Project Completion Report

Building Capacities for ACTO Member Countries in Ecologically Responsible Forest Management and Biodiversity Conservation in Managed Forests of the Amazon

(ITTO/CDB/ACTO)

PP-A/47-266

TITLE	"BUILDING CAPACITIES OF ACTO MEMEBER COUNTRIES IN ECOLOGICALLY RESPONSIBLE FOREST MANAGEMENT AND BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION IN MANAGED FORESTS OF THE AMAZON"
PROJECT CODE	(PP-A/47-266)
COMMITTEE	REFORESTATION AND FOREST MANAGEMENT
PRESENTED BY	ITTO
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE	ENGLISH

EXECUTING AGENCY	Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization (ACTO)
COLLABORATING AGENCIES	Governments of Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Peru, Suriname and Venezuela
INITIAL DURATION	36 months
ADJUSTED DURATION	32 months
STARTING DATE	June 3, 2015
RESTARTING DATE	March 1, 2017

	Budget financing source	Original contribution US$	Adjusted Contribution[1] US$
	ITTO:	1.182.430	1.054.792,52
	PS/ACTO:	277.800	292.633,34
	Member Countries of ACTO:	691.200	614.400,00
	TOTAL	2.151.430,00	1.961.825,86

The readjustment is equivalent to 13% of the ITTO funds.

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ANALYTICAL SUMMARY

The search of the common goal of conserving and managing tropical forest resources and biodiversity in a sustainable manner marked the starting point of the Project “Building Capacities of ACTO Member Countries in Ecologically Responsible Forest Management and Biodiversity Conservation in managed Forests of the Amazon”. In this context, in February 2013, the Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization (ACTO), through its Permanent Secretariat (PS/ACTO), signed a memorandum of understanding with the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO).

The main objective of this project is to improve the conservation of forests and biodiversity by means of ecologically responsible forest management and to strengthen management models and best practices in managed forests in the Amazon region, with emphasis on community forest management. The project’s implementation strategy was divided into three main phases: 1. Evaluation; 2. Development, and; 3. Consolidation, whereby one of the phases produces inputs for the next phase. The eight ACTO Member Countries Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Peru, Suriname and Venezuela are involved in the process.

Countries was produced through the analysis of the implementation of the ITTO/IUCN guidelines (2009), training centers in forest management and biodiversity conservation were prospected and selected, the creation and application of the project's methodological proposal, 3 pilot courses were organized and conducted in the selected centers of excellence, a process of knowledge exchange was established through the digital platform, and other direct and indirect results recorded in the various project Results.

The project's first phase called Evaluation, in addition to the preparation and structuring of all project activities, resulted in eight national assessments of ACTO Member Countries. These assessments were responsible for providing important information for other related Results such as (i) analysis on the implementation of the ITTO/IUCN guidelines in the Amazon region; (ii) reports of some successful national experiences in responsible forest management and biodiversity conservation, and the registration and selection process of regional centers of excellence in forest management.

The second phase, Development, was responsible for the organization, creation and implementation of the 3 pilot courses at the regional centers of excellence, located in Belem do Para (Brazil), Loreto Region (Peru) and Mariwa Region (Guyana). These Centers produced the following Results: (i) the methodological proposal for capacity building (I-version of the MoU); (ii) the national consultation process of project's focal points in ACTO Member Countries; (iii) training modules Versions II and III, containing the contents and refinement of each of the modules implemented; (iv) the execution of pilot courses with the presence of 75 participants from the 8 countries involved; (v) the assessment of the training course by the participants, and; (vi) this final report.

The third phase of the project, consolidation, compiled all the information from the previous two phases, it also developed the Regional Platform of Knowledge and Information Exchange(RKEP), which will host and disseminate all information produced throughout the project as well as other relevant information deemed of interest to the Amazon region.

It is noted that these good results, - information, exchange of knowledge and networking among professionals from the eight Member Countries, elaboration of the MoU, development and implementation of pilot courses, the establishment of a sharing and dissemination strategy of information generated and others of regional importance provided by the project-, directly influenced the strengthening of local, national and regional institutional and technical capacities.

1. PROJECT IDENTIFICATION

1.1 Context

Millions of people worldwide directly depend on forests' natural resources and services provided for their livelihoods. FAO (2007) highlights the significance of forests as sources of food, shelter, clothing, among others, and also for the economy of the countries, especially in the tropics, as sources of employment and income for participating households in different parts of the timber and non-timber products value chain.

The Amazonian forests in the ACTO Member Countries covered by 2015 an area of 5.4 million km², *i.e.* 70% of the region's total forest area (ACTO 2018) [1], and approximately 60% of the total extension is in the Brazilian Amazon. These forests are home to over 40 million people, including 385 indigenous and tribal peoples whose survival depend almost entirely on the goods and services provided by the forests.

However, despite the fact that the Amazon region still has a vast area of forests, there is still concern regarding its long-term permanence. Its constant annual reduction reached an annual rate of 0.28% (1.6 million hectares per year) during the period 2000-2015. However, it is important to mention that in that same period the net loss rate decreased by 50% from 0.46 to 0.23%, which means less than one million hectares per year by 2015 (ACTO, 2018).

Deforestation and degradation of tropical forests affect 89% of threatened birds, 83% of threatened mammals and more than 90% of threatened plants (ITTO/CBD, 2011). Ripple et al. (2017) mentioned that if rising loss rates of forest cover and biodiversity detected globally are maintained, the world could face widespread misery and a catastrophic biodiversity loss.

[1] OTCA 2018. Informe Regional Sobre la Situación de los Bosques en la Región Amazónica.

The disorderly exploitation of tropical forests is often cited as one of the main threats to biodiversity, nevertheless, there is enough evidence to suggest that if handled correctly, timber production forests can be an important source for biodiversity conservation (ITTO/IUCN, 2009). In this context, local communities (indigenous, peasant or traditional) have played a key role in the conservation and sustainable use of large forest extensions by implementing practices of multiple use management, conservation, reforestation or fire management (Aider and FAO, 2016).

Improvement of forestry practices and techniques incorporating theoretical and practical aspects of biodiversity conservation at different stages of forest management can lead to positive changes in terms of biodiversity and, consequently, in the livelihoods of forest-dependent communities and families. These changes may also favor the maintenance and improvement of the benefits of ecosystem services offered to society in general.

To include biodiversity conservation aspects at different stages of forest management has multiple benefits at different scales (spatial and temporal, for example). Other important benefits include:

- Maintenance of ecological functions within the units of use ensuring forest regeneration, quantity, and quality of forest resources and greater resilience to climate change;
- multifunctional use of the forest landscape, integrating productive forest management activities with tourism, commercialization and use of non-timber forest products and research; preserve the knowledge and relationships that local communities have with biodiversity.
- Enhance the well-being of local communities through biodiversity conservation and sustainable use of forest resources.

In this scenario, the project "Building Capacities of ACTO Member Countries in Ecologically Responsible Forest Management and Biodiversity Conservation in Managed Forest of the Amazon (OIMT/CDB/OTCA)" was implemented. It had the purpose of establishing the process for building and developing the necessary technical capacity to strengthen and implement forest management models and ecologically responsible practices in terms of territorial management favoring forests and biodiversity conservation, as well as the maintenance of livelihoods of local and indigenous communities in the Amazon.

1.2 Source and problem addressed

1.2.1 **Basis of the Project**

By helping to reconcile the joint objectives of economic development and environmental conservation, sustainable use of forests plays a key role in combating

degradation and deforestation. Sustainable use of forests in addition to being considered a social and economic factor must be ecologically responsible.

Ecologically responsible forest management aims at developing the use and exploitation of forests by meeting the local populations needs without affecting the processes, ecological balances and regeneration capacities of forest life systems. At the same time, it ensures the feasibility and reproduction of the forests multiple environmental functions and minimizes human activities' impact on biodiversity and associated ecological processes to maintain long-term ecological integrity through the development of conservation strategies, forest planning, management, and monitoring considering economic and environmental objectives.

The different experiences in forest management throughout the Amazon region and other areas of the tropics demonstrate the feasibility of ecologically responsible management and can be competitive in many contexts.

However, while the commitments to environmentally responsible forest management in Amazonian countries are stronger, improvements have been uneven, and biodiversity concerns are rarely effective in forest management operations.

This regional project is the third initiative proposed under the ITTO-CBD cooperation. The first two were focused on Southeast Asia (Cambodia, Thailand, and Laos) and the Congo Basin (D.R.C., Congo, Gabon, C.A.R. and Cameroon). This third is directed to the Amazon region of the eight ACTO Member Countries.

The overall objective of the project was to address the priorities set by the Partnerships initiative and the strategic agenda of ACTO's Regional biodiversity Plan. It aimed at assisting the Member Countries in their efforts to promote environmentally responsible forest management and biodiversity conservation, as well as to consolidate and improve local, national and regional capacity for information exchange in the context of biodiversity conservation, best practices and local knowledge and experiences of the Amazon Region.

The project was also motivated by the need to maintain and improve the engagement among forest managers, training centers and trainers, by developing training opportunities and technical advice, as well as all practical challenges in implementing best practices, sustainable forest management, and forest and biodiversity conservation.

Therefore, establishing a regional digital platform for knowledge exchange among forest managers, government regulators, academics and the local community was an urgent need in order to build a robust and sustainable system on the strengths of each sector for the promotion of forest and biodiversity conservation.

1.2.2 **Problem addressed**

The continuous loss of forest cover in the Amazon Region, coupled with the degradation of a significant forest area (through unsustainable logging, fire and other forms of resource extraction) is the main cause of biodiversity loss and soil degradation. Consequently, it is a major challenge for national governments of ACTO countries.

Forest loss and degradation processes are partly caused by faults and limitations in the definition and application of those national standards guiding the use and planning of forests, along with the weakness of the institutions involved in implementing such legislations, and inadequate financial resources and incentives.

In addition to these political and socioeconomic concerns, there are three sets of underlying conditions that deserve urgent attention to facilitate the integration of forests and biodiversity conservation with forest management and responsible use of forest resources in the Amazon region, such as:

(i) Recovery of management models, best practices, and local knowledge about forest management with an emphasis on the community sector

(ii) Creation and strengthening of national and regional capacities to integrate management models, good practices and local knowledge into national technical and legal aspects of forest management

(iii) The provision and development of appropriate tools for dissemination and exchange of information and experiences on past and current practices of sustainable forest management and biodiversity conservation along with the monitoring of incentives in the Amazon region.

This project will help to meet these demands. Figure 1 describes the project's problem tree, highlights the problem of the central government - forest management in the Amazon is failing to apply appropriate guidelines to protect biodiversity-, along with the related effects and underlying causes.

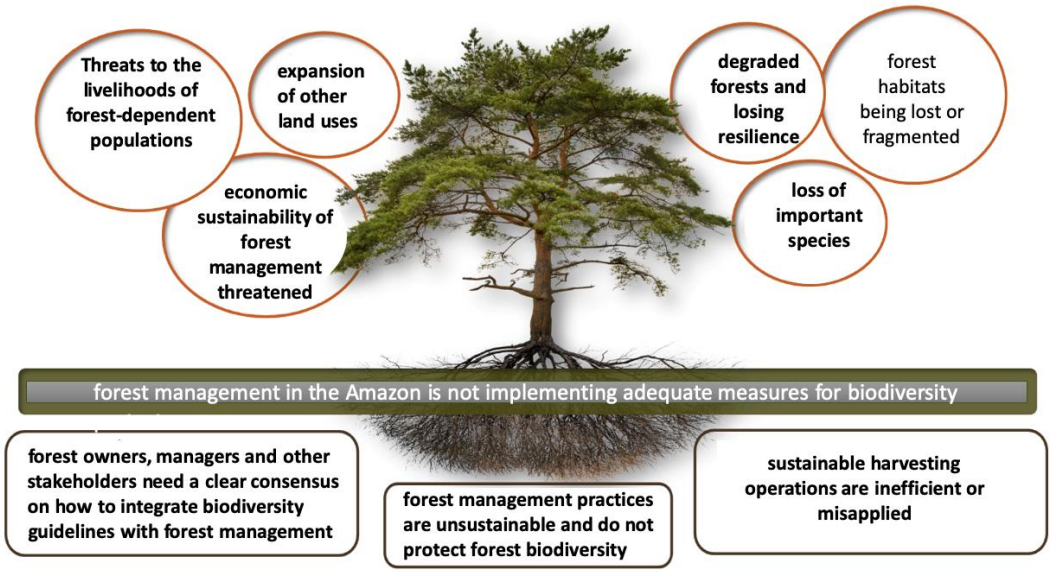

Figure 1. Project's Problem tree.

2. OBJECTIVES AND OPERATIONAL STRATEGY

2.1 Objective of the project

To improve forest and biodiversity conservation under ecologically responsible forest management and strengthen management models and best practices in Amazonian forests, with emphasis on community forest management.

2.2 Specific objective

To establish a process among ACTO Member Countries to build and develop the necessary technical capacity to strengthen and implement forest management models and ecologically responsible best practices, in terms of territorial management favoring the forest conservation and biodiversity.

2.3 Operational Strategy

The "Building Capacities of ACTO Member Countries in Ecologically Responsible Forest Management and Biodiversity Conservation in Managed Forests of the Amazon" was divided into three main phases oriented from the assessment stage, development, and culminating in the consolidation phase.

The first phase, called Evaluation, was characterized by detailed national assessments about sustainable forest management and biodiversity conservation in the eight ACTO countries taking into consideration national and/or regional standards, along with the ITTO/IUCN Guidelines for biodiversity conservation in production forests. From this information, conduct assessments and give recommendations towards forest management and biodiversity conservation in the Amazon region.

The second phase, Development, contemplated the coordination with three Centers of Excellence in Forest Management for the implementation of training modules prepared to improve sustainable forest management and biodiversity conservation in the Amazon Region. The process of producing the module's material was sustained by the evaluation and Results of the project's first phase.

Finally, the third phase of the project, Consolidation, envisaged the creation and availability of the Regional Platform of Knowledge and Information Exchange(RKEP), to facilitate the exchange of information and experience, and strengthen the capacities of sustainable forest management and biodiversity conservation in the Amazon under ACTO's coordination.

The project results can also be expressed in three successive phases during its execution, the Evaluation phase (Result 1), the development phase (Result 2) and the consolidation phase (Result 3).

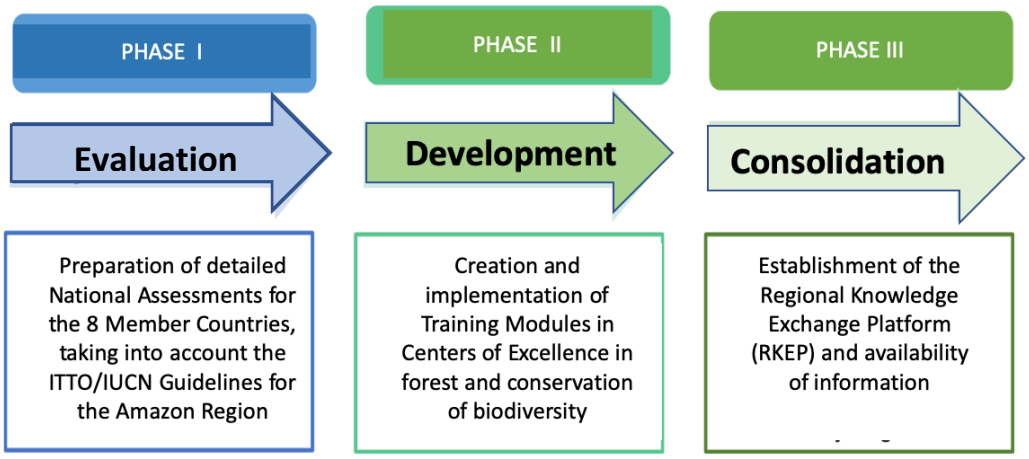

Figure 2. The three project phases and Results as part of the operational strategy.

The project meets the objectives settled, achieving the three main results that were met with the successive and gradual execution of the activities. Each result presented is directly related to the established phases.

(i) **First Result (Phase I):** detailed national assessments of sustainable forest management and biodiversity conservation in the Amazon, observing national and regional forest management standards, taking into consideration the ITTO/IUCN Guidelines for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in tropical timber production forests, and, among others, to report on: (a) the extent to which forest management and biodiversity conservation issues and guidelines are currently considered and implemented in the production forests of ACTO Member Countries; (b) the capacity for training and knowledge exchange in ecologically responsible forest management at national level.

(ii) **Second Result (Phase II):** the implementation of training modules developed by the project in four languages (Spanish, Portuguese, English and Dutch) is

coordinated with at least three centers of excellence in forest management to improve sustainable forest management and biodiversity conservation in the Amazon region.

(iii) **Third Result (Phase III):** establishment of a Regional Platform of Knowledge and Information Exchange (PRIC), under ACTO's coordination, to facilitate information and experience exchange about the opportunities and challenges of forests sustainable management and environment and biodiversity conservation of the Amazon region.

3. PROJECT PERFORMANCE

The project activities were designed from the results obtained and their direct correlation with phases I, II and III. Therefore, the activities planned and executed throughout the project execution are presented herein.

Activity	Planned	Executed
Project Configuration		
A 0.1	Preparation of project's concept note and the capacity development plan	The project concept note was approved by Member Countries
A 0.2	First Steering Committee and regional consultation to initiate the project, establish a shared vision and framework for capacity building as well as to design the structure of the national assessment exercises	The First Steering Committee was held in Puyo, Ecuador in March 2014. This meeting approved the first AOP and its budget.
Result 1 - Detailed national assessments of sustainable forest management and biodiversity conservation in the Amazon, observing national and regional forest management standards, taking into consideration the ITTO/IUCN Guidelines for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in tropical timber production forests, and, among others, to report on (a) the extent to which forest management and biodiversity conservation issues and guidelines are currently considered and implemented in the production forests of ACTO Member Countries and forest management and biodiversity conservation guidelines; (b) the capacity for training and knowledge exchange in ecologically responsible forest management at the national level.		
A 1.1	A national performance management and capability assessment exercise to assess competencies and needs regarding the implementation of sustainable forest management and conservation of forest biodiversity in the Amazon.	In this activity eight national assessments were prepared, one for each ACTO Member Country, in coordination with the focal points and national consultants responsible for the preparation and delivery of the reports. The eight national reports were prepared with the support of the project team regarding the methodology and information collection aspects. From the national assessments, much information (presented throughout the project) was produced in addition to the articles presented at IUFRO Congress in Curitiba, Brazil, which can be viewed in **Annex 3.**
A 1.2	Evaluation of training centers across the region that are considered candidates for Centers of Excellence for training in ecologically responsible	After elaborating the national reports of the eight ACTO Member Countries, the information presented was systematized and analyzed, resulting in the following

	forest management and biodiversity conservation in the Amazon.	guiding products: (i) review paper of the implementation of the ITTO/IUCN Guidelines in the member countries; (ii) selection report of regional centers of excellence; (iii) brief report of successful experiences presented by the countries.
Result 2 - Implementation of training modules developed by the project in four languages (Spanish, Portuguese, English and Dutch) coordinated with at least three centers of excellence in forest management in order to improve sustainable forest management and biodiversity conservation in the Amazon region.		
A 2.1	Preparation of Version-1 (V-1) training modules based on existing training materials, guidelines and regional experience.	Training Module -Version-1 was prepared by the project team and submitted for National Consultation and approval by ACTO Member Countries. Version-1 consists of the methodological proposal of the training modules.
A 2.2	Selection of three training centers as Centers of Excellence in capacity building for ecologically responsible forest management and biodiversity conservation in the Amazon.	Based on the national assessments prepared by each of the Member Countries about the forest management training centers, a methodology was established to identify, qualify and select three Centers of Excellence were selected, located in Brazil (IFT), Guyana (FTCI) and Peru (IIAP).
A 2.3	Selection of three (3) regional expert trainers to assist in the preparation of the modules and to conduct the training courses and strengthening of the Centers of Excellence.	The selection process of the expert trainers was carried out culminating in the selection and beginning of their activities with the Regional Project Coordinator and the Senior Consultant, who is responsible for the coordination of Phases I and II of the project.
A 2.4	Preparation and development in the field of training modules from its Version-1 (V-1), training modules and consolidation of Version-2 (V-2), as well as case studies from the Centers of Excellence for a period up to two (2) weeks sequentially in each one, with the participation of the Center's staff and at least two regional expert trainers in each center.	The methodological proposal was duly approved through the national consultation in the Member Countries. Issues concerning the pilot courses logistics, organization, administrative and needs were addressed. Three technical visits and several other virtual meetings were held between project specialists and centers of excellence which concluded in the reporting of the technical visits to Environmental Coordination, which included the proposal of a Memorandum of Understanding to be signed between ACTO and each of the Centers of Excellence, including the budget required for collaboratively executing the courses.
A 2.5	Regional consultation (with ACTO Member Countries) and work follow-up to present all information collected from training modules Versions V-1 and V-2, and to consolidate V-3 according to the field activities at the centers of excellence.	Following the preparation of the Methodological Proposal, which consists of Version I of the Training Modules, the National Consultation with the Member Countries, which are the guiding sources of the training proposal, was held and Version I was approved with some comments from the national focal points. Version-II of the training modules contains the program content and the pedagogical material applied in the field.

		The drafting of Version II and consolidating of Version III of the training modules (with post-course adjustments and enhancements) can be seen in the completed Training Modules, which will be diagrammed and published.
A 2.6	Selection of at least 15 (fifteen) forest managers to participate in the first three courses with the training modules consolidated in Version-3 (V-3), one in each Center of Excellence, with a total of 45 forest managers participating.	As part of the organization and implementation of the planned pilot courses, 75 participants (over 45 participants initially planned) were selected for courses in Brazil (27), Guyana (26) and Peru (22).
A 2.7	Conduction of training courses in each Center of Excellence (duration of 10 days) for forest managers chosen by the ACTO Member Countries.	Three pilot courses were held, one in each of the RCEs selected by the project, with the project teams, the centers of excellence along with participants from the eight ACTO Member Countries.
A 2.8	Publishing of the Version-3 (V-3) Capacity building modules, in English and Spanish, and its dissemination to stakeholders throughout the Amazon Region.	The final version of the training modules has been published on-line in Spanish and English. The ACTO Permanent Secretariat will disseminate the modules through the official communication channels and on its institutional website.
3- Establishment of a Regional Platform of Knowledge and Information Exchange (PRIC), under ACTO's coordination, to facilitate information and experience exchange about the opportunities and challenges of forests sustainable management and environment and biodiversity conservation of the Amazon region.		
A 3.1	Development of the Regional Platform of Knowledge and Information Exchange(RKEP) for sustainable forest management in the Amazon.	A web platform called PRIC was developed, using open source programs. The PRIC es capable of providing the following four services, at user and administrator interaction level: i) On-line courses, which may be uploaded to the platform by the countries themselves (administrator), and made available on-line to those interested in the course (user); ii) thematic forums, which may be proposed and facilitated by the MCs themselves (administrator) or by the PS/ACTO; iii) MCs technical and regulatory Information Repository, and iv) list of Undergraduate and Postgraduate Institutions and Programs.
A 3.2	Third Steering Committee (III PSC), regional consultation and regional training course regarding the application and development of the Regional Knowledge Platform (RKEP).	The III PSC was held in parallel with the International Course on Biodiversity Conservation through Ecologically Responsible Forest Management. This course was delivered in partnership with the Tropical Forest Institute (IFT by its acronym in Portuguese) of Brazil, on September 20-30, 2018. The Regional consultation took place through virtual meetings with the project focal points. The training course for the use of the Platform was held on December 10-14, 2018 and January 29-31, 2019, which was opened for the participation of the project's Focal

		Point institutions as well as other institutions related to the project theme.
A 3.3	On-line presentation and implementation of adjusted RKEP based on the III PSC Results, regional consultation, and trainings assessment	The PRIC was presented several times during the participatory adjustment process to i) Project Focal Points, ii) PS/ACTO Thematic and Project Coordinators, and iii) new PS/ACTO Authorities in January 2019. Its on-line implementation will be carried out as part of the launching of the Amazonian Regional Observatory (ORA) platform. These activities are being led by the Bioamazonia project, coordinated by Mrs. Ximena Buitrón.
A 3.4	Preparation of Project's Closing Report.	Preparation and delivery of this final report

3.1 Invested inputs

It is worth mentioning that for the restarting of the project in March 2017, it was necessary to make some budget adjustments (along with the timeframe) in accordance with the 10% cut made by the ITTO according to letter Ref.L. 16-0156 - December 16, 2016 ($ 98,243.00), with an additional 7% adjustment being recommended. The PS/ACTO made the required adjustment up to a total reduction of 13% in the ITTO funds, and an increase in the PS/ACTO's contribution of 4.25%.

The approved amount after modifications carried out within the different budget lines was $1,054,792.52, as shown in the table in the "approved amount" column. Also, and as a result of the project's financial execution, some balances were transferred to other budget lines in order to comply with the planning foreseen in the AOP, as shown in the column "modified amount".

				Expenses to end of period (US$)			**Available funds (US$)**
Components		**Approved amount**	**Modified amount (A)**	**Compromised (B)**	**Executed (C)**	**TOTAL (D) {B + C}**	**(E) {A - D}**
10.	Staff	415.700,75	514.901,93	439.029,88	75.173,49	514.203,37	698,56
20.	Subcontracts	234.969,40	223.147,54	140.424,43	76.326,91	216.751,34	6.396,20
30.	Events and travels	350.597,90	282.067,45	279.741,46	1.892,17	281.633,63	433,82
40.	Capital assets	31.000,00	18.424,89	18.424,88	-	18.424,88	0,01
50.	Consumption goods	14.180,92	4.189,04	4.189,04	-	4.189,04	-
60.	Various items	8.343,55	3.061,67	1.716,32	453,80	2.170,12	891,55
70.	Management of Executing Agency	-	9.000,00	5.462,34	-	5.462,34	3.537,66
OVERALL TOTAL:		**1.054.792,52**	**1.054.792,52**	**888.988,35**	**153.846,37**	**1.042.834,72**	**11.957,80**

4. PROJECT RESULTS AND PARTICIPATION OF BENEFICIARIES

4.1 Project Results

This project was aimed at establishing a process among ACTO Member Countries to build and develop the necessary technical capacity to strengthen and implement forest management models and ecologically responsible best practices in terms of territorial management, favoring the forest conservation and biodiversity. The project fulfilled its specific objective by reaching its three main results, namely:

(i) The project's **first phase (Evaluation)** was responsible for producing important inputs and information on the forests, forest management and biodiversity conservation of the eight Member Countries that supported the construction and execution of the later phase. In this phase, 8 national assessments were produced describing the forest situation, management and biodiversity conservation in the Amazon region of the eight ACTO Member Countries. The assessment delivered data on the forest situation, the national training centers, a brief report of successful experiences and the analysis of the implementation of the ITTO/IUCN Guidelines in the Amazon region;

(ii) the **second phase (Development)** was responsible for the production, approval and implementation of the Training Modules based on the information produced in the Evaluationphase. The methodological proposal of these modules was duly approved by the Member Countries through national consultation until the final version of the Training Modules, incorporating, as improvements, the experiences and learnings during the courses. The training modules were applied in the three pilot courses foreseen in the project, promoting the training of 75 professionals working in forest management and biodiversity conservation in the 8 countries involved.

(iii) due to the diverse information produced on biodiversity in ACTO Member Countries and given the need for a regional space for knowledge and experience exchange, the **third phase (Consolidation)** was aimed at the creation of the Regional Information and Knowledge Exchange Platform (RKEP). The platform was developed in a web platform format and will be a space enabling to find relevant information from the Amazon region, with distance-learning courses, materials and news, in addition to the outputs related to this project. Moreover, it will have a space for forum and discussions, dissemination of meetings and events among others.

In this sense, the scenario envisaged after the project's execution relies on the production and provision of relevant information related to the project theme and which may support research, studies, improvement measures by ACTO Member Countries.

4.2 Participation of beneficiaries

The network established between all project stakeholders (national consultants, project staff, centers of excellence staff, and pilot course participants) can provide for many joint activities and actions related to South-South Cooperation, where the technical inputs and outputs provided by the project (national assessments, analysis of the implementation of the ITTO/IUCN Guidelines in the Amazon, survey of training centers and successful experiences, the applied methodological proposal, and also, the elaborated Training Modules) can be used to replicate the knowledge and experience earned and shared among the eight ACTO Member Countries.

The successful engagement of this project beneficiaries can be reviewed in the broad participation of forest practitioners, biologists, ecologists, forest managers, and community representatives, from the structure of project focal points in the eight countries, the generation of information from the Evaluationphase, the creation, approval and implementation of the MoU in the 3 pilot courses and, finally, access and use of the information and tools available on the RKEP platform.

4.3 Project sustainability after completion

The project assures its sustainability in its investments in people who have been trained under the principle of replicability, which are in fact the greatest legacy, as well as in the Forest Training Centers, called Regional Centers of Excellence (RCE) in Sustainable Forest Management. Furthermore, the PRIC, as a mechanism or tool, will play a key role in ensuring the project sustainability, as its design envisage to integrate and leverage the results of its two previous phases (Evaluation and Development).

The PRIC will have the following tasks:

i) Disseminate information and facilitate the exchange of experiences (knowledge).

ii) Provide training and/or capacity building to the different actors in the region.

iii) Communication and/or discussion forum, bringing SFM and Biodiversity Conservation actors and experts closer to the issues that still require close attention and articulated solutions identified in Phase I of “Institutional Capacity Assessment and Degree of Implementation of Guidelines” ITTO/IUCN (2009). ”

Upon completion of the training courses, the directors of the three RECs participating in the courses in partnership with the project, motivated by the success of the courses and identified with the long-term objective of the project, decided to sign a “Letter of Expression of Interest for Interinstitutional Cooperation” to support the development of a long-term technical capacity building process in the region, and other related themes of ACTO's Amazonian Strategic Cooperation Amazon Agenda. Annex 4 contains a copy of the signed letter.

The Project Regional Coordination submitted two abstracts (Annex 3) to the IUFRO World Congress Scientific Committee to disseminate the project results in a broad forum with the participation of different forest, regional and international actors. The Congress will be held in Brazil, in the city of Curitiba in September 2019. Both abstracts have been approved and should be presented under the following headings:

a) Timber producing forests and biodiversity: ecologically responsible forest management under the focus of the ITTO/IUCN Guidelines in the Amazon region (Theme A6d).
b) Democratizing biodiversity monitoring in ACTO Member Countries: collective inputs on the development of a low-cost monitoring tool for Amazonian production forests (Theme A6c).

5. ASSESSMENT AND ANALYSIS

The eight Member Countries of the Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization (ACTO) were engaged in this project. Its starting point was the objectives and activities foreseen in the theme "Forests" of the Amazonian Strategic Cooperation Agenda (ASCA) that was approved during the meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the ACTO Member Countries in November 2010 in Lima, Peru. At this meeting, the Ministers stressed the importance of this project for their countries

In addition to meeting the objectives of the ACTO's ASCA and the Regional Biodiversity Plan, the project supported the implementation of the priorities set out in the ITTO-CBD Collaboration Initiative that was translated into a sum of efforts to assist the Amazonian countries in promoting environmentally responsible forest management and biodiversity conservation, as well as consolidating and enhancing local, national and regional capacity for information exchange in terms of biodiversity conservation, good practices and local knowledge of the Amazon.

The project was also motivated by the need to maintain and improve engagement among the various stakeholders of the forest sector: forest managers, training centers and their instructors, government and private sector along with academic technicians. The project was very effective in involving the beneficiary stakeholders through the three international courses held, creating opportunities for cooperation networks and exchange of knowledge and experiences.

Moreover, the project was effective in tackling the main concerns detected during its design. It was observed that forest management in the Amazon was not implementing adequate protection measures for biodiversity, affecting negatively on livelihoods, promoting forest degradation and consequent loss of biodiversity.

The project sought to positively interfere and change this reality through the articulation between its Implementation Strategy, its Logical Objectives Matrix, and

operationalized through the different Annual Operating Plans (AOP), in three phases: Evaluation/Evaluation, Development and Consolidation.

This strategy was considered successful. After all, it is premise to assess in detail the scenario one wants to work in and, promote changes. A scenario where the main beneficiaries can express their difficulties and, from these evaluations, build the necessary mechanisms, tools, and training modules, among other tools, capable of assisting in problem solving and, hence consolidating the information generated, enabling the important exchange of information and experiences among the parties in the Amazonian forest area of the eight Member Countries that seek solutions on biodiversity conservation for production forests

From the initial discussions, the project was carefully designed and structured taking into account the reality, to confine and transform it. Therefore, one can state that the actions were successful, with few and no fatal critical issues during its execution.

Every activity that was planned was successfully executed. As a result, good and up-to-date documents have been prepared related to the situation of the forest sector, biodiversity conservation and forest management in the Amazon region, and their respective instruments and laws. Even the goals were exceeded, where it was possible to reach a total of seventy-five (75) participants in the courses in Brazil, Guyana and Peru. This figure was higher than initially anticipated (45 participants after the resumption of the project). Therefore, there will be more people replicating good management techniques that enable biodiversity conservation and the maintenance of a healthy and productive forest.

It is worth mentioning as a critical issue, the project's suspension that lasted approximately eight months since it was announced, from July 2016 to February 2017, affecting the conduction of some important activities. Nevertheless, thanks to the dedication and professionalism of the hired team even after the resumption and the budget cuts, it was possible to perform all proposed activities. However, what needs attention at this point is the fact that the team of specialists did not anticipate on-site work prior to the implementation of the training courses. Adaptations that could have occurred in advance were occurring during the course’s execution, overloading the professionals in their tasks. Yet, the courses received good scores in the evaluations made by the participants.

A setback was due to the fact that some contracts needed new deadlines, because the time devoted to the preparation and execution of some activities, and consequent achievement of results, was extended beyond what was originally intended.

The quality of the specialized workforce for project formulation and execution was considered good, as was the aforementioned team of experts and consultants, since the results obtained were satisfactory with good responses and direct beneficiary evaluations.

Managing risks is often not an easy task. Threats, as well as opportunities, are events occurring throughout the life cycle of a project. Evidently, there was a need to manage several external variables, as a wide range of actors in the national governments were involved, which should provide adequate support for the necessary actions and motivate the institutional and technical capacities for the participation of the new training and information exchange opportunities.

The governments of the Member Countries were very committed to the success and full implementation of the proposed actions and the achievement of the results. To mitigate the risks, it was established that the project had a focal point (in addition to the ACTO focal point), and a national government environmental and forestry professional to coordinate with other actors and partners in each of the eight Member Countries. With these focal points, ACTO's Permanent Secretariat maintained constant contact on each operational phase of the project.

The participants in the training modules “strengthening and implementing forest management models and good ecologically responsible practices, with a territorial management approach that favors forests and biodiversity conservation” were the direct beneficiaries. The modules were conducted during the three pilot courses foreseen in the project, with the participation of 75 professionals acting in the area of forest management and biodiversity conservation from the 8 countries involved, as well as representatives of Non-Governmental Organizations, Government, Educational Institutions, Companies, and Communities.

Dissemination of all the technical work produced, both in the Evaluationor evaluation phase and during the courses at the Forest Management Centers of Excellence will be available on the Regional Information and Knowledge Exchange Platform (RKEP), along with other technical and regulatory information deemed relevant to address sustainable forest management and biodiversity conservation in the Amazon region. Important information was also made available to a wide audience of stakeholders in the Amazon as well as to other tropical regions of the planet.

The long-term continuity of the proposed actions is expected to take place through the RKEP, where ACTO Member Countries will have access to more information on sustainable forest management and biodiversity conservation in the Amazon. The RKEP will operate as a regional knowledge platform, under ACTO coordination, and within ACTO's Amazonian Regional Observatory (ORA).

Several institutions were involved in the project’s implementation, being the Permanent Secretariat of ACTO (PS/ACTO) the project executing agency through the Regional Coordination Unit (RCU). This RCU acted under the supervision and coordination of the Executive Board, regarding the technical aspects, in close supervision with the Environment Coordination.

The project was, ultimately, managed by a Steering Committee comprising the ACTO Regional Project Coordinator, a CBD and an ITTO representative, plus the National

Coordinators as representatives of each Member Country, which met when necessary - but not less than once a year-.

Each country had a Management Team, which ensured the proper execution of the planned actions. The team was represented by the National Coordinator and was made up of representatives of interested groups: government sectors, forest management organizations (including companies, local communities and indigenous groups), independent experts in forest management and biodiversity conservation, the academic research community, forest certification bodies, national ITTO and CBD representatives.

6. LEASONS LEARNED

The execution of this project involved a participatory process to achieve each of its products through the inputs and outputs received from various professionals of the eight ACTO Member Countries. These professionals were engaged in a joint effort exchanging experiences in virtual and in-person discussion spaces, from the completion of the evaluation phase, during national assessments Results, systematizations and analyzes; the development phase, with the creation, approval, and implementation of training modules in the 3 pilot courses held in Brazil, Peru and Guyana; the consolidation phase, with the creation and structuring of the PRIC focused on responsible forest management and biodiversity conservation in the Amazon region.

The information resulting from the national assessments in the eight member countries was fundamental for designing the methodological proposal and implementation of the planned pilot courses, generating important inputs, especially for the analysis of the implementation of the guidelines in the Amazon region of the ACTO Member Countries.

During the execution of the three pilot courses foreseen in the project all participants and the project team were constantly exchanging knowledge and experience among them. Much of this learning was taken into account when upgrading the Training Modules, from Version II to Version III, and served to enhance pre-existing content.

The strategy used to teach the topics of Module 1 based on South-South Cooperation and the exchange of techniques was also fundamental to stimulate and identify the supply and demand of training (and capacity) needs in forest management and biodiversity conservation among the Member Countries.

The pilot courses favored the interrelationship between the Centers of Excellence, especially the one conducted in Guyana. This course was attended by representatives of the project's three Regional Centers of Excellence (RCE). From the joint work of the three RCEs, it is expected that the supply and demand of training identified during the courses can lead to many joint activities.

An extremely positive aspect of this project was that through the courses was created a kind of forum space for knowledge and experiences exchange, for discussions and information about the actions, activities, events, and training on information on responsible forest management and biodiversity conservation, using WhatsApp groups. The PRIC will allow that this space to be available for all forestry professionals of ACTO Member Countries.

The role of the new PS/ACTO authorities in terms of Sustainability will be essential to ensure greater impact of the Results as the on-line implementation of the PRIC is being prepared in the context of the deployment of the ACTO's Information and Knowledge Management System, and specifically the Amazonian Regional Observatory (ORA). Also, a coordinated long-term capacity building process in ecologically responsible forest management and biodiversity conservation among the three Regional Centers of Excellence (RCEs), should be managed by the new authorities. To this end, the Regional Coordination took the first step by articulating and formalizing the interests of the three RCEs expressed in the letter of "Expression of Interest for Institutional Cooperation" signed by the three centers (Annex 4).

7. CONCLUSSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 Proposal identification

This proposal arose from the institutional approach between the ITTO and ACTO in 2010 in dialogues that took place during the meetings for the International Year of Biodiversity (IYB 2010) and the International Year of Forests (IYF 2011). The ACTO was invited to prepare a proposal addressing the capacity building themes under the agreement of the ITTO/CBD collaborative initiative for the conservation of biodiversity in tropical forests.

The proposal was developed with the participation of experts/representatives from ACTO Member Countries. The first version was submitted and approved in the Regional Workshop held in August 2012. The project received the contributions from the ACTO MCs and was duly adjusted. Finally, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was prepared with the ITTO to implement the approved project proposal. ACTO signed the MoU on January 30, 2013, receiving a US$ 1,320,224 contribution from the ITTO for a 32-month execution.

However, there was a delay by the PS/ACTO affecting the effective implementation and execution of activities, mainly related to the structuring process of the Regional Coordinating Unit, which started activities in June 2015, after a lengthy process of hiring the Regional Coordinator of the project.

7.2 Design of the Project

The project design strategy included three main stages for the execution of activities and meeting the objectives. Each stage supported the execution of the next

step, following the objectives of Assessment/Evaluation, Development, and Consolidation.

This division by stages allowed the organization and monitoring of activities and Results. The first phase (evaluation and analysis of the forest situation of ACTO member countries) was crucial to support the implementation of the second phase (creation and implementation of the training modules in the pilot courses) and, finally, both stages supported the third phase of consolidation (with the creation of the platform for the exchange and dissemination of information and knowledge on forest management and biodiversity conservation in the Amazon region).

In this sense, the project design was also well evaluated and assisted in meeting the proposed objectives.

7.3 Implementation

All project activities were successfully implemented. The first phase was responsible for producing a large amount of important information about the forest situation, the implementation of the guidelines in the Amazon region, the survey and the selection process of the regional centers of excellence, successful stories and other information that could guide the actions of the following phases.

The second phase, in turn, taking into account the information produced by the first stage, was devoted to the creation of the methodological training proposal through the development of the training modules, the application of the 3 pilot training courses, their respective evaluation, and finally, the enhancement and finalization of the Training Modules after the training courses' implementation experience.

Finally, the third phase created and provided the necessary space for sharing and exchanging information, knowledge related to the forest, forest management and biodiversity conservation in the Amazon region.

In this sense, and in general, it is concluded that the implementation of the project and its main activities enabled to meet the project results, in some cases extrapolating the expected results, as was the case of the 75 participants. One of the challenges encountered in achieving the project objectives was the lack of time for producing and preparing the materials, products, and reports, concurrently with the performance of the three pilot courses, as there were downtimes and delays in project implementation.

7.4 Organization

To conform a team of national and regional consultants (project team) was part of the organization and structuring of project actions, as well as project focal points in

ACTO member countries. Their coordination was essential for the collective construction of project Results at each stage and hence, to achieving the objectives proposed.

During the first phase of the project, -elaboration of national assessments and generation of important information-, national teams from the eight ACTO member countries and the project team worked together and virtually for the generation of information, systematization and analysis of these assessments.

Also, the coordination with the national focal points guided the selection process of the centers of excellence, based on the survey of national evaluations, allowing to meet the main result of the first phase, which is the Evaluation.

The second phase also required a lot of dedication from the project team, centers of excellence and focal points of the member countries, as it was responsible for the design and implementation of pilot courses in Brazil, Peru and Guyana. Finally, the third and last phase, which consisted on the coordination with the process of dissemination and publication of the RKEP platform, responsible for the dissemination and exchange among member countries and other interested parties.

7.5 Management and Administration

The project had to go through several budget adjustments associated with the transfer of resources between budget lines to comply with the execution of the AOP. But the main adjustment was due to the ITTO itself, cutting 10% of the remaining resources before the project was suspended in June 2016. The PS/ACTO made the required adjustment in line with the ITTO's recommendation to cut expenses that might lead to an additional 10% reduction, reaching a total reduction of 13% in ITTO funds. However, despite all the necessary adjustments, the execution of the original project's planning for its three expected products was not compromised. Even the goals proposed for each result were exceeded.

7.6 Replication Potential

Replicability was a fundamental principle of this capacity building proposal, as it reinforces the process of articulation and regional integration of the Member Countries through the generation, teaching and transmission of knowledge, which is one of the purposes of the Amazon Cooperation Treaty.

The strategy and the pedagogical planning for the elaboration and execution of the training modules and the 3 pilot courses foresaw the replication process in two distinct levels, namely:

(i) **Staff:** The trained participants, bearing the new knowledge, practices and/or visions acquired in the different modules of the training course, will be responsible for its application in their local and institutional reality, and

(ii) **Institutional:** Regional Centers of Excellence (RCE) will play a key role in the development of the regional capacity building process as they will be the direct recipients of the capacity building proposal and will participate in its implementation in due course. To date, the RCE IFT/Brazil has already applied some processes and methodologies learned in the course, together with the university and the faculty of the Center. As an example, a course was delivered with students from the University of São Paulo at IFT.

8. ANNEXES

Annex 1. Cash flow

Period ending on:
Project No. PP-A/47-266 30/09/2019
Project Title: Building Capacities for ACTO Member Countries in ecologically responsible forest management and biodiversity conservation in managed forests of the Amazon

Component	AMOUNT IN US$		
	ITTO	COUNTERPART	TOTAL
A. FUNDS			
1. First instalment	50.000,00		50.000,00
2. Second instalment	150.000,00		150.000,00
3. Third instalment	264.362,52		264.362,52
4. Fourth instalment	392.000,00		392.000,00
5. Fifth instalment	198.430,00		198.430,00
6. Counterpart allocated		907.033,34	907.033,34
Total de funds Received:	**1.054.792,52**	**907.033,34**	**1.961.825,86**
I. <u>Funds managed by Executing Agency</u>			
10. Personnel			
11. Regional Coordinator	314.620,75	-	314.620,75
11. Regional Administrator	32.082,62	20.000,00	52.082,62
11. National Assemessment leads for each country	36.000,00	-	36.000,00
11. National Coordinator (30% dedication)	-	307.200,00	307.200,00
11. Technical Advisor to National Coordinator (30% dedication)	-	192.000,00	192.000,00
11. Administrative assistant to National Coordinator (30% dedication)	-	115.200,00	115.200,00
12. ACTO Secretary General (5% dedication)	-	11.900,00	11.900,00
12. ACTO Executive Director (20% dedication)	-	34.000,00	34.000,00
12. ACTO Coordinator of the Environment (30% dedication)	-	40.800,00	40.800,00

12.	ACTO Managing Director (20% dedication)	-	23.800,00	23.800,00
12.	ACTO Assistant acquisitions and payments (10% dedication)	-	17.000,00	17.000,00
12.	ACTO Support staff (02 Persons x 10% dedication to the project)	-	13.600,00	13.600,00
14.	Senior Consultant to oversee training module development	52.000,00	-	52.000,00
14.	2 Consultant experts on conservation planning	27.500,00	-	27.500,00
14.	2 Consultant experts on sustainable forest management	26.000,00	-	26.000,00
14.	2 Consultant experts on biodiversity monitoring and management	26.000,00	-	26.000,00
19.	**Component Total:**	**514.203,37**	**775.500,00**	**1.289.703,37**
20.	Sub-contracts			
21.	Project website	749,29	3.000,00	3.749,29
21.	Investment in training Centers of Excellence	107.611,44	-	107.611,44
21.	Translation of training modules	4.019,82	-	4.019,82
21.	Simultaneous translation for three courses of the governing board design	8.362,47		8.362,47
21.	Simultaneous translation for three training courses	17.419,32		17.419,32
21.	Printing of training modules	6.832,14	-	6.832,14
21.	Development of knowledge Exchange Platform	67.249,09	-	67.249,09
21.	Consultancy for complementation of Output 1 (National Assessment)	10.500,00	-	10.500,00
29.	**Component Total:**	**222.743,57**	**3.000,00**	**225.743,57**
30.	Travel and events			
31.	Per diems	11.640,29	-	11.640,29
32.	International Travel	200.311,54	-	200.311,54
33.	Local Travel	6.667,89	-	6.667,89
34.	Rent of meeting room, coffee break and another spending for the 3rd Project Steering Committee	2.908,15		2.908,15
34.	Hotel and Food for the 3rd Project Steering Committee	2.783,96		2.783,96
34.	Rent of meeting room, coffee break and another spending for the three training courses	-		-
34.	Hotel and Food for the three training courses	54.517,10		54.517,10
34.	Support to carry out National Workshops (meeting, coffee break, copies)	2.804,70		2.804,70
39.	**Component Total:**	**281.633,63**	**-**	**281.633,63**

40. Capital Items			
41. ACTO Space for installation of the project (estimated rental)		64.000,00	64.000,00
41. ACTO Energy		16.000,00	16.000,00
44. Computers and printers	18.424,88		18.424,88
49. Component Total:	**18.424,88**	**80.000,00**	**98.424,88**
50. Consumable Items			
54. ACTO Office maintenance and equipment	-	21.866,67	21.866,67
54. Materials and other expenses for the three training courses	2.316,81		2.316,81
54. Office Supplies	1.872,23		1.872,23
59. Component Total:	**4.189,04**	**21.866,67**	**26.055,71**
60. Miscellaneous			
61. Sundry (Various: international and local courier, printings, bank transfer costs, etc.)	1.435,34		1.435,34
62. Contingencies	750,59		750,59
69. Component Total:	**2.185,93**	**-**	**2.185,93**
70. Executive Agency Management			
71. ACTO Annual Audit	9.000,00	26.666,67	35.666,67
79. Component Total:	**9.000,00**	**26.666,67**	**35.666,67**
GRAND TOTAL:	**1.052.380,42**	**907.033,34**	**1.959.413,76**
Remaining Balance of Funds (A-B)	**2.412,10**	**-**	**2.412,10**

Annex 2: Financial statement

Project No. PP-A/47-266

Period ending on: 30/09/2019

Project Title: Building Capacities for ACTO Member Countries in ecologically responsible forest management and biodiversity conservation in managed forests of the Amazon

			Expenditures To-date			
	Component	Approved Amount	Modified Approved Amount (A)	Accrued (B)	Expended (C)	TOTAL (D) {B + C}	Available Funds (US$) (E) {A - D}
I.	**Funds managed by Executing Agency**						
10.	Personnel						
11.	Regional Coordinator	215.300,75	315.149,79	282.322,03	32.298,72	314.620,75	529,04
11.	Regional Administrator	26.400,00	32.252,14	28.307,85	3.774,77	32.082,62	169,52
11.	National Assessment leads for each country	36.000,00	36.000,00	36.000,00	-	36.000,00	-
14.	Senior Consultant to oversee training module development	48.000,00	52.000,00	26.400,00	25.600,00	52.000,00	-
14.	2 Consultant experts on conservation planning	30.000,00	27.500,00	18.000,00	9.500,00	27.500,00	-
14.	2 Consultant experts on sustainable forest management	30.000,00	26.000,00	24.000,00	2.000,00	26.000,00	-
14.	2 Consultant experts on biodiversity monitoring and management	30.000,00	26.000,00	24.000,00	2.000,00	26.000,00	-
19.	**Component Total:**	**415.700,75**	**514.901,93**	**439.029,88**	**75.173,49**	**514.203,37**	**698,56**
20.	Sub-contracts						
21.	Project website	5.749,29	749,29	749,29	-	749,29	-
21.	Investment in training Centers of Excellence	120.000,00	107.611,44	73.423,44	34.188,00	107.611,44	-

	21.	Translation of training modules	13.778,53	4.019,82	2.860,55	1.159,27	4.019,82	-
	21.	Simultaneous translation for three courses of the governing board design	14.362,47	8.362,47	8.362,47	-	8.362,47	-
	21.	Simultaneous translation for three training courses	16.000,00	17.575,72	4.649,88	12.769,44	17.419,32	156,40
	21.	Printing of training modules	12.579,11	7.079,71	579,71	6.252,43	6.832,14	247,57
	21.	Development of knowledge Exchange Platform	52.500,00	67.249,09	46.049,09	21.200,00	67.249,09	-
	21.	Consultancy for complementation of Output 1 (National Assessment)	-	10.500,00	3.750,00	6.750,00	10.500,00	-
					-	-		
	29.	**Component Total:**	**234.969,40**	**223.147,54**	**140.424,43**	**82.319,14**	**222.743,57**	**403,97**
30.	Travel and events							
	31.	Per diems	46.270,94	11.640,29	11.640,29	-	11.640,29	-
	32.	International Travel	176.691,95	200.686,49	200.311,54	-	200.311,54	374,95
	33.	Local Travel	13.167,61	6.726,76	4.775,72	1.892,17	6.667,89	58,87
	34.	Rent of meeting room, coffee break and another spending for the 3rd Project Steering Committee	12.927,40	2.908,15	2.908,15	-	2.908,15	-
	34.	Hotel and Food for the 3rd Project Steering Committee	7.400,00	2.783,96	2.783,96	-	2.783,96	-
	34.	Rent of meeting room, coffee break and another spending for the three training courses	18.000,00	-	-	-	-	-
	34.	Hotel and Food for the three training courses	71.140,00	54.517,10	54.517,10	-	54.517,10	-
	34.	Support to carry out National Workshops (meeting, coffee break, copies)	5.000,00	2.804,70	2.804,70	-	2.804,70	-
	39.	**Component Total:**	**350.597,90**	**282.067,45**	**279.741,46**	**1.892,17**	**281.633,63**	**433,82**
40.	Capital Items							

	44. Computers and printers	31.000,00	18.424,89	18.424,88	-	18.424,88	0,01
	49. Component Total:	**31.000,00**	**18.424,89**	**18.424,88**	**-**	**18.424,88**	**0,01**
50.	Consumable Items						
	54. Materials and other expenses for the three training courses	9.000,00	2.316,81	2.316,81	-	2.316,81	-
	54. Office Supplies	5.180,92	1.872,23	1.872,23	-	1.872,23	-
	59. Component Total:	**14.180,92**	**4.189,04**	**4.189,04**	**-**	**4.189,04**	**-**
60.	Miscellaneous						
	61. Sundry (Various: international and local courier, printings, bank transfer costs, etc.)	4.301,28	2.038,28	1.183,63	251,71	1.435,34	602,94
	62. Contingencies	4.042,27	1.023,39	532,69	217,90	750,59	272,80
	69. Component Total:	**8.343,55**	**3.061,67**	**1.716,32**	**469,61**	**2.185,93**	**875,74**
70.	Executive Agency Management						
	71. ACTO Annual Audit	-	9.000,00	5.462,34	3.537,66	9.000,00	-
	79. Component Total:	**-**	**9.000,00**	**5.462,34**	**3.537,66**	**9.000,00**	**3.537,66**
	GRAND TOTAL:	**1.054.792,52**	**1.054.792,52**	**888.988,35**	**163.392,07**	**1.052.380,42**	**2.410,10**

ANNEX 3. Articles for the Tropical Forest Update (ITTO) Magazine and 2019 IUFRO Congress

1) **For the** Tropical Forest Update (ITTO) Magazine

Are Amazon forests being managed ecologically responsible? An analysis of the implementation of ITTO/IUCN guidelines in ACTO countries.

Otávio Marangoni Souza[1], Vicente Guadalupe[2] Erilene Lima Silva[3],

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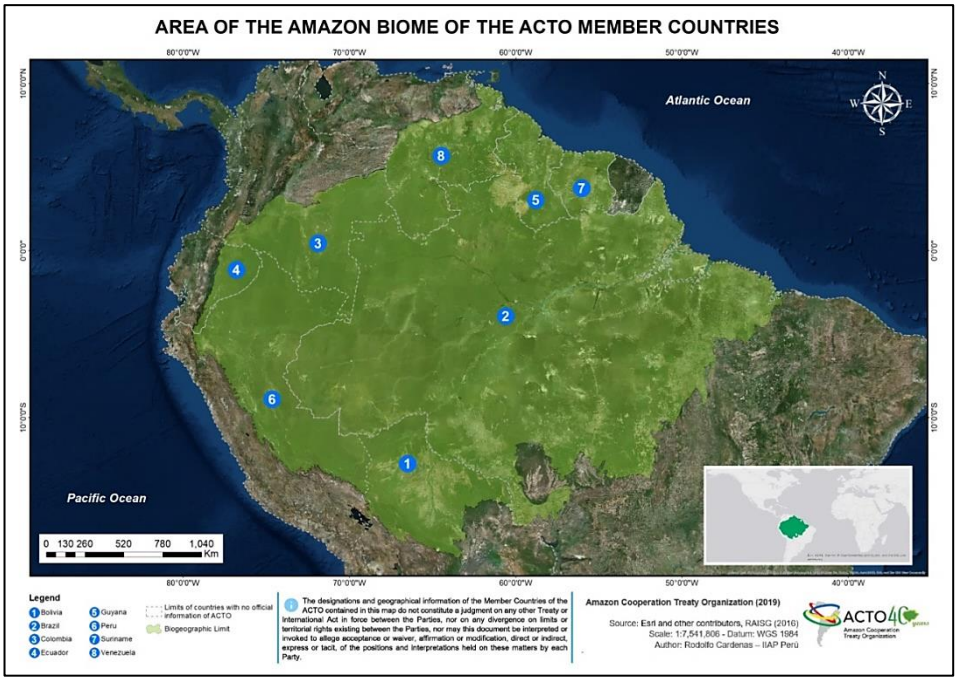
Addressing the problem, causes and progresses

The extension of forest of the Amazon Region inside the ACTO Member Countries comprises approximately 544 million hectares, which represents 70% of the total area of the biome. Although this is really a vast area of forest, and may seem an endless sources of timber and other forest resources, its permanent reduction still continues at an annual rate of around 1.6 million hectares, mainly due to deforestation, changes in land use and also illegal logging (degradation), despite the annual rate of net loss have been decreasing during 2000 – 2015 (OTCA, 2018).



Source: OTCA, 2018.

The importance of the forests for the national economies of Amazonian countries is evident, as the area incorporated for timber production has been growing since 2000, increasing to 47% in 2015, totalizing nearly 115 million hectares (or 21% of the amazon forest), with an average annual volume of wood extracted (without bark) of slightly more than 34 million cubic meters in this period, with Brazil contributing 86% of it (OTCA, 2018).

The loss of biodiversity associated to degradation and reduction of forest cover are strongly related to planning deficiencies and financial constraints to enforce legislation by the institutions to which the State has delegated this responsibility, as well as the lack of incentives to prevent land owners from taking the decision of converting their forest to other land uses, possibly to the ones more economically attractive.

Moreover, using forests as a source of timber production is often cited as one of the major threats to biodiversity, but there is enough evidence to suggest that, if properly managed, forests can play an important role, not only for national economies but also for the conservation of biodiversity (ITTO/UICN, 2009).

ACTO countries[2] have made important progress towards the sustainability of the management of forests of the region, mainly through the creation of forest policies and their legal and regulatory frameworks. However, to what extent these instruments are being applied and therefore are effectively protecting and conserving biodiversity has been little studied. Much of the current knowledge on this subject is based on the experience of forest officers, in the application of regulations and norms, which has revealed that:

i. Landowners, managers and other forest stakeholders lack a clear knowledge on how to integrate biodiversity conservation within forest management practices and or codes;
ii. Forest management approaches are unsustainable and do not protect forest biodiversity, and
iii. Logging operations are inefficient or poorly applied.

If these conditions of management are going to remain unchanged, the adverse effects on forest ecosystems and biodiversity will get worse, threatening their economic sustainability and the livelihoods of dependent communities, and also accelerating fragmentation and loss of forest habitats and species that are important to maintain forest resilience.

Under this scenario, ACTO under the financial support of the “ITTO/CBD Collaborative Initiative for Tropical Forest Biodiversity” implemented the project "Building capacities of ACTO member countries in ecologically responsible forest management and biodiversity conservation in managed Amazonian forests (PP-A/47-266 ITTO/CBD/ACTO)" to help its eight member countries to improve the conservation of their forests and biodiversity through the ecologically responsible forest management

[2] The signatory countries of the Amazon Cooperation Treaty since 1978 are: Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Peru, Surinam and Venezuela.

and of the strengthening of good management practices and models, with emphasis on community-based forest management.

The implementation of the ITTO/IUCN guidelines in ACTO countries

The ITTO/IUCN guidelines (2009) were developed with participation of several forestry experts from tropical countries and also with organizations such as CBD, CIFOR, FAO, etc., expecting to provide forest policy decision makers and other forestry-related stakeholders with excellent guidance on how to best conserve biodiversity in tropical timber production forests.

The ITTO/CBD/ACTO project carried out an evaluation of the measures implemented in ACTO countries to conserve and sustainably use the biodiversity in their managed forest in the light of the 46 ITTO/IUCN guidelines. In the evaluation participated forest national experts and the project focal points, and it was performed through a qualitative and quantitative analysis focused on examining to what extent ACTO countries have incorporated these guidelines into the forest management policies and instruments as well as to know how this incorporation is reflected in the practice.

For the analysis, both qualitative and quantitative, the 11 principles were grouped into three categories having into consideration the focus and scope of each principle as well as of their related guidelines, thus the following groups were defined: 1) Strategic, 2) Enabling and 3) Operational (Table 1). Additionally, to measure the level of application of each guideline and the "expert criteria" together with a scale graded in four levels (1=Poor, 2=Fair, 3=Good, 4=Excellent) were used.

Table 1 - Principles by category and number of guidelines by principle and by category

CATEGORY/PRINCIPLES	Nº of guidelines by principle	Nº of guidelines by category
Strategic (Institutional and regulatory national arrangements in accordance with international commitments)		
I. Sovereignty and election of society	**2**	**6**
II. International Commitments	**2**	
III. Political commitment, policies and legislation	**2**	
Enabling (Institutional and regulatory national arrangements that affect forest management)		
IV. Land use and planning	**2**	**14**
V. Decentralization, forest ownership and rights of access to natural resources	**2**	
VI. Incentives	**4**	
VII. Knowledge, education, technology transfer and capacity building	**6**	
Operating (Institutional and regulatory national arrangements that allow intervention in the territory)		
VIII. Management of tropical forests of production in scale of landscape	**3**	**26**

IX. Biodiversity considerations at the level of the forest management unit	**14**
X. Conservation of biodiversity in planted forests	**5**
XI. Maintenance of the functions of forest ecosystems	**4**

Overall, the results show (Fig. 1) that many important actions have already been undertaken for the eight ACTO countries to promote the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity of their managed forest, through the creation of different policies and legal or regulatory instruments, which is reflected in the highest score achieved (2.83 points) by the guidelines grouped into the Strategic category. However, the level of implementation of the guidelines related to the Operational category had the lowest score (2.42 points) indicating that despite existing national legal frameworks articulated to the international regime to protect tropical forest biodiversity, more efforts are still needed for an effective compliance of the international commitments in the field.

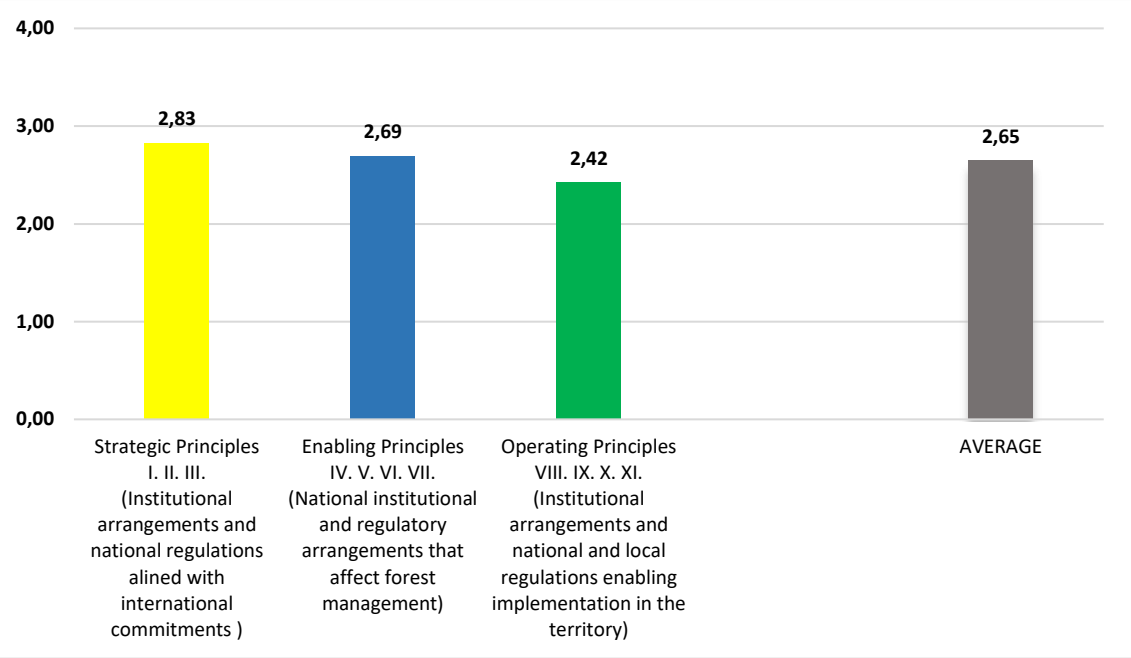


Figure 1 - Degree of implementation by category of principles in the Amazon region of ACTO member countries.

The general overview of the results provided by the categories is consistent with the results obtained at the level of principles, as shown by principle 2 - *International commitments* - and principle 4 - *Land use and spatial planning -,* where both reached a score around 3.00 (graph 2), which means that national governments of ACTO countries have committed, either through legally or non-legally binding intergovernmental agreements, to address biodiversity conservation issues for the management of production forest landscapes as well as to include conservation objectives in land allocation and spatial planning within their territories.

Those results, in turn, are consistent with principle 1 - *Sovereignty and societal choice* – which means that governments have responded to the concerns of the society in regard

to the conservation of amazon forest and its biodiversity, for which arrangements have been made between sectoral institutions and local stakeholders at the national or sub-national scale.

However, on the other side, the lowest scores achieved by Principles 8, 10 and 11 (average 2.36) shows (Fig. 2) that more collective efforts are needed, including governments, private sector, and academic and research institutions, to develop institutional and local capacities to effectively protect in the field several habitats and maintain the ecosystem functions and also to manage planted forest to keep healthy conditions of the forest ecosystems.

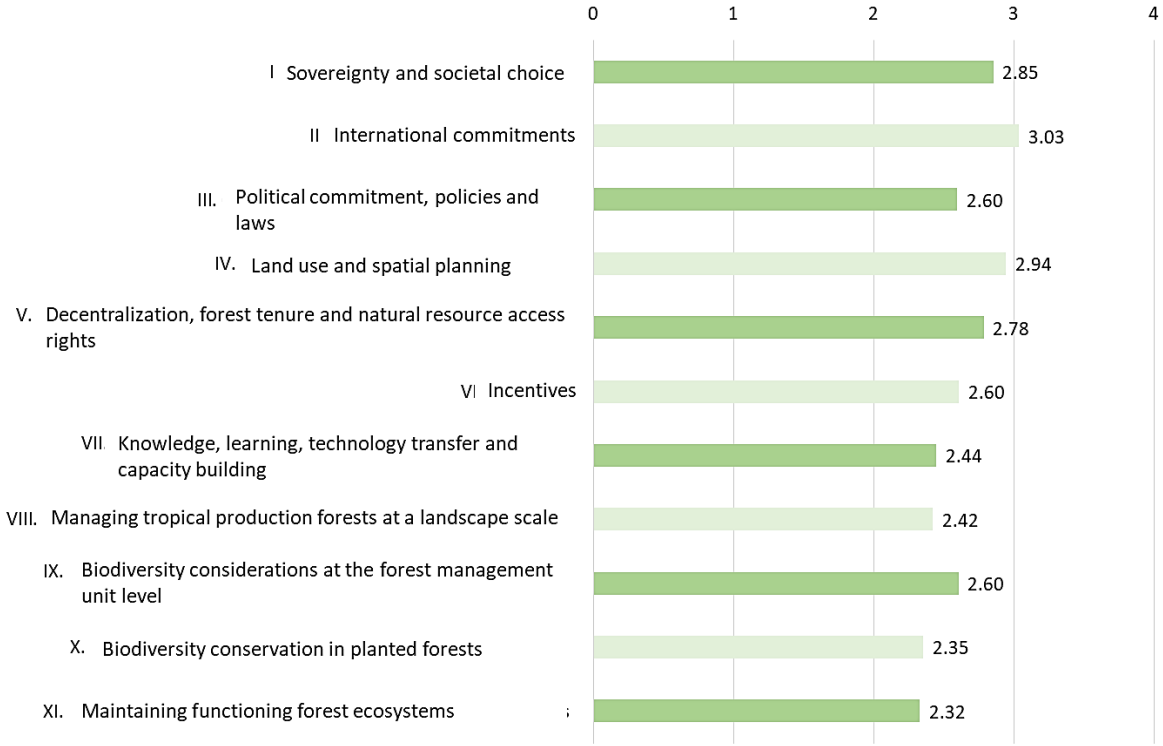


Figure 2 - Degree of implementation of the principles in the Amazon region of ACTO member countries.

At the level of individual guidelines, it can be seen in Fig. 3 in which areas ACTO countries have been focused their efforts, and in which areas it is needed to do more.

a) Areas with more actions developed (score equal or above 3.00)

i. Creation of regulatory and legal frameworks that guide the allocation and use of production forest land to address the conservation of biodiversity (i.e. genes, populations, species and assemblages of species or habitats) -*guideline 3*-
ii. Addressing issues of conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity within national land-use planning processes and forest and environmental laws -*guideline 7*-
iii. Applying special precautionary measures to protect populations, and maintain the within-species variability, of the most valuable timber species -*guideline 31*-

b) Areas with fewer actions developed (score equal or below 2.20)

i. Development of capacities for biodiversity conservation in technical agencies, planning departments and timber companies and among local forest owners and managers -*guideline 20*-

ii. Minimize the risk of introducing and spreading invasive alien species during forestry operations -*guideline 35*-

iii. Development of management systems that favor natural processes and native species and enhance the productivity and resilience of the planted forest -*guideline 40*-

iv. Improvement and application of ecological knowledge to ensure that forest management enhances or maintains biodiversity and, thus ensures forest functions such as pollination, seed dispersal and nutrient cycling -*guideline 43*-

v. Understand fire ecology and to include biodiversity considerations in fire management measures -*guideline 46*-

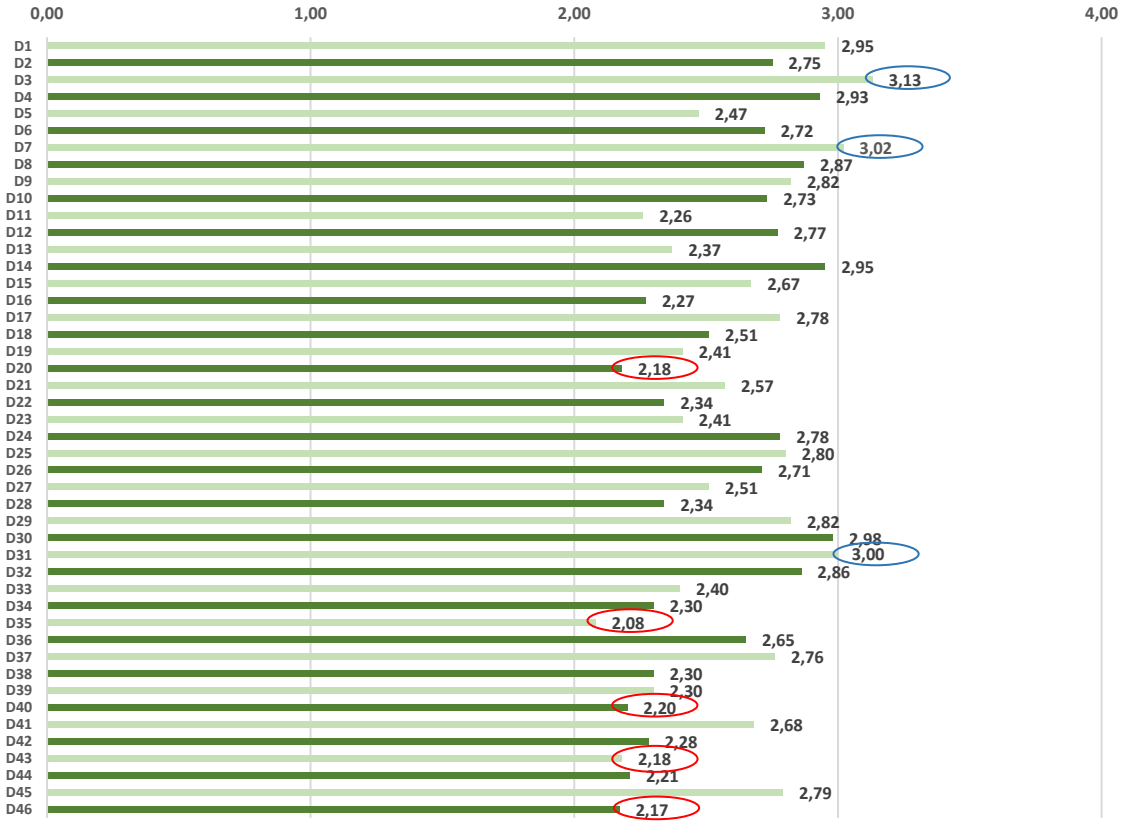


Figure 3 - Degree of implementation of guidelines in the Amazon region of ACTO member countries.

Final Considerations

The analysis showed that, in the light of the OIMT/UICN guidelines, important steps have been done by all governments of ACTO countries towards the conservation of biodiversity of their production forest, mainly through the development of forest policies and legislation, however, it has also be shown that is very important to work

with an approach bottom-up, taking the forest legislation to the field to make forest management more ecologically responsible. To do that, governmental actions must be prioritized and addressed to develop and strengthen capacities of the different stakeholders at the local level, by improving and applying ecological knowledge into the forest management practices assuring over the long-term the ecological, social and economic sustainability.

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1) **For IUFRO Congress 2019**

A6d. Timber Forests and Biodiversity: Ecologically Responsible Forest Management under the Focus of the ITTO / IUCN Guidelines in the Amazon Region

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Summary

Improvement of forestry practices and techniques incorporating theoretical and practical aspects of biodiversity conservation at different stages of forest management can lead to positive changes in terms of biodiversity and, consequently, in the livelihoods of forest-dependent communities and families, as well as favoring the maintenance and improvement of the ecosystem services' benefits offered to society. In this sense, the IUCN/ITTO Guidelines were established, consisting of 11 principles and 46 guidelines directed to tropical production forests, addressing from the sovereignty of society, international commitments, politics, education, forest management, biodiversity conservation, among other aspects. Based on these guidelines, an analysis was made of the eight ACTO Member Countries: Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Peru, Suriname, and Venezuela, in two stages: the first one focused on the quantitative assessment of the guidelines implementation degree. The second stage is the qualitative one, which consists of detailing the information by pre-established guidelines and principles. The analysis showed that the overall average of compliance with the

guidelines was 2.65, considered from regular to good. These results provide comprehensive, up-to-date and official information related to forest and biodiversity conservation within the ecologically responsible forest management of the Amazon region in the eight ACTO member countries, test the practical usefulness of the guidelines, identify obstacles that might limit its application and generate sufficient inputs to broaden and diversify the analysis and recommendations for ecologically responsible forest management and biodiversity conservation in timber-producing forests in the Amazon.

A6c. Democratizing biodiversity monitoring in ACTO member countries: collective inputs on the development of a low-cost monitoring tool for Amazonian production forests

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Abstract

One of the principles of adaptive management is to frequently read the environment in order to introduce management changes accordingly. Thus, the ITTO/IUCN Guidelines for biodiversity conservation in tropical production forests (2009) recommend the development of low-cost monitoring programs serving the needs of forest managers, making information on failures and achievements widely available. In the framework of the ITTO/CBD/ACTO International courses in biodiversity conservation through ecologically responsible management of Amazonian production forests, recently implemented in Brazil, Peru and Guyana, a collective exercise on the development of a monitoring tool was proposed to participants and regional training centers. Utilizing the HCVN-Forest Integrity Assessment (FIA) tool, which uses habitats as proxies for biodiversity, and that has not yet been adapted to the Region, as a canvas, around 80 forestry professionals and managers working in different sectors at ACTO member countries provided technical and multi-actor input into this endeavor.

Most participants agreed on the importance to make of biodiversity monitoring a participatory exercise, highlighting the benefits for local communities' empowerment and to set up feasible conservation goals at the forest management unit scale. Suggestions on adding variables such as soil type, canopy height and forest health indicator species were made and, particularly for forestry operators, the opportunity to look at forest habitats, "rather than just measuring", and to apply local knowledge was highly appreciated. Some resistance was also encountered, which demonstrates the need to work harder in the diffusion of simpler and more cost-efficient biodiversity monitoring tools, such as FIA.

ANNEX 4. Letter of "Expression of Interest for Institutional Cooperation"

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST FOR INTERINSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION

In the city of Mariwa, Region 7, Guyana, on the 05th November 2018, within the framework of the execution of the International Course "Conservation of Biodiversity through the Ecologically Responsible Forest Management of the Productive Forests of the Amazon " of the ITTO/CBD/ACTO project, the directors of the Forestry Training Center Incorporated (FTCI/Guyana), the Tropical Forest Institute (IFT/Brazil) and the Peruvian Amazon Research Institute -Probosques Program- (IIAP / Peru), meeting at the FTCI facilities *express* their interest in cooperating with each other, aligning their efforts in the context of South-South Cooperation, to support the establishment of a long-term process for the strengthening of technical capacities of the different stakeholders of the Forestry Sector of the ACTO Member Countries, focused on the conservation of the biodiversity of the productive forests of the Amazon region.

To achieve this, the three directors commit to develop the following actions:

a. Prepare, discuss and sign an Inter-institutional Cooperation Agreement to implement a work plan articulated with the development objective of the project, which enables the implementation of actions for the joint strengthening among the three CERs, based on the identification of strengths and needs of each center.
b. Support ACTO in the development and implementation in its Member Countries of forest management models to enhance local capacities that incorporate ecologically responsible forest practices, including the traditional ecological knowledge, with the participation of indigenous and local communities, universities and forest companies.
c. Promote the development, improvement and use of monitoring tools for forest biodiversity, which are easy to apply and cost-efficient, in the practice of sustainable forest management.

Sign:
Date:

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