025.

(6) 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 (FDS)

Period of Approval: Rev.3: Approved in October 2022

Starting Date and Duration: September 2023 / 24 months

The project was approved in October 2020 with funding from Bruno Manser Funds and the Canton of the City of Basel (Switzerland) for a total USD 400,000. Additional funds were provided by the Government of Japan, the United States of America and the Bali Partnership Funds at ITTC 57 in December 2021. The implementing agency revised the project document in accordance with the available funding. The revised project document was approved in October 2022. The project agreement 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 (UBFA) for biodiversity conservation and socio-economic development for the benefits of local communities. Specifically, the project seeks to enhance rural transformation through conservation and sustainable development with good governance.

Partial progress was achieved on some project activities, including establishing values for five forest ecosystems and support for the development of basic infrastructure and facilities in selected villages.

The second project steering committee (PSC) with participation of some of the donors—took place after a field visit to the UBFA by ITTO and FDS officials in October 2024. During the opening of PSC meeting the government of Sarawak requested the termination of the project. In his opening remarks, Datu Haji Hamden, Director of Forests, stated, “since the project’s inception in September 2023, we have faced numerous disruptions that hinder our progress. This includes the submission of official letters to high-level officials, overseas demonstrations, and publishing damaging articles containing unsubstantiated allegations against Sarawak and ITTO without consulting project partners.” He added that “the changing and differing aspirations of some stakeholders, particularly NGOs, have created insurmountable challenges. Consequently, through the Forest Department, the Sarawak government has regrettably requested the termination of the UBFA project under Article XI Section 11.01 c of the project agreement, citing that its continued approval and funding no longer serve the project’s objectives.”

The Committee may wish to consider the government of Sarawak’s request for project termination in accordance with ITTO procedures.

(7) PD 903/19 Rev.3 (F) Management of Sungai Menyang Conservation Area for Orangutan Protection and Uplifting Community Livelihood, Sarawak, Malaysia

Budget and Funding Sources:

Total Budget:		US\$	441,904
ITTO Budget:		US\$	261,904
Government of USA:	US\$	140,000	
Government of Australia:	US\$	121,904	
Government of Malaysia:		US\$	180,000
Implementing Agency:	FOREST DEPARTMENT SARAWAK		
Period of Approval:	March 2024		
Starting Date and Duration:	To be determined / 24 months		

The project was approved in October 2020 and received partial funding of USD 121,903.50 from the Government of Australia in June 2022, with the remainder provided by the Government of the United States of America (USD 140,000) in November 2023. The implementing agency revised the project document based on the available funds, which was approved in March 2024, with the project agreement being duly signed in September 2024. The disbursement of the first installment of ITTO funds, needed for the commencement of the project implementation, will be made upon reception by the ITTO Secretariat of an acceptable Inception Report by the implementing agency and its associated first yearly plan of operation.

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: 1) a study to secure forest resource base for integrated management; 2) a process for effective ecosystem management and resource utilization; and 3) community participation in eco-tourism with improved facilities and training. Expected deliverables include: (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.

(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: August 2023 / 18 months (for Phase I)

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 Phase 1 was signed by all parties in May 2023. The disbursement of the first installment of ITTO funds was made in August 2023 after the reception by the ITTO Secretariat of an acceptable Inception Report and its associated Detailed Work Plan.

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. The Phase I and Phase II of the project will deliver the three following expected outputs: (1) Forest resources are used in a rational way, (2) Land is used sustainably, and (3) Stakeholders are organized and have good knowledge of forest management.

Progress in project implementation can be summarized as follows:

- In addition to the recruitment of intellectual service providers (consultants and subcontractors required for the implementation of this project), the executing agency (ODEF-Togo) purchased one vehicle, two motorcycles, and two computers and their accessories.
- The work of consultants and subcontractors was delayed by several weeks due to the period of electoral campaigns and the holding of legislative and regional elections in Togo, in April 2024.
- The subcontractor (NGO-RAFIA) submitted a first provisional report on the preparatory aspects of the training needed by relevant field actors, to be involved in the project implementation, as well as the training modules. After the validation of the report and the training modules, by the project executing agency (ODEF-Togo), the NGO-RAFIA will work on organizing the training sessions during the fourth quarter of 2024.
- The national consultant in socio-economic studies (Mr. Koffi KOMBATE), produced a methodological note that was examined and validated by the executing agency. The consultant was also introduced to the local authorities in the project target areas-during the awareness-raising tour on August 30, 2024 to facilitate- his consultancy work to be carried out during the fourth quarter of 2024.
- The national consultant in participatory forest management (Mr. Moumouni BAWA) produced a provisional analysis that identified relevant stakeholders, a proposed structure for a joint management committee and its 8 associated sub-committees, as well as their related regulatory texts. A workshop was held in Dapaong (Togo) on 29 August 2024 to review and validate the consultant's report.
- Taking advantage of the visit to Togo of a diplomat from the Embassy of Japan, with residence in Abidjan (Côte d'Ivoire), Mr. SAKODA Takashi (First Secretary of the Japanese Embassy), the national members of the steering committee of the project held a meeting, on July 31, 2024 to update him on the progress of the project.

ITTO Secretariat conducted a monitoring mission (first project steering committee meeting and field visits in selected project sites) from 16 to 18 September 2024, in consultation with the Ministry of Environment and Forest Resources of Togo.

(9) 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:	November 2024 / 24 months		

The first approval of this project was in September 2019. The project was partially financed with an amount of USD 200,000 thanks to the generous contribution of the Government of Japan during the inter-sessional period between ITTC 58 and ITTC 59, and the amount of USD 250,000 secured from the Government of the United States of America in two tranches (USD 150,000 at ITTC 57 and USD 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 available funds of USD 450,000 by adjusting planned project activities. The revised project was approved in March 2023, planning implementation in two stages as follows:

- Phase 1 of 12 months with the ITTO budget of USD 200,000 from the Japan's supplementary budget (with the compulsory pre-condition to use the funds of the Japan's supplementary budget within a period not exceeding 12 months (i.e. no later than until March 2024). However, due to an extensive delay in the signature of the project agreement an extension was granted until December 2024 by the Government of Japan.
- Phase 2 of 12 months with the ITTO budget of USD 250,000 from the United States' contribution through ITTO project regular cycle.

This proposal stems from a recommendation of a previous ITTO 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". 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 project agreement was duly signed in August 2024, and at the time of preparation of this report the documents for releasing the first installment of funds were under review by the Secretariat. The project's first steering committee meeting took place in October 2024, where the implementing agency demonstrated that arrangements are in place for executing the project.

(10) 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:	August 2024 / 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 - establishes 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 in facilitating 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 deliver 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 - 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.

The signing process of the Project Agreement was completed in July 2024 and the 1st installment of the project ITTO budget to the Executing Agency was disbursed in August 2024. Therefore, the project is now - in operational status. The hybrid kick-off meeting of the project was held on 23 September 2024. The first PSC/PTC meeting and the field visit is scheduled to be carried out in the first half of 2025.

(11) 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: January 2024 / 24 months

The project derived from the concept note CN-21005 received an expression of interest by the Republic Korea at ITTC 58 in November 2022, it was approved in August 2023. The project agreement was duly signed in November 2024 and the project commenced implementation in January 2024 with the first disbursement of funds.

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, a region that produces most of the country's wood. 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 first project technical committee (PTC) meeting took place in October 2024. The Committee noted that project activities are on track. Progress has been ahead of schedule for output 1, with 4 out of 5 forests management units (MUs) already identified, and with sustainable forest management plans prepared for 3 of those MUs. Capacity building activities under output 2, are scheduled to take place in the following months.

The PTC also provided recommendations for efficient implementation of output 4, which involves promotion and communication campaigns at a later stage of implementation.

(12) 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: November 2023 / 12 months

The project derived from the concept note CN-22014 received an expression of interest by the Republic of Korea at ITTC 58 in November 2022, it was approved in August 2023. The project agreement was duly signed in November 2023 and the project commenced implementation in the same month.

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.

According to the latest progress report, project implementation has suffered some delays, however most of activities under output 1 (collection, review and systematize the available secondary information) have been carried out; activities under output 2 and 3 (expanding interest of government and businesses for investing in Caoba conservation and plantation and enhancing social interest in Caoba conservation and plantation) are ongoing and have been merged as they are complementary. At the time of preparation of this report the Secretariat was awaiting information from the executing agency on the estimated date of project completion.

(13) 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:	April 2024 / 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 *Dalbergia oliveri* and *Dalbergia 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 *Dalbergia oliveri* and *Dalbergia 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.

The project was officially in April 2024. - Since then, based on the project progress report submitted in July 2024, the following progress-has been made made under Activity 1.1 and 3.2:

- Activity 1.1, the project team liaised with research institutions such as the Vietnam University of Forestry, the Institute of Ecology and Biological Resources, the Vietnam Academy of Forestry Sciences, and the management of protected areas such as Dakrong Nature Reserve (NR), Dong Nai Culture and Nature Reserve (CNR), and Cat Tien National Park to collect reports and documents on *Dalbergia cochinchinensis* and *D. oliveri*, biological and ecological situation, and forest maps to support the preparation of field survey on rosewood population. Project has mobilized project personnel and National Consultants (Plant Conservation Biologist, Community-based Forestry Specialist, Plant Conservation Specialist and Forest Management Specialist) to conduct field activity in Dakrong NR and Dong Nai CNR.
- Activity 3.2, the project team has conducted a field survey at some local households to identify appropriate locations for establishing local rosewood nurseries.

The Executing Agency -submitted to the Secretariat a project progress report covering activities to June 2024 which is available on request (English only). A project monitoring mission is scheduled to be carried out in October 2024.

(14) 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		
Approved Revised Date of	First Extension until 31 January 2024 (NOL F23-0018)		
Project Completion:	Second Extension until 30 March (NOL F24-0003)		

The project agreement was duly signed in January 2021 and the implementing agency commenced project activities in February 2021. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the implementation of some activities has been delayed, and the duration of the project was extended until the end of March 2024.

The project's objective is to significantly advance the achievement of sustainable forest management in Myanmar through strengthening national certification systems for 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).

According to the executing agency's completion report submitted in July 2024, key accomplishments included the launch of forest management certification and chain of custody (CoC) training programmes, focusing on PEFC standards, due diligence systems, CoC methods, and multi-site certification; MFCC, in collaboration with Green Gold Industry, developed and implemented the Digitalization of Timber Tracking System (DTTS), which included establishing a training of trainers programme; comprehensive revisions were done to the Myanmar Timber Legality Assurance System (MTLAS) and the Myanmar Forest Certification Scheme (MFCS); several knowledge-sharing and awareness raising events were conducted, and regular updates were provided through the MFCC website, newsletters, and social media platforms.

MFCC also organized study tours to Viet Nam and Malaysia in March and June 2024, respectively, to gain insights into Viet Nam and Malaysia's forest policy development, particularly concerning forest certification and timber legality assurance systems.

The completion report states that the project - made significant contributions to MFCC by enabling the reorganization of various aspects of the institution, systems, and stakeholder engagement. However, to ensure sustainability of project outcomes the executing agency is requesting the use of unspent funds in the amount of USD 25,216 minus the cost of the final audit (which is ongoing by ITTO appointed auditor) for developing a sustainability plan. Therefore, -the Committee may wish to extend the project to allow a revision by the Secretariat on the activities involved in the sustainability plan and to coordinate the use and reporting of the unspent funds, so that the project can be declared as duly completed at the next session of the Committee.

(15) 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: April 2023 to March 2024 / 12 months
First Project extension: until December 2024 (MOFA-Japan's letter of 25 March 2024 and ITTO's letter L.24-0021)

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 the development of Fiji's 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 of Fiji, and the disbursement of the first installment of ITTO funds was made in January 2024 after a 6-month process for selecting and hiring of the project coordinator by the Forest Department of Fiji.

The development objective of this project is to promote the conservation, restoration and sustainable management of mangrove forest ecosystem to contributing to the resilience of coastal communities and mangrove forest ecosystem to natural disasters in Fiji. Specifically, the project intends to promote community-based restoration of cyclone-affected vulnerable mangrove forests through the empowerment of coastal communities, including women. The project has four expected outputs contributing to achieve the specific objective, namely: (1) Local communities are trained to adopt the "*Community-based Management Guideline for Mangrove Rehabilitation and Restoration in Fiji*" to strengthen governance of mangroves and women are empowered to participate in the decision-making process for the improvement of existing alternative livelihoods, (2) Degraded coastal and mangrove wetland rehabilitated to mitigate climate change through increased carbon sequestration, (3) Empowering women to implement a suite of viable alternative livelihood options, reducing over dependence on coastal and mangrove wetland resources for sustenance and life support, and (4) Strengthen coordination of policy guidelines to improve communities' resilience in the face of natural disasters.

Since the Fifty-seventh Session of the Committee and in accordance with the project's most recent progress report submitted by the executing agency, progress in project implementation can be summarized as follows:

- Six villages (Natila, Narocake, Naivakacau, Muanaira, Waicoka and Nasilai) have got fresh animal wastes loaded from Navuso Agriculture School for the establishment of biogas production sites. For that purpose, water tanks were delivered and filled each with 4,500 litres of water before the mixing with animal wastes.
- After the approval of screen printing, fabric painting, jewellery making, tailoring and weaving, the training workshop was conducted by the Pacific Women Economic Empowerment Program (PWEE). After a 1-week training, about sixty participants have received certificates guaranteed by the PWEE that Fiji Development Bank can approve loan for anyone interested in starting a business in correlation with the area training. Other communities had been informed about the achievements of this training workshop through Facebook pages and there are requests for similar training workshop to be conducted by PEWEE in other villages.
- Caregiver training has been fully prepared, but the disbursement process has delayed its holding because the new payment system imposed by the Government of Fiji. The training will be carried out during the fourth quarter of 2024.
- The Activities under Output 2 have been planned in collaboration with some experts of the University of the South Pacific (USP) for technical guidance to be observed and shared with local communities on the selection of fuelwood species adapted to the ecological conditions of their lands, in relation to the purpose of reducing human pressure on mangrove forest ecosystem in Fiji. Traditional knowledge for the selection of best species adapted to these special environmental conditions will be considered because most of the lands to be used for forest plantations with fuelwood trees are below sea level. The Rewa and Tailevu delta is considered as a very important mangrove forest ecosystem that needs to be subject to sustainable conservation good practices.
- The footpath at Natila village, which is one of the project achievements, had been successfully constructed by the villagers.

The new Fiji financial management system database is one of the big challenges facing the project due to the delays in releasing funds needed for the implementation of project activities as planned in the project document.

The ITTO Secretariat carried out a monitoring mission (first project steering committee meeting and field visits in selected project sites), from 17 to 20 June 2024, with participation from the Embassy of Japan in Fiji.

(16) 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 (FDS)

Starting Date and Duration: September 2023 / 12 months

The project was developed in early 2023 through Japan's Emergency Supplementary Budget Programme. The project agreement was signed in March 2023 and the implementing agency commenced project activities in September 2023.

The project proposal aims to promote community empowerment in forest management and forest landscape restoration within the Upper Baram Forest Area (UBFA) 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 UBFA 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.

The second project technical committee (PTC) meeting took place in October 2024 in conjunction with the project steering committee for PD 902/19 Rev.3 (F), where the following outputs were reported:

- Awareness-raising programmes and dialogues with forest communities focused on sustainable forest management, certification, conflict resolution, conservation and constitution of protected forest conducted.
- Capacity building on community-based forest eco-tourism with 39 participants from 19 villages; and on electric wiring, wood carpentry and furniture with 25 participants from 7 villages.
- Benchmark visits to Kibatangan, Sabah and Rain Forest Discovery Centre with the participation of 25 communities from 16 villages to enhance knowledge on eco-tourism and in-situ conservation.
- Holding the Asia-Pacific Forest Landscape Restoration Conference in August 2024 with the attendance of approximately 300 participants.

The project has provided an opportunity for FDS to closely connect with communities in the UBFA and learn about their immediate needs. During the PTC meeting the executing agency requested a two-month non-cost extension to complete the activities for upgrading community infrastructure in 3 villages and to establish a demonstration site for FLR in Ba Data Bila and Long Kerong.

(17) PP-A/60-367

Critical Upliftment of Local Livelihoods: Urgent Actions for Community-Based Conservation and Development in Upper Baram, Sarawak, Malaysia

Budget and Funding Sources:

Total Budget:		US\$	289,039.24
ITTO Budget:		US\$	139,039.24
Government of Japan:	US\$	139,039.24	
Government of Sarawak, Malaysia:		US\$	150,000.00

Implementing Agency: FOREST DEPARTMENT SARAWAK (FDS)

Starting Date and Duration: To be determined / 12 months

The Upper Baram Forest Area (UBFA), scattered over an area of 283,500 hectares, consists of 32 communities from various ethnic groups, of which Penan (20), Kenyah (8), Kelabit (3) and Saban (1) with diverse cultures, norms and different social settings and urgent needs. The UBFA holds immense significance due to its rich biodiversity, critical role in maintaining ecological balance, and its importance as a vital resource for local communities' livelihoods. This project is committed to urgently addressing the pressing livelihood needs of affected ethnic groups in 32 communities in the UBFA.

The project will enhance the management of the UBFA and uplift the local community's livelihoods by involving women's groups in the diversification of economic activities through training and capacity building. Implementation approaches will consider the ITTO Guidelines on Gender Equality and Empowering Women (GEEW).

The project agreement was duly signed in September 2024, and it is expected that project activities will commence after the disbursement of the first installment of ITTO funds which will be made upon reception by the ITTO Secretariat of an acceptable inception report and its associated detailed work plan.

(18) PP-A/60-368

Strengthening the Resilience of Indigenous Mayan Communities in Tropical Forests of the Yucatan Peninsula through the Sustainable Use of Biodiversity in the Context of the Maya Train Project (Mexico)

Budget and Funding Sources:

Total Budget:		US\$	337,097
ITTO Budget:		US\$	227,097
Government of Japan:	US\$	227,097	
Government of Mexico:		US\$	110,000

Implementing Agency: NATIONAL SCHOOL OF HIGHER EDUCATION, MERIDA UNIT, NATIONAL AUTONOMOUS UNIVERSITY OF MEXICO

Starting Date and Duration: To be determined / 12 months

The Yucatan Peninsula has a great biocultural wealth thanks to the diversity of its ecosystems and the heritage of the Mayan culture. However, the extent of tropical forests, their environmental services and the traditional knowledge associated with these ecosystems have all decreased due to recurrent land-use changes in the region. Current threats are related to the expansion of industry, agroindustry, cattle ranching and mass tourism. The introduction of the Maya Train megaproject in the region seeks to boost employment and economic development, however, there are potential unforeseen impacts on the environment and local indigenous communities. In this regard, this project seeks to:

1. Safeguard ecosystems and their native and endemic species in anticipation of impending ecological changes, with recommendations based on research findings.
2. Promote sustainable livelihoods of local communities that envisage the conservation and sustainable use of tropical forests, promoting the maintenance of biodiversity and preserving their traditions and knowledge.

3. Create public awareness about the importance of traditional knowledge for the management of biodiversity, as well as the relevance of actions for the preservation of tropical forests.

Proposed outputs and activities include research on flora, fauna, environmental services and traditional knowledge; training on strategies for strengthening the local economy; and dissemination of research topics among target communities and cities, decision-makers and public policy makers.

The project derived from concept note CN-22022 was developed in December 2023 through Japan's Emergency Supplementary Budget Programme. The project agreement was duly signed in September 2024 and at the time of preparation of this report the executing agency submitted the necessary documentation for the first instalment for review of the Secretariat.

(19) PP-A/60-370 Integrated Project to Strengthen Sustainable Management Systems and Monitoring the Miombo Forest against Degradation Processes for Food Security, Rural Employment and Climate Mitigation Action (Angola)

Budget and Funding Sources:

Total Budget:		US\$	197.544.09
ITTO Budget:		US\$	166,847.09
Government of Japan:	US\$	166.847,09	
Government of Angola:		US\$	30,697.00

Implementing Agency: **FOREST DEVELOPMENT AGENCY
(INSTITUT DE DEVELOPPEMENT FORESTIER - IDF)**

Starting Date and Duration: To be determined / 12 months

The project was developed through Japan's Emergency Budget Programme, with the aim to prevent and control the rapid degradation of the miombo forest ecosystem in Angola, which has worsened in the last five years because of the overexploitation of some of its most valuable species, due to the economic situation and financial crisis in the country associated with the COVID-19 pandemic. The degradation of miombo forest ecosystems has led to inequality and extreme poverty (especially for rural economies), making forests susceptible to encroachment by playing the role of social safety net. The funds were made available by the Government of Japan for the project implementation period from April 2024 to March 2025. The project agreement was signed in September 2024 by all project parties, after a 6-month process for the review of the Agreement by Angola's signatory parties (Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, and IDF).

This project will contribute to reversing the degradation of miombo forest ecosystems, while increasing their forest cover, with the involvement of key stakeholders, including local communities in the project's target areas, timber companies and other forestry stakeholders, in the central, southern and eastern provinces of Angola. The project specifically aims to promote the gradual rehabilitation of degraded miombo forest ecosystems with the involvement of key stakeholders, including local communities in the project's target areas, timber companies and other relevant stakeholders.

The project implementation will deliver two expected outputs contributing to achieve the specific objective, namely: (1) Institutional and legal frameworks for the monitoring and surveillance of the drivers of the degradation of miombo forest ecosystems are being developed for submission to bilateral and multilateral partners for financial support, (2) Pressures on Miombo forest ecosystems gradually reduced through their rehabilitation while contributing to satisfying multiple primary needs: basic food products, wood energy (fuelwood and charcoal), service wood, etc.

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

B. BWP PROJECT-BASED ACTIVITIES IN IMPLEMENTATION**(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
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ITTO Budget:	US\$	1,413,449
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Government of Germany:	US\$	1,413,449
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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: Ministry of Environment and Forestry
West Africa
 Togo: University of Lomé

Starting Date and Duration: November 2023 / 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. ITTO has concluded the Minutes of Understandings (MOUs) with four participating countries, namely: Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia, and Togo. As for the other two participating countries (Indonesia and India), the signing of the MOUs is pending review results by authorities in the respective countries. The signing of the MOU between ITTO and the Johann Heinrich Thunen Institute has been concluded in January 2024. The project has started to implement the activities since the beginning of November 2023.

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.

Up till the reporting date, the project has made the following progress:

Output 1:

Supply chains of smallholders and community-based teak and other valuable species plantation and management systems have been strengthened with easy availability of high-quality planting stock and implementation of improved practices in silviculture, timber processing and legality

- Activity 1.1 Conserve teak and other valuable species genetic variation through improved management of existing seed production areas, seed orchards, and provenance/progeny trials/clonal plantations implemented in India, Indonesia, Togo and Thailand (Thailand: 20%; Togo: 15%)
- Activity 1.2 Support smallholders and local communities for improved management of existing demonstration plots for teak and other valuable species and field training implemented in all participating countries (Thailand: 25%; Vietnam: 10%; Cambodia: 5%; Togo: 5%)

Output 3: Regional and international collaboration, information sharing and knowledge management, networking, policy development and outreach for sustainable smallholder teak and other species plantations have been strengthened

- Activity 3.1 Produce and disseminate outreach and training materials on the conservation and sustainable management of teak and other valuable species plantations and legal and sustainable supply chains in line with outcomes of Activities 1.2 and 2.1-2.4 to support forest policy development implemented in all participating countries (1 out of 18 bi-monthly newsletter was issued)
- Activity 3.3 Plan and organize a regional workshop in Thailand for timber legality and another regional workshop in Java, Indonesia with investors and financial institutions to discuss financing schemes promoting quality timber production in smallholder teak plantations (To be convened in September 2024 in Bangkok)
- Activity 3.4 Support sharing lessons in promoting the quality teak production and legal and sustainable supply chains at the IUFRO World Congress 2024 (Sweden) and in the 5th World Teak Conference 2025 (Kerala, India) for improved global teak collaboration (4 project's abstracts presented at the IUFRO World Congress in Stockholm, June 2024)

The Executing Agency -submitted to the Secretariat a project progress report covering activities to June 2024 which is available on request (English only). The 1st PSC meeting was held in Bangkok on 17 September 2024, followed by the 1st Project's Regional Workshop on 18 September 2024.

(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:	October 2024 / 12 months		

This 12-month BWP Project-based 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 Project-based 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 mechanism 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 Project-based Activity has been duly signed by all parties (Government of Togo, REFACOF-Togo, Implementing Agency and ITTO Secretariat), in September 2023. The disbursement of the first installment of ITTO funds was made in October 2023.

The development objective of the third phase of the project is -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 the third phase 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 Lacs Prefectures through the establishment of community forests, and also to continue supporting alternative sources of livelihoods for local communities, including women's groups.

Since the Fifty-seventh Session of the Committee and in accordance with the project's most recent progress report submitted by the executing agency, progress in the implementation of this BWP Project-based Activity can be mainly summarized as follows:

- The production of 15,000 seedlings, the acquisition of equipment for income-generating activities (IGAs), and the maintenance and protection of the former reforested or enriched sites have been fully completed.

- 13 ha of sites reforested or enriched during the two previous phases have been subject to silviculture-related treatments and also being protected from wildfires, contributing to good growth of planted trees.
- Two houses sheltering the facilities for income-generating activities have been acquired and are used by women's groups for income generating activities (processing food crops, conservation of fishes from a nearby lake).
- Only one out of two motor pumps had been purchased for the benefit of the women's groups of Agouegan because of the insufficient amount budgeted for in the ITTO budget. This situation has no impact on the activities of the women's groups of Pagala-Gare, since they have already benefited from a donation of a motor pump provided by the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Rural Development of Togo.

All that remains is to carry out some activities for protecting the 1-year established forest plantations and new forest plantations from fire outbreaks which regularly occurred in November and December. Given that this is a seasonal activity, it could only be carried out from November 2024, while the formal implementation period should end in October 2024. Therefore, the monitoring committee meeting recommended the extension of the implementation period of this BWP Project-based Activity until 31 December 2024 without additional ITTO funds.

ITTO Secretariat carried out a monitoring mission (first project steering committee meeting and field visits in selected project sites) - from 19 to 20 September 2024, in collaboration with the Ministry of Environment and Forest Resources of Togo and the Agency for Forest Development and Use (ODEF, in French acronym).

(3) PP-A/56-341C Support for Women's Groups with the Restoration of Forest Landscapes in the Departments of Ouémé and Zou, Benin (Benin)

Budget and Funding Sources:

Total Budget:		US\$	80,330.73
ITTO Budget:		US\$	64,180.73
Soka Gakkai (SG):	US\$	64,180.73	
ONG W.E.W.:		US\$	16,150.00
Implementing Agency:	African Women's Network for Community Management of Forests (REFACOF, in French acronym) in collaboration with World Ecology Women (W.E.W.) of Benin		

Starting Date and Duration: October 2024 / 12 months

This 12-month BWP Project-based 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 new BWP Project-based Activity was fully funded by Soka Gakkai (SG), by the inter-sessional pledge received after the Fifty-ninth Session of the Council through a funding mechanism supported by a Profile-document for this BWP Project-based Activity. The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) governing the implementation of this BWP Project-based Activity has been duly signed by all parties (Government of Benin, WEW-Benin, Implementing Agency and ITTO Secretariat), in August 2024. The disbursement of the first installment of ITTO funds was made in September 2024.

The objective of this BWP Project-based Activity is to promote the participation of women's groups in the restoration of degraded forest landscapes. It aims at creating community forests and highlighting the importance of tackling impacts of climate change, while contributing to a significant improvement in the livelihoods of local communities involved in its implementation. Specifically, this BWP Project-based Activity intends to provide women's groups with the necessary means allowing them to be key actors in the restoration of degraded forest landscapes, thereby contributing to the improvement of local environment and economic well-being of communities involved in its implementation in the Ouémé and Zou departments of Benin.

Based on information from the implementing agency (WEW-Benin), the progress in the early stage of the implementation of this BWP Project-based Activity is mainly in relation to the consultation and sensitization

campaigns contributing to ensure the involvement of relevant stakeholders, for its smooth implementation which started in September 2024 with the disbursement of the first installment of ITTO funds.

C. PROJECTS, PRE-PROJECTS, AND BWP PROJECT-BASED ACTIVITIES AWAITING IMPLEMENTATION AGREEMENT

None.

D. PROJECTS AND 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
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ITTO Budget:	US\$	117,712
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Government of Togo:	US\$	52,630
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Implementing Agency:	Friends of the Environment civil society organization (Association Les Amis de l'Environnement—AMEN)
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Period of Approval:	October 2023
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Starting Date and Duration:	To be determined / 10 months
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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.

(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 II

Budget and Funding Sources:

Total Budget:	US\$	380,246
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ITTO Budget:	US\$	248,154
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Government of Indonesia :	US\$	6,272
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Sinarmas Forestry & Partners	US\$	125,820
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Implementing Agency:	Forest Research and Development Centre, Forestry and Environment Research, Development and Innovation Agency (FOERDIA), Ministry of Environment and Forestry (MOEF), Indonesia
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Period of Approval:	Rev.3: Approved in October 2021
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Starting Date and Duration:	To be determined / Phase II - 12 months
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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 of this project,

focusing on promoting partnerships among key stakeholders for the operational management of GSK-BR, will commence, if funded, following the completion of Phase I.

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. 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.

(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 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.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. Phase II of the project will commence, if funded, following the completion of Phase I.

(5) 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.

(6) PD 936/24 Rev.1 (F) Protection and Restoration of Forest Lands for Water Catchment, Regulation and Recharge in the Upper Salinas River Watershed, Guatemala, as a Climate Change Adaptation Measure to Ensure Water Supply for the Guatemalan Population

Budget and Funding Sources:

Total Budget:	US\$	615,031.10
ITTO Budget:	US\$	496,959.10
Water for People:	US\$	74,472.00
INAB & Local Municipal Councils:	US\$	43,600.00

Implementing Agency: WATER FOR PEOPLE (WFP)

Collaborating Agency: NATIONAL FOREST INSTITUTE (INAB) AND LOCAL MUNICIPAL COUNCILS

Period of Approval: October 2024

Starting Date and Duration: To be determined / 24 months

The Department of Quiché located in the northwestern region of the country covers an area of 8,378 km² (7.67% of the national territory), with approximately 42.5% of its land under forest cover. The project's area of intervention covers four municipalities located in the upper reaches of the Salinas River Watershed.

Aware of the significance of forests and their link to water-related environmental services, the association Water for People (WFP), in coordination with the National Forest Institute (INAB), has developed this project with a view to maintaining, restoring and increasing forest cover over at least 800 hectares, in areas of high to very high-water recharge significance in the Upper Salinas River Watershed, as well as implementing two compensation mechanisms for environmental water services as a way of strengthening water resource governance in the area and ensuring the social, economic and environmental sustainability of water resources.

(7) PD 938/24 Rev.1 (F) Sustainable Management of Production Forests Driven by Traditional Communities in the Brazilian Amazon

Budget and Funding Sources:

Total Budget:	US\$	1,656,672
ITTO Budget:	US\$	678,531
Government of Brazil:	US\$	978,141

Implementing Agency: EMPRESA BRASILEIRA DE PESQUISA AGROPECUÁRIA AMAZONIA ORIENTAL (EMBRAPA)

Period of Approval: October 2024

Starting Date and Duration: To be determined / 36 months

Traditional communities producing timber in the Brazilian Amazon face significant challenges. The most important lies in communitarian organization, poor access to technical assistance and training and the need to adapt to management models that are not adequately addressing their needs and capacities. The project aims to strengthen communities in the Conservation Unit Verde para Sempre in the State of Pará, with an area of 13 thousand km². This project will apply an interdisciplinary and multi-institutional approach combining organizational strengthening and forest management skills.

(8) PD 940/24 Rev.1 (F) Strengthening Effective Forest Area Designation and Customary Rights in East Nusa Tenggara Province as a Precondition of Achieving Sustainable Forest Management (Indonesia)

Budget and Funding Sources:

Total Budget:	US\$	673,715
ITTO Budget:	US\$	599,555
Government of Indonesia:	US\$	74,160
Implementing Agency:	DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF FORESTRY PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENTAL GOVERNANCE, MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTRY	
Period of Approval:	October 2024	
Starting Date and Duration:	To be determined / 30 months	

Sustainable forest management is the key to forest productivity, and the continuity of the flow of benefits (social, economic, and ecological) for the local, national, and global. In the Indonesian context, one of the preconditions for achieving and realizing SFM is clear and legitimate land tenure. Designation of forest areas refers to the formal process by which the government designates certain areas as conservation, protection, and production forests through a participatory process of boundary marking and an official declaration. Apart from strengthening the legality and legitimacy of forest areas, the process of designation of forest areas also provides recognition for local community management land, while contributing to solving various conflicts regarding the boundaries of forest areas and customary lands in NTT Province which continue to emerge and to be the cause of ineffective sustainable forest management.

The main objective of this project is to accelerate the effective designation of forest areas as a precondition of SFM in NTT Province. The expected outputs of this project are: a) local communities' rights recognized and resolved, b) community capacity and acceptance of securing forest and land area boundaries improved, c) Local institutions on managing land tenure strengthened, and d) forestry-based business model at the community level developed.

(9) PD 941/24 Rev.1 (F) Capacity Building for Private and Community Tree Farmers in Relation with the Sustainable Management of Forest Plantations in Southern Benin

Budget and Funding Sources:

Total Budget:	US\$	629,612
ITTO Budget:	US\$	537,712
Benin (CPDRN-NGO):	US\$	91,900
Implementing Agency:	CENTER FOR THE PROMOTION OF LOCAL DEVELOPMENT AND SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES (<i>CENTRE DE PROMOTION DU DÉVELOPPEMENT LOCAL ET DE GESTION DURABLE DES RESSOURCES NATURELLES</i> —CPDRN)	
Collaborating Agency:	GENERAL DIRECTORATE OF WATER, FORESTS AND HUNTING (<i>DIRECTION GENERALE DES EAUX, FORETS ET CHASSE</i> —DGEFC); NATIONAL TIMBER CORPORATION (<i>SOCIÉTÉ NATIONALE DU BOIS</i> —SONAB)	
Period of Approval:	October 2024	
Starting Date and Duration:	To be determined / 36 months	

Forest landscapes are undergoing continuous degradation in Southern Benin – location area of the environment conservation Ramsar sites 1017 and 1018 – threatening the entire ecosystem, biodiversity, natural resources, as well as the livelihoods of local communities. Strategies implemented to reverse this trend include reforestation and the development of forest plantations to meet the ever-increasing demand for forest products. Investigations carried out as part of project development showed that technical itineraries and silvicultural operations are not being followed. As a result, forest plantations produce low yields in terms of both quantity and quality. It results in discouragement and a change of vocation among tree farmers.

This capacity-building project for private and community tree farmers in southern Benin aims to ensure the sustainable management of forest plantations and to improve the livelihoods of stakeholders and rural communities with limited financial resources, while specifically contributing to the conservation of natural forests and to the restoration of degraded forest landscapes in the project's target areas. The project derives from the implementation of the pre-project PPD 201/21 Rev.2 (F) entitled: "*Study for Capacity Building of Private and Community Tree Farmers in Benin*" which was implemented previously by the same executing agency.

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