



TFU

Promoting the
conservation and
sustainable development
of tropical forests

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Tough climb up for biodiversity

Biodiversity is under immense threat. According to the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, 1 million species of plants and animals are facing extinction, many within decades, unless action is taken to tackle the drivers of biodiversity loss (IPBES 2019). Moreover, without such action, the rate of species extinction will accelerate.

To some extent, the consequences of this catastrophic loss of biodiversity are unknown, but they are highly unlikely to be good for the planet or us as a species.

Tropical forests are home to an estimated three-quarters of the world's terrestrial biodiversity and what happens to them, therefore, is crucial. ITTO has been working for more than 30 years to encourage sustainable forest management that safeguards biodiversity while enabling people to generate income and tropical countries to pursue sustainable development.

ITTO has a strong partnership with the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), which is the treaty charged with pursuing “the conservation of biological diversity, the sustainable use of its components and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources”. ITTO and the CBD Secretariat signed a memorandum of understanding in 2009 and created the Joint ITTO–CBD Collaborative Initiative for Tropical Forest Biodiversity in 2010 with the aim of improving biodiversity conservation in tropical forests. In the ten years to 2020, the initiative supported 16 projects; this edition of the TFU presents some of the outcomes. Given their modest financial cost, the projects achieved impressive results, and valuable lessons have been learned. In his final message before leaving ITTO, Executive Director Gerhard Dieterle (page 3) expresses his delight that the collaboration between ITTO and the CBD has

Inside: collaboration with Convention on Biological Diversity · mangroves · Tanintharyi

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Cover image: Local man Serukit climbs a tree to collect a specimen as part of an ITTO-funded biodiversity survey in the Pulong Tau National Park, Sarawak, Malaysia. Photo: © P. Chai

recently been renewed. Given that most forest biodiversity is located outside protected areas, says Dr Dieterle, it is vitally important “to address its decline as a central part of sustainable use”.

Ian Thompson and co-authors (page 5) present the results of their assessment of the ITTO–CBD Collaborative Initiative after a decade of operation. They report a range of notable achievements and distil lessons that can readily be applied to future projects.

Aporosa Ramulo and co-authors (page 9) describe a project in Fiji, conducted as part of the initiative, that has worked with women’s groups in several villages to reduce pressure on mangroves and start restoring them. In the article, stakeholders report a range of benefits from the project, including the return of marine species and improved livelihood options. The authors say that Fiji is increasingly vulnerable to climate change, and the empowerment of coastal communities is essential for reversing mangrove degradation and thus building resilience against climate-related shocks.

Thang Naing Oo and co-authors (page 15) outline work undertaken in a project in Myanmar, also part of the ITTO–CBD Collaborative Initiative, to improve biodiversity conservation in the Tanintharyi mountain range on the border with Thailand—a global important terrestrial ecoregion containing one of the highest diversities of bird and mammal species in the Indo-Pacific. Among other things, the project addressed ecosystem management, local livelihood improvement, multistakeholder participation, and the building of institutional capacity. The authors conclude that a good start has been made but ongoing support is needed, including to strengthen institutional cross-border coordination.

Elsewhere in this edition, Simon Kawaguchi (page 19) reports on ITTO’s new framework for project audits, which has been designed to conform with accounting best practice and thereby enhance transparency and accountability for the Organization’s stakeholders.

ITTO Fellow Felipe Veluk Gutierrez (page 22) relates his professional journey as a social forester, assisted by an ITTO Fellowship in 2009 and a second one awarded in 2020. Felipe is undertaking a doctorate in tropical forest conservation and development, and his second Fellowship will enable him to undertake field work in the Brazilian Amazon. One of his great interests is biocultural diversity, and he is working with indigenous communities on the collaborative development of value chains for Amazonian (also known as Brazil) nut.

Finally, Mike Adams reviews the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the tropical timber sector in Europe. These have been substantial—for example, European Union imports of tropical wood products between January and October 2020 were 12% down on the same period in 2019. On the other hand, pent-up demand, and a EUR 1.8 trillion recovery fund, should spur growth in Europe and possibly associated demand for tropical timber.

There is no inherent contradiction between biodiversity conservation and a vibrant timber sector—the key is sustainable forest management, which has been ITTO’s guiding approach since the Organization’s establishment in the 1980s. There has been huge change—to forests, societies and policies—since those early days; nevertheless, the sustainable use of natural tropical forests is still crucial for the future of the world’s biodiversity and for millions of forest-dependent people.

Reference

IPBES 2019. *Summary for policymakers of the global assessment report on biodiversity and ecosystem services of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services*. Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) Secretariat, Bonn, Germany.



From the Executive Director

Concluding my term at ITTO



On the ground: Dr Dieterle speaks to forestry staff and local, refugee and displaced women engaged in an ITTO project to rehabilitate forest near Tien-Oula village, Duekoue district, Côte d'Ivoire. Photo: P. Masupa/ITTO

Dear readers of the TFU, dear colleagues and friends,

With this message I say goodbye to all those with whom I worked during my term as ITTO's Executive Director.

After four exciting and challenging years, I leave the Organization on 31 March 2021. In the course of my term, ITTO has undergone a process of financial and organizational recovery, together with a thematic and strategic reorientation. Much has been achieved, and good progress has been made.

Thanks to the combined efforts of the dedicated staff in the Secretariat, ITTO is now considered to apply best-practice standards in its financial management and accounting, and full transparency is assured. This is the basis for repositioning ITTO in its unique role and niche in the global forest regime and as a member of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests. It is also the basis on which it will respond effectively and in a timely way to the dramatic new challenges caused by deforestation and forest degradation, climate change and the global decline in biodiversity.

I am thankful for the strategic support provided by the International Tropical Timber Council, which was instrumental in reorienting ITTO towards its core mandate of helping members achieve their goals in the sustainable and equitable management and use of tropical forests.

ITTO has adopted, on a pilot basis, a new programmatic approach, which marks a significant departure from the past. One of its three new lines is on legal and sustainable supply chains, which mandates a holistic approach, covering the whole value chain from the tree in the forest to the product in the market. This requires collaboration, responsibility and transparency among all participants, including forest managers, processors, traders and buyers based on verifiable or certified product streams. I am delighted that this new approach has already been applied in several new-generation ITTO projects.

Recent data show that arresting forest degradation will be crucial for saving and restoring the integrity, substance and diversity of the world's forests. This ambitious goal can only

be achieved based on economically viable sustainable-use concepts that address the livelihood needs of communities depending on forest goods and services. With its new programme line on landscape restoration and livelihoods, ITTO will support member countries in developing integrated approaches that not only restore ecosystems and the environment more generally but also create lasting livelihoods and reduce poverty.

I am particularly happy that, in February 2021, the secretariats of ITTO and the Convention of Biological Diversity agreed to renew and strengthen their collaboration to enhance the values of forest landscapes, including biodiversity and ecosystem services. Most forest biodiversity is located outside protected areas and it is vitally important, therefore, to address its dramatic decline as a central part of sustainable use. With its new programme line on biodiversity and ecosystem services, ITTO can play a key role in the international forest regime to promote global public goods within sustainable-use concepts.

I believe that the pilot programmatic approach and the new financing architecture adopted by the International Tropical Timber Council are important milestones and will serve as a viable basis for steering ITTO into the future.

I wish my successor all the best—and a successful hand in making the new approach fully operational and securing the resources needed to implement it on the ground for the benefit of people and nature.

What remains to be said is that I am tremendously thankful for the support I have received from my colleagues in the Secretariat as well as from partners and friends during the rewarding years of my term. I thank the Government of Japan and the City of Yokohama for their great hospitality and the opportunity they offered me to learn about Japan's wonderful and unique culture.

Gerhard Dieterle

Vacancy announcement—Executive Director

The following vacancy announcement is posted consistent with the provisions of ITTC Decision 5(LVI) 'Matters related to Article 14 of the ITTA, 2006, regarding the recruitment, selection, and term of the Executive Director.'¹

Deadline for Application:

15 April 2021, 23:59 Japan Standard Time (JST)

Position/title: Executive Director

Level (grade): ASG

Duty station: Yokohama, Japan

Date for entry of duty: 1 December 2021²

Duration of assignment: Fixed term: 4 years
(Extendable for up to 2 years,
pending Council approval)

The International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO), a commodity organization headquartered in Yokohama, Japan is in the process of appointing a new Executive Director. The ITTO mission is to promote the expansion and diversification of international trade in tropical timber from sustainably managed and legally harvested forests and to promote the sustainable management of tropical timber producing forests. The Executive Director is the chief administrative officer of the International Tropical Timber Organization and is responsible to the International Tropical Timber Council for the administration and operation of the International Tropical Timber Agreement, 2006, in accordance with decisions of the Council. (Article 14.3, ITTA, 2006).

Functions:

- The Executive Director will strategically lead, oversee and direct the work and the performance of the ITTO Secretariat as mandated by the Council;
- Implement strategic priorities, policies and initiatives as decided by the Council;
- Lead the organization's finance, risk management, and corporate governance;
- Ensure efficient, effective and transparent management of existing structures and procedures for the administration and operation of the ITTA, 2006;
- Foster and enhance synergies and collaboration among members of the organization;
- Represent ITTO; strengthen and maintain close partnerships with high-level stakeholders, including the relevant Multilateral Agreements, International Organizations, representatives of government at relevant levels, civil society, including the private sector, and the UN to support of the delivery of the ITTA, 2006;
- Oversee and implement strategies for the mobilization of resources necessary for the implementation of the strategic priorities, policies and initiatives as decided by the Council, development of relations with donors other than ITTO members and strategies for partnership with stakeholders, including innovative modalities for the mobilization of resources;
- Create an environment in the Secretariat that fosters innovation and that empowers staff to translate vision into results.

The ITTO applies an equal opportunity recruitment policy and will consider all applications regardless of gender, religion, race or sexual orientation. Candidates must however be citizens of an ITTO member country.³

1. Competencies

Demonstrates:

- i. Professionalism: Professional competence and mastery of subject matter, is conscientious and efficient in meeting commitments, observing deadlines and achieving results;
- ii. Accountability: Ability to operate in compliance with state-of-the-art organizational rules and regulations, to deliver high quality results within agreed timeframes, within projected cost and to agreed quality standards in a transparent manner;
- iii. Communication: Ability to communicate effectively orally and in writing to a wide range of audiences. Listens to others, correctly interprets messages from others and responds promptly and appropriately. Openness in sharing information and keeping people informed;
- iv. Leadership: Ability to motivate staff and to delegate the appropriate responsibility, accountability and decision-making authority to each staff member. Makes sure that roles, responsibilities and reporting lines are clear, and that progress is monitored against targets;
- v. Ethical standards: Committed to the highest ethical standards in furtherance of his/her mission and the objectives of the ITTO;
- vi. Diversity and gender balance: Committed to promoting equal opportunities and the implementation of the ITTO Guidelines on Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women;
- vii. Diplomatic and negotiation skills: experience in working with high-level representatives from government, international organizations, private sector/civil society, and engaging with donors.

2. Professional experience

- i. Managerial experience: a proven track record and a minimum of 15 years of progressively responsible experience in managing complex programs, financial/human resources and strategic planning in areas relevant to forestry, trade, environment and other related fields;
- ii. Specific experience: demonstrated experience in the field of natural resource management, in particular sustainable forest management and related timber trade would be a distinct advantage;
- iii. International experience: demonstrated track record of professional experience of work in a leading capacity at the international level in and/or international organizations and of working in diverse, multicultural settings; Working experience in ITTO related fields in more than one region of ITTO membership would be an advantage;
- iv. Partnership building and fundraising experience: Demonstrated experience in creating strategic partnerships/networks and promoting initiatives with partner organizations. Demonstrated experience in mobilization of financial resources would be a distinct advantage.

3. Education

Master's or Ph.D. degree in forestry, natural resource management and conservation, economics, business administration, or other relevant field.

4. Language

Proven ability in both oral and written communication in one of the official languages of ITTO (English, French and Spanish) and preferably a working knowledge in the other two official languages of ITTO. Very good command of English orally and in writing is essential.

5. Salary and emoluments

Salary is equivalent to that of an Assistant Secretary General (ASG) in the scale of the United Nations, including benefits such as removal expenses, home leave travel every 24 months, children's education grant, rental subsidies, etc.

6. Conflict of interest

Candidates or any close relatives should have no financial interest in the timber industry or timber trade and related activities. Candidates must – in their application – identify any professional or personal ties – also those linked to previous, terminated employment, that could be perceived as conflict of interest. Candidates must provide clarifications and information on how they intend to proactively prevent and manage situations in which such ties or other personal interests may conflict or appear to conflict with the interests of the ITTO, should the individual be appointed to position of the Executive Director.

7. Criminal record clearance

Shortlisted candidates will be required to complete a self-attestation stating that they have not committed, been convicted or, nor prosecuted for any criminal offense. If there is information to the contrary, candidates should provide clarification and information in writing on these circumstances, for the consideration of the selection panel.

8. Terms of service

The appointment is for a period of four years. There is an option to extend for up to another 2 years if approved by Council. Any appointment takes into account Regulation 7.4a of Staff Regulations and Rules of the ITTO, which sets the retirement age as prescribed by the United Nations.⁴

9. Applications

Written applications including a cover letter explaining how the candidate meets the required qualifications, a completed United Nations Personal History form (form P.11), a curriculum vitae and additional supporting materials related to the job qualifications and a recent photo must be received at ITTO headquarters by **15 April 2021, 23:59 hours (Japan Standard Time)**. Applications may be submitted electronically or by mail or fax and should be sent to:

Executive Director,
International Tropical Timber Organization
International Organizations Center,
5th Floor Pacifico-Yokohama,
1-1-1, Minato-Mirai, Nishi-ku,
Yokohama, 220-0012 Japan
Tel: (81-45) 223-1110 Fax: (81-45) 223-1111
E-mail: itto@itto.int

¹ Available at www.itto.int/council_committees/decisions

² Or as otherwise decided by the ITTC at its 57th Session.

³ See: www.itto.int/about_itto/members

⁴ Staff members shall normally not be retained in the service of the Organization beyond the retirement age prescribed by the United Nations and are expected to retire at that age. Earlier retirement consistent with the rules of the Provident Fund may be agreed between the Organization and the staff member.

Two organizations and a common goal

The aim of the ITTO–CBD Collaborative Initiative for Tropical Forest Biodiversity, which has been underway for a decade, is to improve biodiversity conservation in tropical forests. It has had significant success

by Ian Thompson,¹
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Forest learning: School children learn about the importance of biodiversity as part of activities supported by the ITTO–CBD Collaborative Initiative to strengthen the transboundary management of the Emerald Triangle shared by Cambodia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Thailand.
Photo: ITTO/Royal Forest Department (Thailand)

In 2010, ITTO signed a memorandum of understanding with the Secretariat to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) that established the Joint ITTO–CBD Collaborative Initiative for Tropical Forest Biodiversity. The goal of the initiative was—and still is—to improve biodiversity conservation in tropical forests by addressing the two main drivers of biodiversity loss in tropical forests: deforestation and forest degradation. The initiative has the following four objectives:

- 1) enhance the local capacity for biodiversity conservation in production forests and the rehabilitation of degraded and secondary forests;
- 2) improve the conservation and management of protected areas, especially in association with buffering protected areas, and transboundary conservation;
- 3) safeguard tropical forest biodiversity in forestry interventions, including in REDD+-related projects; and
- 4) improve the welfare of local communities and indigenous groups through biodiversity conservation and the sustainable use of natural resources.

These objectives align with global forest-related goals, including many of the Sustainable Development Goals (especially Goal 15) and several of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets (5, 7, 11, 14 and 15).

The ITTO–CBD Collaborative Initiative recognizes the importance of protected areas and the tremendous biodiversity that is unique across tropical forests, but also that most biodiversity and resulting ecosystem services occur outside protected areas in managed landscapes. Therefore, proper landscape management, where conservation is a key objective, is necessary for sustaining biodiversity in the long term.

The initiative was designed to support ITTO producer member countries in their efforts to implement the CBD Programme of Work on Forest Biodiversity, the ITTO Strategic Action Plan and the International Tropical Timber Agreement. Its relevance was noted in a decision by the CBD's Conference of the Parties (COP) on mainstreaming and integrating biodiversity within and across sectors, specifically with regard to the sustainable use of forests in the planning of protected-area networks and their buffer zones.¹ The same COP decision noted the relevance of the ITTO/IUCN Guidelines for the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biodiversity in Tropical Timber Production Forests.

The ITTO–CBD Collaborative Initiative supported 16 projects (some described in separate articles in this edition of the TFU) in the decade 2011–2020, with a total value exceeding USD 13 million (Figure 1).² Table 1 lists these projects and indicates to which of the initiative's four objectives they most contributed.

Of the 16 projects:

- Five were in transboundary areas (e.g., the Emerald Triangle area shared by Cambodia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Thailand).
- Four worked to improve forest management in various types of reserve (e.g. a biosphere reserve in Benin).
- Five improved management in production forests (e.g. mangrove forests in Fiji).

¹ CBD COP Decision XIII/3: "Strategic actions to enhance the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011–2020 and the achievement of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, including with respect to mainstreaming and the integration of biodiversity within and across sectors". www.cbd.int/doc/decisions/cop-13/cop-13-dec-03-en.pdf, para 12 and 55.

² Some of these projects are still going or are seeking funds to expand in scope and continue their work.

... Two organizations and a common goal

Figure 1: Locations of the 16 projects conducted as part of the ITTO–CBD Collaborative Initiative for Tropical Forest Biodiversity



Table 1: The 16 projects under the ITTO–CBD Collaborative Initiative for Tropical Forest Biodiversity and their links to the initiative's objectives

Project title	Countries in which the project took place	Objectives			
		1	2	3	4
1 Capacity-building for sustainable forest management and conservation in the Congo Basin	Cameroon, Central African Republic, Congo, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Gabon	X			
2 Management of the Emerald Triangle Protected Forests Complex	Cambodia, Thailand		X		X
3 Mangrove ecosystem conservation in the northwestern Peru biosphere	Peru	X			X
4 Transboundary biodiversity conservation in the Betung Kerihun National Park	Indonesia, Malaysia	X	X	X	X
5 Buffer zone management of the Pulong Tau National Park with local communities	Malaysia		X		X
6 Integrated natural resource management in the Tacaná Volcano range	Guatemala, Mexico	X	X		X
7 The conservation of selected high-value indigenous species in Sumatra	Indonesia	X			
8 The rehabilitation and sustainable forest management of sacred forests at Ramsar sites 1017 and 1018	Benin			X	X
9 Capacity-building in the Congo Basin for sustainable forest management and use of satellite imagery	Angola, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Rwanda		X		
10 Capacity building of Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization member countries in managing Amazonian forests	Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Peru, Suriname, Venezuela	X		X	
11 Transboundary biodiversity conservation in the Tanintharyi Range	Myanmar		X		X
12 Community-based restoration and sustainable forest management in mangrove forests of the Rewa Delta	Fiji	X		X	X
13 Capacity building for sustainable forest management in tropical dry forests on the north coast of Peru	Peru	X			X
14 Restoration and sustainable forest management of sacred forests at Ramsar sites 1017 and 1018 ^a	Benin			X	
15 Developing a forest landscape restoration programme based on ITTO guidelines	Guatemala	X			
16 Restoration of Cibodas Biosphere Reserve involving local stakeholders	Indonesia	X			X

Note: X = project contributed substantially to the objective. Objective 1 = "Enhance the local capacity for biodiversity conservation in production forests and for the rehabilitation of degraded and secondary forests"; Objective 2 = "Improve the conservation and management of protected areas, especially in association with buffering protected areas, and transboundary conservation"; Objective 3 = "Safeguard tropical forest biodiversity in forestry interventions, including in REDD+-related projects"; Objective 4 = "Improve the welfare of local communities and indigenous groups through biodiversity conservation and sustainable use of natural resources". ^a This project followed on from a similar project listed above.

- Two improved education on biodiversity conservation and sustainable forest management designed for forest managers in countries in sub-Saharan Africa and the upper Amazon Basin.
- Eleven contributed to the livelihoods of communities living in or near protected areas (e.g. in the Tacaná Volcano area of influence on the border between Guatemala and Mexico).
- Six engaged local communities in sustainable forest management (e.g. buffer-zone management near the Pulong Tau National Park, Malaysia).³

A special aspect of the initiative was its attention to transboundary conservation and promoting ecosystem conservation across the borders of neighbouring countries.

Achievements and lessons from the projects

Notable achievements of the ITTO–CBD Collaborative Initiative included: the expansion of a Peruvian mangrove protected area by more than 700 000 hectares; a better understanding of animal movements between Cambodia and Thailand, which has led to improved transboundary protected-area management protocols; more than 120 hectares of mangrove forest planted in Fiji; and more than 400 foresters in Central Africa trained in sustainable forest management.

The important lessons learned in the implementation of the initiative’s 16 projects, outlined below, can readily be applied to future projects under the initiative.

Working with local communities

- All projects addressing conservation and sustainable forest management—especially in protected areas and their buffer zones—should consult regularly with, and enable the involvement of, local communities and indigenous groups in the area of influence. Indigenous and other local communities must derive benefits from such projects, and traditional land rights and practices must be enabled to continue.
- Projects designed to improve livelihoods can have beneficial impacts on local incomes if planned in consultation with the communities concerned. Clear indicators should be established to measure the effectiveness of such projects in addressing long-term livelihoods, sustainability and biodiversity conservation.
- Capacity building and awareness-raising among local communities and government staff is essential for improving forest and landscape management. The existing capacities of such stakeholders should be assessed before the development of training programmes and convening of workshops.



No-fly zone: A pale blue flycatcher (*Cyornis unicolor*) rests on a branch in the Cibodas Biosphere Reserve, Indonesia. Photo: © Ida Rohaida

- The establishment of community forests is a promising land management approach in the buffer zones of protected areas. Such forests should be established in suitable locations to increase their chances of success. For example, community forests established in degraded forests are less likely to provide financial rewards in the medium term, thus reducing community interest in managing such forests.

Working with government

- Local government authorities at all levels (e.g. municipal, district and provincial) should be involved in projects to the greatest extent possible, and regular communication should be maintained. One means for doing this is by including representatives of all levels of government in project steering committees.
- Political support at high levels of government in participant countries is essential for the success of transboundary conservation and restoration projects and for sustaining outcomes over time.
- Project developers should be careful not to overcommit to project designs that exceed budgets or the local capacity to do the work.
- The membership of steering committees for transboundary conservation and restoration projects should include all relevant agencies at the highest possible level of government. This is necessary to ensure that participating countries clearly understand the commitments needed for the implementation of project activities and achievement of desired outcomes.

³ Most projects contributed to more than one of these achievements and the total therefore tallies to more than 16.

Improving monitoring and outcomes

- Data produced by a project should be subject to scrutiny by a technical committee established for this purpose.
- Projects that develop baseline biodiversity information through monitoring, or conduct forest research, benefit substantially from the incorporation of local knowledge in their design.
- All projects need to clearly state their biodiversity objectives and contributions to the CBD's post-2020 strategic plan for biodiversity, including expected outcomes, using biodiversity indicators.
- Projects should include measurable indicators for monitoring progress towards objectives, such as: area of forest sustainably managed; area of forest restored; area of forest planted or enriched; area of improved habitat for focal species; and area surveyed or monitored.

In their own words

People involved in the ITTO–CBD Collaborative Initiative projects have been highly appreciative of the changes that have resulted from the work in which they were involved. Some are quoted below.

Dr Eka Novriyanti, Indonesia, said: “our [project] activities have impacted policy and activities at the state/province level, especially for andalas trees (*Morus macrourea*). This species is the mascot flora of the West Sumatra Province but seems long forgotten, until our project started. Since the project started to raise the issue about endangered andalas, the provincial government decided to launch a campaign on planting andalas in the governance offices areas, and the Governor instructed the campaign be carried out intensively by the Offices of Environment Services of West Sumatra Province.”

Mr Bienvenu Bossou, Benin, wrote: “The project had far-reaching educational impacts and resulted in an increased demand for the dissemination of project results. For that purpose, the executing agency developed jointly with the collaborating agency (General Directorate of Water, Forests and Hunting—*Direction Générale des Eaux, Forêts et Chasse*) technical sheets summarizing the strategies used for project implementation, project achievements/outcomes and lessons learned, and made them widely available to the stakeholders and main actors involved in natural resource management on computer media (USB flash drives, CD-ROMs). The technical sheets serve as reference documents and are being promoted by the Forestry Administration for use among other actors pursuing the sustainable management of community forests.”

Mr Vicente Guadalupe, on behalf of the executing agency, the Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization, wrote: “It is noted that these good [project] results—information, exchange of knowledge, and networking among professionals from the eight member countries, elaboration of the [memorandum of understanding], 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.”

Continuing the partnership

ITTO and the CBD recently formally extended their joint work to 2025 in a new memorandum of understanding. The ITTO–CBD Collaborative Initiative will be revised in light of this, with the aim of continuing its long-term commitment to enhancing biodiversity conservation in tropical forests with the direct participation of local stakeholders. Among other things, it will maintain a focus on improving the management of transboundary landscapes; this is a highly effective strategy for ITTO and the CBD because of the importance of fostering landscape-scale management and protecting endangered species across borders and the capacity of the two institutions to bring multinational stakeholders together. The revised initiative will contribute to the next iteration of the ITTO Strategic Action Plan, the provision of support for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, and efforts in line with the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration 2021–2030.

As this first chapter of the ITTO–CBD Collaborative Initiative closes, both ITTO and the CBD look forward to further collaboration by renewing their agreement and continuing their joint efforts to conserve the rich biodiversity in tropical forests.



“I am very pleased to support the renewed collaboration between CBD and ITTO. These types of collaboration are essential if we want to promote conservation and sustainable use in tropical forests around the world, and prepare for implementation of the post-

2020 global biodiversity framework with the support of the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration 2021–2030.”

—Elizabeth Maruma Mrema, CBD Executive Secretary



“The protection and sustainable use of global biodiversity is essential for life on Earth and the survival of humanity. Most of this biodiversity is located outside protected areas and it must therefore be an essential consideration and priority in the way we use our planet’s

natural resources and riches. I am therefore thrilled about the renewed and enhanced collaboration between ITTO and the CBD. Together, we will make sure that biodiversity becomes a central consideration in global wood value and supply chains and thus contributes to mitigating and increasing resilience to climate change, creating sustainable businesses and reducing inequity and poverty.”

—Gerhard Dieterle, ITTO Executive Director

Restoring the Rewa Delta

Empowering coastal communities and women is essential for healthy, resilient and productive mangrove forest ecosystems in Fiji

by **Aporosa Ramulo,¹**
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³ Projects Manager, ITTO Secretariat, Yokohama, Japan



Strengthening the first line of defence: A mangrove ecosystem flourishes at Waicoka village, the site of an ITTO project in the Rewa Delta, Fiji. Photo: Laisiasa Dave Lavaki, Tropic Beat Studio

Fiji comprises more than 330 islands in the South Pacific Ocean. Worryingly, sea levels have risen in the country by an average of 6 mm per year since 1993, much higher than the global average of 2.8–3.6 mm per year (Anonymous undated). According to the Fijian government, 830 coastal communities are already exposed to climate change due to their vulnerability to rapid sea-level rise and the resultant saltwater intrusion, with 48 facing urgent relocation (Bossey 2020). The country is placing a high priority on climate-change adaptation and mitigation.

Mangrove resources provide many ecosystem services that are vital for the sustainability of Fijian coastal communities and livelihoods. With an estimated total area of 46 600 hectares, Fiji has the third-largest area of mangroves in the Pacific after Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands, mostly on the two main islands of Viti Levu and Vanua Levu. The largest area of mangroves is in the Rewa Delta on Viti Levu, and it is undeniably under threat.

Most communities in the delta are still largely dependent on mangroves for a wide range of subsistence and commercial forestry and fishery products. These ecosystems have many important economic, social and environmental benefits that are taken mostly for granted until their depletion. Despite having no ownership rights to mangroves or their resources, coastal village communities have considerable autonomy in the manner in which they use them; as a generalization, such communities have long been relied on as the unpaid custodians of the nation's mangrove resources, which are state-owned.

Most mangrove forests are now degraded, and their restoration to a healthy, resilient and productive state is extremely urgent. Mangrove restoration will provide breeding and nursery grounds and habitats for diverse plants and animals, barriers to storm surges, and protection against coastal erosion.

Such restoration is essential, therefore, for enabling Fijian communities to cope with and adapt to climate change and rising sea levels. New initiatives are needed at the village level for mangrove conservation, protection and (where necessary) reforestation. Such initiatives must reward community conservation and management efforts rather than rely on community support simply because it might be “in their own interests”.



Start-ups: Nasilai Women's Group leader, Tagilala Vereti, poses inside a community nursery. Photo: Aporosa Ramulo Livani, Ministry of Forestry

The ITTO mangrove project in the Rewa Delta

The aim of an ITTO project in the Rewa Delta, which has been under implementation by the Ministry of Forestry since October 2015,¹ is to reverse the degradation of mangrove resources by establishing sites to demonstrate the rehabilitation and sustainable management of coastal and mangrove wetlands. The project has built on the findings of a previous project coordinated by the Department of Environment,² which established that mangrove forests have been overharvested, resulting in the erosion of riverbanks and mud flats. The project supports the Fiji National Development Five-Year Plan, which states that the Ministry of Forestry will take the lead role in collaboration with stakeholders to strategically increase the country's forests by 56% and reforest 5300 hectares of native species by 2022 by planting almost 1.5 million indigenous trees in deforested and degraded forest areas (Box 1). The project is one of 16 implemented as part of the ITTO–CBD Collaborative Initiative for Tropical Forest Biodiversity.³

The ITTO project sites—in the villages of Muanaira, Naivakacau, Narocake, Nasilai, Natila and Waicoka—are in the provinces of Rewa and Tailevu (Figure 1 and Figure 2). Villagers there use mangroves for woodfuel, construction materials, medicines, foods, dyes, fishing equipment and cash income. Dogo (*Bruguiera gymnorrhiza*) is the preferred species for woodfuel, and other frequently used species are tiri wai (*Rhizophora samoensis*), dabi (*Xylocarpus granatum*) and sagale (*Lumnitzera littorea*). These latter species, as well as misimisi (*Scirpodendron ghaeri*), soga (*Metroxylon* spp.) and borete (*Acrostichum aureum*), are also used in construction, mostly for small kitchens, toilets and temporary sheds. The mangrove species most commonly used for medicinal purposes are dabi, tiri wai (the aerial roots) and verevere (*Clerodendrum inerme*).

Families in the six villages involved in the project have few livelihood options due to the limited land available for subsistence farming, and they are heavily dependent on mangroves. Among other things, the project has provided them with various species of fruit tree for planting in their communities and assisted them in setting up piggery farms, apiaries and brackish-water shrimp ponds as alternative sources of livelihood. The project has worked in collaboration with the communities and other stakeholders to improve decision-making on mangroves, develop national guidelines on mangrove use and management, and increase awareness of the importance of sustainable mangrove management.

Participation in the project has been impressive in each of the six villages. This is especially so among women's groups, who have a strong desire to rehabilitate and conserve the vulnerable delta ecosystem, thereby minimizing further

Box 1: Encouraging the planting of indigenous species under Fiji's National Development Five-Year Plan

Three key approaches have been used to encourage individuals and communities to pursue reforestation using local species:

- 1) promoting the planting of indigenous tree species for functions that people can potentially benefit from;
- 2) the production of seedlings of indigenous tree species for purchase by the public; and
- 3) support for the planting of indigenous trees for social and economic development opportunities.

At the launching ceremony of an indigenous tree species nursery at the Vunimaqo Forestry Station on 25 June 2018, the Minister for Forestry, Mr Osea Naiqamu, said that the construction of the nursery would help in achieving the objectives of sustainable management and sustainable development in Fiji's forest sector, and that this was just the beginning. Mr Naiqamu also said that the nursery would support Fiji's commitment to reduce carbon emissions and efforts to achieve a land-degradation-neutral world by 2030.

coastal erosion, providing a more sustainable supply of woodfuel and reducing pressure on existing mangroves due to overharvesting. The involvement of the women's groups has been crucial to the project's success.

The ITTO project conducted community training and awareness-raising in the six villages on the rehabilitation of degraded areas, mangrove and wetland restoration, seed collection and seedling planting, and the ecological valuation of mangroves and wetlands. One outcome of this work is that the villages of Muanaira and Narocake have now banned the cutting of mangroves. The project has also helped the communities build capacity in the development of alternative livelihoods; they are now empowered to undertake sustainable management while also deploying their own traditional knowledge and skills. Additionally, the project has established permanent tree nurseries in each of the six villages to support the reforestation of areas inland from the mangroves using indigenous species. The project incorporates the enrichment of these forest areas with fruit trees and other crops, which adds to the livelihoods of local people. Thus, the communities are applying their new skills towards obtaining early rewards. The project is closely monitoring and undertaking survival assessments of seedlings planted in the initial phase of the rehabilitation and restoration programme.

Women as drivers of ecosystem restoration

Most women in the Rewa Delta rely on mangroves as a source of income and for food for their families—they fish, catch crabs and collect shellfish in the mangroves. In response to the degradation of mangrove habitats and the consequent negative impacts on livelihoods, the women

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

2 The Mangrove Ecosystems for Climate Change Adaptation and Livelihoods—MESCAL—project was implemented in five countries in Oceania in 2009–2013 and managed by IUCN.

3 See article on page 5.

Figure 1: Locality map of the ITTO project sites

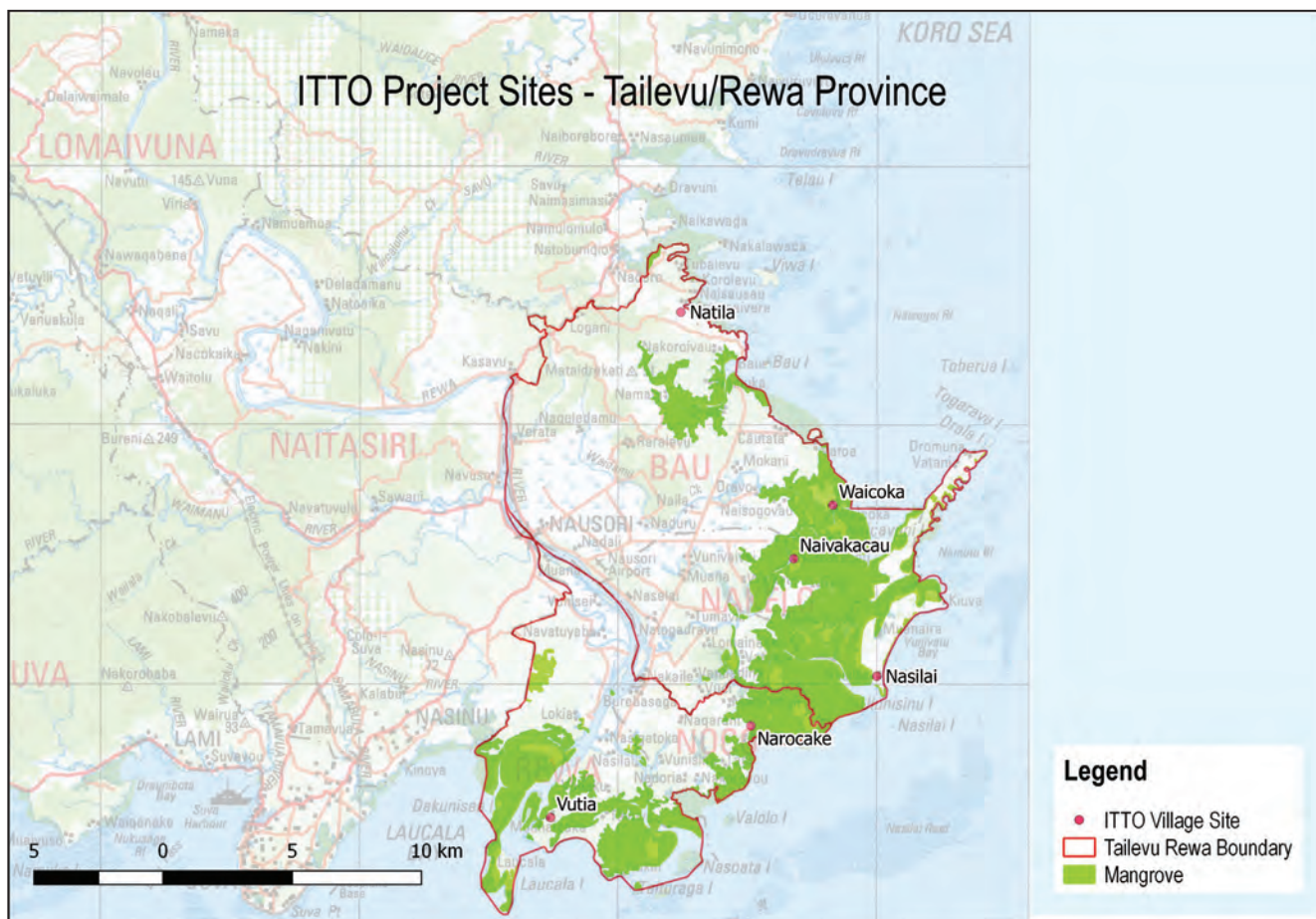
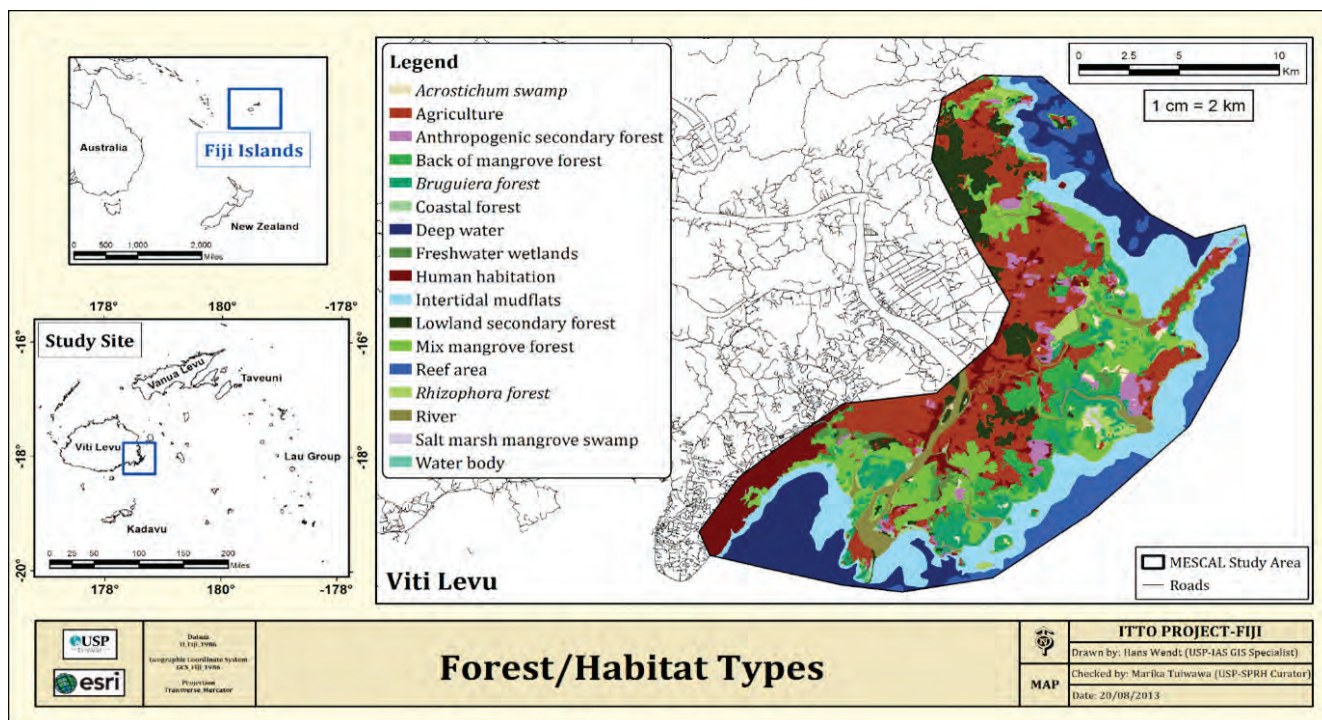


Figure 2: The ITTO project site in the Rewa Delta, coinciding with the earlier Mescal project area



Source: Wedt (2013).



Arm-in-arm: The Nasilai Women's Group. Photo: Aporosa Ramulo Livani, Ministry of Forestry

resolved to collectively plant mangroves along the foreshores of their villages. The ITTO project has facilitated the inclusion of women in community decision-making processes, enabling them to lead and advocate on environmental issues that affect their lives. This has resulted in improving food security (from marine resources) and enabled skills development and education among women and girls in the communities. The women's group in Nasilai planted 5000 mangrove seedlings along the foreshore as part of their mangrove restoration and rehabilitation work; they also planted native coastal trees, such as tavola (*Terminalia catappa*), vutu (*Barringtonia edulis*), dilo (*Calophyllum inophyllum*) and coconuts in areas behind the mangrove forest to prevent coastal erosion and provide a future resource. Additionally, they planted a woodfuel tree species, marasa (*Storckiella vitiensis*), and various fruit trees to reduce the need to harvest woodfuel from the mangrove forests and to create alternative livelihoods.

The women's group in Waicoka carried out a survival assessment of their mangrove plantings in 2019 and replanted areas where numbers were low. The women's groups in Muanaira, Naivakacau, Narocake and Natila have raised seedlings in their community nurseries and are

growing coastal species along the coast and fruit trees in the villages. Sandalwood (*Santalum* spp.) seeds were distributed to the six communities, and the women's groups have raised these in the nurseries and sold the seedlings to the Ministry of Forestry for up to FJD 5 each. The Ministry is using the seedlings as part of the government's initiative to establish 30 million trees in 15 years to combat environment degradation and climate change.

In an interview, the women's group leader for Nasilai, Tagilala Vereti, said, "the ITTO project has brought about positive changes in our mangrove ecosystem, inspiring the community to ban villagers and contractors from cutting mangroves, resulting in the return and replenishment of marine species, which has been declining in our marine ecosystem. With lots of mangrove planting being undertaken, it has protected the village from seawater intrusion. This has greatly taught us about the importance of the mangrove ecosystem and its protection. The ITTO project has greatly assisted the village in providing sandalwood, fruit trees and native tree species for fuelwood to plant in the village, curbing our dependence on the mangrove ecosystem, and since some of the seedlings that have been raised in our community nursery had been purchased by the ITTO project, it has greatly supported and improved the livelihood of the village".

Empowering women in alternative livelihood skills

Thirty women from the six ITTO project sites (five from each village) participated in a two-week training course on basic sewing skills held at Fiji National University's Nabua Campus. The training was aimed at providing alternative livelihoods for women to help reduce pressure on their mangrove forests. Participants received accredited certificates for completing the course.



Mangrove extension: The Nasilai women's group planted 5000 mangrove propagules along the foreshores of their village. Photo: Aporosa Ramulo Livani, Ministry of Forestry



Sew great: Nunia Tinaibilosiliva (front right) learns new skills as a benefit of the ITTO project. *Photo: Mela Katonivualiku, Ministry of Forestry*

The women also received sewing machines for use by their women's groups; the trained women will train other women in the villages in their newly acquired sewing skills. This upskilling and equipment will enable women in the six communities to sew clothes for their family members at a cheaper cost and to start their own tailoring businesses. The 30 trained women with accredited certificates could also seek employment in garment factories in Nausori town, Suva City and the tax-free zones at Nasinu.

In an interview, Nunia Tinaibilosiliva, the women's group leader in Waicoka village and a participant in the sewing course, said, "I didn't realize that frequently catching fish and other delicacies from the mangrove swamps threatened the lives of other marine life and biodiversity that rely on the mangrove swamps. I had learnt how to sew back in the 1970s but I made no progress because at the time financial pressures of having to pay school fees saw me going back to the mangrove swamps to earn my living. Now that I realize I was harming the environment, I intend to put my basic sewing skills learnt here today to good use. I will also be imparting these skills to other village women so that together we have an alternative source of livelihood instead of exploiting our mangrove resources."

Mangrove management guidelines

In collaboration with the Pacific Community, the ITTO project has developed guidelines to help communities better manage their mangroves. The Pacific Community conducted a workshop with participating local communities on the formulation of the guidelines, capturing local knowledge on mangrove ecosystems for incorporation in a village-level version.

Challenges and next steps

The project has encountered various challenges. It has been time-consuming to obtain agreement from the owners to restore land, but village meetings have proved effective for



Forest builder: A Nasilai woman plants an indigenous fruit tree seedling, kavika (*Syzygium jambos*), behind a mangrove forest. *Photo: Aporosa Ramulo Livani, Ministry of Forestry*

this purpose. Another challenge has been the need to plan activities in ways that take into consideration the pre-planned programmes of communities and the availability of community members. Finding suitable "windows" for project activities has, at times, slowed implementation. Unfavourable weather conditions—such as large downpours of rain—have delayed mangrove planting and the construction of piggeries, nursery sheds and brackish-water shrimp ponds. Most importantly, the COVID-19 pandemic has greatly slowed the final phases of project implementation.

The community-based restoration and sustainable management of mangroves and other vulnerable forests in the Rewa Delta is underway and must continue. Not only will it help create productive, healthy ecosystems, it also offers diverse opportunities for sustainable income and creating valuable businesses in local communities, especially by women. The project continues to work with the six villages to formulate and advocate mangrove restoration, protection and sustainable livelihood options, all of which will benefit mangrove-dependent communities in the long run.

Nationally, collective efforts are needed to integrate mangrove protection and management into the national climate-change adaptation strategy and to protect coastal ecosystems. Renewed efforts are required for the revision of legislation and regulations to better protect priority mangrove areas and incentivize communities to manage them sustainably, drawing on the lessons learned from the ITTO project. An assessment of ecosystem services provided by mangrove forests is planned, and post-COVID-19 stimulus packages could be designed to promote the establishment of healthy, resilient and productive mangrove forest ecosystems.



Turning of the tide: Mangrove seedlings two years after planting by the Nasilai women's group. *Photo: Aporosa Ramulo Livani, Ministry of Forestry*

Climate change and related frequent cyclones and flooding, compounded by the recent pandemic, threaten lives and livelihoods. Mangrove ecosystems are at risk, and Fiji—being an island state with the rural poor distributed largely across coastal communities dependent on these mangroves—is increasingly vulnerable. We need to act now in solidarity, and empower our coastal communities to reverse mangrove degradation.

Project outputs can be found by inserting the project code PD 696/13 Rev.2 (F) into the ITTO project search function at www.itto.int/project_search

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Elephants, leopards and livelihoods in Myanmar's Tanintharyi Range

An ITTO project has initiated a biodiversity conservation effort in a conflict-beset area near the border with Thailand

by **Thaung Naing Oo,¹**
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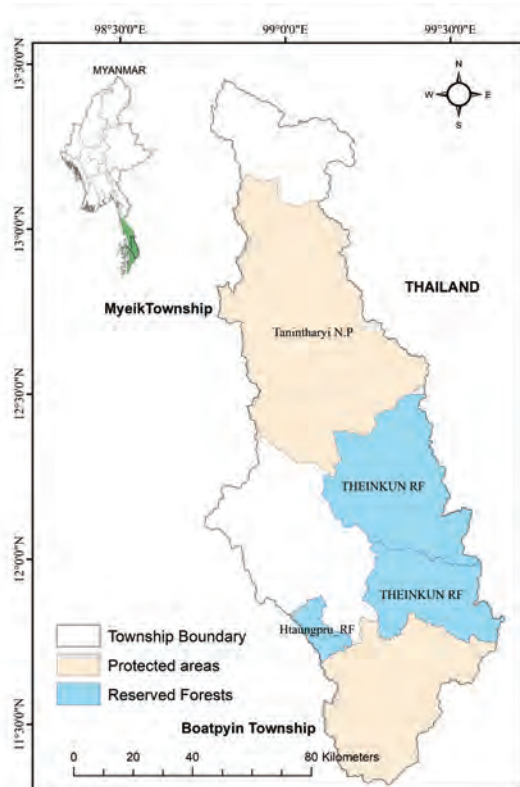
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Jungle cat: A leopard prowls in the Tanintharyi region, Myanmar, caught in a camera trap installed by an ITTO project.

An important question for the effective and sustainable conservation of biodiversity is whether local needs and context are addressed with the active participation of all stakeholders. Myanmar has long been regarded as biodiversity-rich, but biodiversity resources have been dwindling for many years due to a lack of the necessary human capacity and other resources for sound biodiversity protection and management.

Figure 1: The border area between Myanmar and Thailand, showing the Tanintharyi National Park



The Myanmar Forest Department, under the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation, faces various challenges in expanding the protected-area estate to more than 10% of the country's land area. These include a critical lack of capacity and resources at the national and local levels, such as limited biodiversity research capacity at the Forest Research Institute; and the lack of effective participation of local stakeholders. The low capacity of local communities has created problems in building consensus in natural resource conservation associated with the management of protected areas.

The Tanintharyi Range, on the border between Myanmar and Thailand, is a globally important terrestrial ecoregion containing one of the highest diversities of bird and mammal species in the Indo-Pacific region. The pilot project area comprises Tanintharyi Township, which has a considerable forest area, including in the proposed Tanintharyi National Park and several reserved forests (Figure 1). Recent studies indicate that some of the world's largest remaining



Litter browser: An Asian black bear poses for a camera trap installed by an ITTO project in the Tanintharyi region, Myanmar.



Late-night sojourn: A young elephant and an elder take a night-time stroll past a camera trap installed by an ITTO project in the Tanintharyi region, Myanmar.

populations of Asian elephants and tigers survive in forests along the border between Myanmar and Thailand. Karen and Mon people live in the Tanintharyi Range, and many other indigenous cultures call this area home and provide templates for the sustainable use of the region's rich natural resources. Limited capacity and resources for biodiversity conservation, management and monitoring in Myanmar, however, mean that transboundary cooperation on biodiversity conservation has been minimal.

The ITTO project

The Myanmar Forest Department implemented an ITTO project¹ between April 2018 and March 2020 with the aim of addressing the limited capacity and resources for biodiversity conservation in the Tanintharyi Range in Myanmar as a first step towards more effective transboundary conservation management. The project, which is part of the Joint ITTO–CBD Collaborative Initiative for Tropical Forest Biodiversity (see page 5), was funded by the governments of the United States of America and the Republic of Korea.

The project has improved the capacity of the Myanmar Forest Department to design and implement biodiversity conservation, monitoring and research programmes in the Tanintharyi Range; it has also strengthened the participation of local stakeholders and the livelihoods of forest-dependent local communities. The project worked with local offices of the Myanmar Forest Department and with local civil-society and non-governmental organizations and communities to prepare them for engaging in transboundary biodiversity conservation work with cross-border partners. Key areas emphasized during the project included ecosystem management, biodiversity corridors, local livelihood improvement, multistakeholder participation at all levels, capacity building and the sharing of lessons learned. The main project outputs are described below.



SMARTies: Field training in forest inventory at the Popa Mountain Park. Photo: N.L. Soe

Capacity building for biodiversity conservation and monitoring

National capacity, and the human resources needed for biodiversity conservation management and research in the project area, have increased substantially through a series of technical trainings for local staff in the Myanmar Forest Department and for local communities in village-level consultation processes, village development zonation, and community-based natural resource management. The training was supported by non-governmental organizations (NGOs) such as the Myanmar offices of the Wildlife Conservation Society and Flora & Fauna International.

Training was conducted on SMART (“Spatial Monitoring And Reporting Tool”)² patrolling for Forest Department staff; and on the development of community-based ecotourism and agroforestry practices for local communities. These technical training courses helped increase the capacity of project staff, rangers, border patrol police and local communities. In addition, protected-area and local staff were equipped with global positioning systems, hand compasses, cameras and camera traps to strengthen monitoring.

Park rangers and Myanmar Forest Department field staff in the project areas have been trained to use SMART to conduct patrolling and collect data in the Tanintharyi Hills and adjoining forests. The training also assist those working in bordering areas (e.g. in the states of Kachin, Kayah, Kayin and Chin) to reduce natural resource management conflicts. Technical and professional staff at the regional and central levels have increased their understanding of the use of systematic baseline data for biodiversity conservation.

Staff at the Forest Research Institute (FRI) conducted forest inventories and flora surveys as part of the project, establishing 15 sample plots and identifying 67 tree species in 29 families. Wildlife surveys were conducted with the technical support of the Chinese Academy of Science; 56 camera traps were installed in natural forests and about 30 wildlife species detected, including clouded leopard, wild boar, elephant, red muntjac and Asian black bear.

1 ITTO project PD 723/13 Rev.2 (F): “Capacity building for strengthening transboundary biodiversity conservation of the Tanintharyi Range in Myanmar”, phase I, stage I. It was closed formally by the International Tropical Timber Council in November 2020.

2 SMART is a suite of best practices aimed at helping protected-area and wildlife managers better monitor, evaluate and adaptively manage patrolling activities.



Artisanal work: Women make bamboo-based handicrafts for sale in Tanintharyi township after training conducted under the ITTO project. *Photo: N.L. Soe*

Capacity in biodiversity research has increased at FRI through the formulation and implementation of long-term research plans focused on biodiversity conservation, especially plant diversity. The provision of training to build research capacity is especially important in FRI, where staff have limited access to training, particularly in biodiversity research, budgets are small, and there are few rangers and facilities on the ground.

Sustainable local livelihood improvement

The project increased the capacity of forest-dependent local communities to pursue sustainable livelihoods. It helped strengthen local community organizations and networks; held training courses for local communities on agroforestry and livelihood development; undertook a socioeconomic assessment in seven villages in border areas; and assessed the potential in six villages for the commercialization of non-timber forest products, including bamboo handicrafts, fuelwood and charcoal.

Multistakeholder participation

The project encouraged local NGOs to share development experiences and support integrated conservation development activities. Moreover, a wide range of academics, researchers and national and regional NGOs were involved in capacity building conducted through the project. NGOs that played important roles in project activities and added value with their wide experience included the Myanmar offices of the Wildlife Conservation Society, the World Wildlife Fund, Fauna & Flora International and Friends of Wildlife.

The project convened or co-convened many public-awareness and stakeholder consultation meetings, such as:

- three workshops and five consultation meetings with local communities and related organizations;
- a consultation workshop on promoting biodiversity conservation in transboundary areas;
- a regional workshop on promoting transboundary biodiversity conservation in the Tanintharyi Range;
- a series of consultation meetings on strengthening community-based conservation organizations at Myeik, Tanintharyi region;
- six educational talks in Tanintharyi Township; and
- events for the International Day of Forests at FRI, Yezin, in March 2019 and March 2020.

Policy implications

The project made several contributions to the development of national biodiversity policies. For example, the Nature and Wildlife Conservation Division of the Myanmar Forest Department will be able to update the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan, taking into account lessons from the project. It has also started a programme, “Reintroducing Natural Habitats in Protected Areas” (spanning 2019–20 to 2028–29), which includes transboundary biodiversity conservation. The staff who received training through the ITTO project are well placed to contribute their expertise and knowledge in the implementation of activities under the new programme.



Farm map: Trainees present during an agroforestry workshop in Tanintharyi Township. *Photo: N.L. Soe*

Lessons learned

Despite the project's short timeframe, many lessons were learned. Promising project interventions included capacity-building programmes encompassing agroforestry approaches, hands-on training on the production of bamboo-based handicrafts, and ecotourism development, which can help local communities obtain livelihood security and assist in the conservation of biodiversity. People in the villages of Tanintharyi Township engaged actively in these extension activities, which matched their strong desire to achieve sustainable livelihoods.

"I learned about good agroforestry practices to make my lands more productive compared to our earlier practices focusing mostly on pure agriculture and fewer products," said Ms Khin Mar Wai, Ayetharyar Village, Tanintharyi Township. "With improved incomes from my agroforestry activities, I can pay more support to increase biodiversity and improve soil fertility".

The remotely located Tanintharyi Township has experienced conflicts with ethnic armed organizations, but a ceasefire agreement is currently in place. Establishing good consultation processes and mechanisms among stakeholders is crucial for the design and effective implementation of development initiatives that are in balance with nature conservation. The project initiated a coordination mechanism among various institutions by conducting a series of consultation meetings and developing community-based natural resource management plans for four villages. One of the achievements of the project is that an ethnic armed organization (i.e. the Karen National Union—KNU, which is party to a national cease-fire agreement) cooperated with the project team to conduct plant biodiversity research and a wildlife survey (especially setting up a camera trap in the KNU-controlled area).

"I really appreciate ITTO project's support to public awareness-raising about forests and biodiversity, and cooperation opportunities with ethnic armed organizations in biodiversity conservation research," said Mr Sein Win, Assistant Director of the Myeik District Forest Department.

"We look forward to more working opportunities with ethnic armed organizations for biodiversity conservation and a more peaceful future," said Mr Kaung Set Naing, a Range Officer of Local Forest Department.

Sustainability

An important challenge for effective transboundary biodiversity conservation and sustainable development in the Tanintharyi Range and other areas is to build a sustainable political support system by involving diverse organizations and institutions—local, national and transboundary. Facilitation, coordination, resource mobilization and law enforcement efforts will all be more effective when such a supportive system is in place. Transboundary initiatives create additional demands on the administration of natural resources, policy development and harmonization, consultation processes, and implementation. Transboundary biodiversity conservation will always involve a wide variety of actors and it is essential to establish a mechanism that builds trust and coordination among them.

Ongoing capacity building is also crucial for all stakeholders. Technical and baseline information on biodiversity and social, economic, cultural, legal and other aspects of the transboundary area are needed to ensure the long-term success of biodiversity conservation initiatives in the area. In the Tanintharyi Range, a good start has been made in improving transboundary conservation management, but ongoing support is needed, including to strengthen institutional cross-border coordination for the effective management of the area's important biodiversity and to enable local communities to pursue sustainable development.

The project produced several technical reports, including on a socioeconomic assessment in Tanintharyi Township; a biodiversity survey; a study on non-timber forest products; an analysis of forest-cover change in the Tanintharyi Region for wildlife conservation; the carbon storage potential of natural forest stands in Tanintharyi Township; and species distribution patterns in natural forests of the Tanintharyi Township. These and other project outputs can be found by inserting the project code PD723/13 Rev.2 (F) into the ITTO project search function at www.itto.int/project_search

Introducing ITTO's new project audit framework

The Organization is extending its best-practice financial accounting to project executing agencies

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Accounting for the cost: Attendees at the first ITTO Project Financial Reporting and Audit Workshop, held in Jakarta, Indonesia, discuss ITTO's new project auditing framework. *Photo: S. Kawaguchi/ITTO*

The International Tropical Timber Council adopted a new project audit framework for ITTO at its 56th Session in November 2020.¹ The new framework provides detailed terms of reference for auditors based on relevant international standards to perform agreed-upon procedures using a unified reporting format, with the aim of increasing the transparency and timeliness of project financial reporting. The framework also allows ITTO to directly contract auditors to better coordinate the timing and efficiency of audits across projects and regions. The new rules will be applied prospectively to new project agreements, and the cooperation and understanding of project executing agencies will be essential for its success. Once the framework is fully implemented, ITTO envisions an increase in the reliability and timeliness of financial reporting by projects, which will benefit members, donors and the public, to whom ITTO is accountable.

The new project audit framework contains the following elements:

- terms of reference for the auditor detailing procedures for project audits, which require that auditors undertake the engagement in accordance with the International Standard on Related Services 4400 and the International Federation of Accountants' Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants;
- a detailed factual finding reporting format, which requires auditors to describe the results of each test conducted and any issues found; and
- an updated reporting format for financial statements for greater compatibility with the International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS)'s accrual-based accounting.

The new framework will be applied as follows:

- A final independent audit is required on the completion of all projects that transfer funds to an executing agency. Annual independent audits are also required if the executing agency's project budget is USD 200 000 or more.
- Annual independent audit reports are to be completed within three months of the end of each year and final independent audit reports within four months of the completion of the project.
- ITTO retains the audit budget and directly contracts auditors. To reduce cost and ensure the timeliness of reporting, annual independent audits can be conducted simultaneously for various projects by a single global firm.
- Audit budgets in future projects should reflect the requirements of the new framework and ensure that sufficient funds are available for such audits.
- Text will be added to project agreements to reflect the above changes.

The details of the framework are contained in document CFA(XXXV)/7 Rev.1,² which was adopted by the Council on the recommendation of the Committee on Finance and Administration, which met in conjunction with the 56th Session of the Council.

The new framework is the result of a pilot programme that spanned two years targeting selected projects, with improvements made based on the feedback received from the pilot. Before the pilot was developed, ITTO had undergone a major transformation in 2017 with the adoption of new financial rules,³ which introduced

¹ The framework applies to ITTO projects, pre-projects and activities, collectively called "projects" in this article.

² Available at www.itto.int/council_committees/documents/?pageID=3

³ Available at www.itto.int/financial_rules

Table 1: Result of interviews with executing agencies during ITTO project financial reporting and audit workshops

Project identifier	PD 646/12 Rev.3 (F)	PD 710/13 Rev.1 (F)	PD 477/07 Rev.4 (F)	PD 737/14 Rev.2(I)	PD 777/15 Rev.3 (F)	PP-A/55-334
Project title	Initiating the conservation of cempaka tree species through plantation development with local community participation in north Sulawesi	Promoting conservation of selected high-value indigenous species of Sumatra	Improving forest functions in Bengkulu Province through community participation in rehabilitation of degraded forest by using local prospective commodities	Developing supply capacity of wood-based biomass energy through improved enabling conditions and efficient utilization of degraded forest lands involving local communities in North Sumatra Province of Indonesia	Accelerating the restoration of Cibodas Biosphere Reserve functions through proper management of landscapes involving local stakeholders	LSSC Programme Activity 5
Attendee(s)	Project coordinator	Project coordinator, finance assistant	Project coordinator, finance assistant	Project assistant, finance assistant	Project coordinator, finance assistant, project secretary	Director, project coordinator, finance assistant
Internal control environment						
Segregation of duty	Duties segregated between coordinator, finance assistant and director	Duties segregated between coordinator, finance assistant and chief officer	Duties segregated between coordinator, finance assistant and director	Duties segregated between coordinator, project assistant and chairperson	Duties segregated between coordinator, finance assistant and project secretary	Duties segregated between coordinator, finance assistant and director
Four-eyes principal	Director and treasurer sign to release funds	Two signatures required between project coordinator, chief officer, finance officer	Project coordinator and director are the signatories of the bank	Project coordinator and chairperson can sign cheques	Bank transfers can be made with only the project coordinator's signature. Advised to add director to the signatory	The project coordinator submits the request and the director and one other person signs in order for a payment to be disbursed
Accounting						
Bookkeeping	Single-entry on Excel	Single-entry on Excel	Single-entry on Excel	Single-entry on Excel	Single-entry on Excel	Single-entry on Excel for budget management. Double-entry on SAGE accounting software for overall accounting
Accruals	Cash basis only	Cash basis only	Cash basis only	Cash basis only	Cash basis only	No fixed assets, payments are made in a timely manner and cash-basis accounting is used
Local currency	Not discussed	Not discussed	Converted to local currency in small amounts as needed	Most of the United States (US) dollars are converted into local currency	Converted from US dollars to local from time to time. Average exchange rate used for reporting in US dollars	Spot rate is used
Proposed changes						
ITTO contracting auditor	Less work for coordinator	No problem as long as auditors communicate with executing agency	No objection	No objection	No objection	No objection
Complete audit within 2 months	Audit report submitted after 5 months of year end. Could shorten it to 2 months	Has always reported within 2 months	No objection	No objection	No objection	No objection
Audit cost	USD 2000 for 1 audit, which took 2 full weeks	USD 1500 per audit. Would be more expensive for auditor in Jakarta	Similar cost to other projects	USD 1500–2000 per audit. Project advisor commented that it was underbudget	USD 1750 per audit	Usually USD 2000–3000
Comments	Has internal audit report from the ministry and was wondering how to reflect it in their financial reporting	Quarterly reports are sent to the finance ministry. Would like to see threshold for using accrual accounting	How to deal with foreign currency risk. Cash is delivered to local community by local expert and a receipt is signed	Yearly plan of operation is developed on local currency basis. ITTO's reporting requirements are simple compared with government and KFW requirements	Most of the US dollars received was kept in US dollars due to exchange rate fluctuations. Differences in rate slightly affects the yearly plan of operation budget due to expenses being in local currency	Procedures are documented in RIFFEAC's financial rules



Groundwork: Participants in the Second ITTO Project Financial Reporting and Audit Workshop held at the RIFFEAC Secretariat headquarters in Yaoundé, Cameroon. *Photo: ITTO*

stronger internal controls and financial reporting using IPSAS. With its improvements to transparency and reporting, a discussion was held in 2018 with ITTO's auditor, Ernst & Young Japan. In its recommendation for ITTO's financial statements audit, Ernst & Young Japan stressed that audit reports received from project executing agencies were essential sources of information in estimating project expenses, a key element in the IPSAS reporting framework. Simultaneously, the auditor noted that, under the current project audit framework, there may be issues in some project audits regarding the timeliness of reporting and the reliability of locally selected auditors to detect errors and internal control weaknesses. Ernst & Young Japan recommended, therefore, that ITTO explore ways to improve the process. The ITTO Secretariat developed and tested a new project audit framework based on relevant international standards, which required auditors to report in detail on any issues found in the management of funds and internal control weaknesses, in accordance with applicable ITTO rules. Advice from a professional accounting firm was sought on matters related to compliance with relevant international standards and the framework's effectiveness in detecting material issues.

As part of the pilot programme, the Secretariat conducted workshops to obtain feedback on how the current rules were being implemented in the field and how they could be improved. The first of these was held in Indonesia in October 2018 with the participation of five local ITTO projects invited to the Ministry of Environment and Forestry in Jakarta. Overall, the draft framework was well received;

opinions and concerns were exchanged frankly during a briefing with all project representatives on day 1 and in one-to-one sessions with each project on day 2. It became apparent that the guidance and support of ITTO and the auditors were essential for the projects to fully comply with the new requirements in financial reporting and auditing. Improvements to the procedures and additional support from ITTO were generally welcomed.

A second workshop was held in Cameroon in December 2019 at the headquarters of the secretariat of the Central African Forestry and Environment Training Institutions Network (*Réseau des Institutions de Formation Forestière et Environnementale d'Afrique centrale*—RIFFEAC), the executing agency for ITTO's Legal and Sustainable Supply Chain Programme (PP-A/55-334) activity 5. The RIFFEAC Secretariat received a presentation from Ernst & Young Japan on the relevance of the audit in relation to the IPSAS accounting standards that ITTO has adopted and was also interviewed to better understand the controlling environment in which RIFFEAC was operating and whether it was sufficient for future audits under the new framework. It was concluded that RIFFEAC's internal controls are strong due to the presence of the agency's own internal financial rules and that local auditors accustomed to auditing governmental agencies would be sufficient for audits under the new framework.

Feedback gathered at these workshops (Table 1) was used to refine procedures for piloting the framework in three projects: PD646/12 Rev.3 (F)⁴ and PD777/15 Rev.3 (F)⁵ in 2019 and PD732/14 Rev.2 (M)⁶ in 2020. The audits conducted under the pilot were seen as an improvement because ITTO was able to obtain detailed information on the internal control environment of the agencies concerned and to justify financial data in a uniform format that could be applied to any project in any region. The results of the workshops and pilot audits were shared with Ernst & Young Japan, which expressed satisfaction with the results and recommended that ITTO apply the new framework to all projects with agreements with executing agencies.

With its adoption by the Council, the new project auditing framework is now being deployed. ITTO will continue to improve the governance structure of the framework with the cooperation of executing agencies through feedback received from the field via audit reports and monitoring missions, with the ultimate goal of enhancing transparency and accountability for the Organization's stakeholders.

⁴ "Initiating the conservation of cempaka tree species (*Elmerrillia* spp.) through plantation development with local community participation in north Sulawesi, Indonesia".

⁵ "Accelerating the restoration of Cibodas Biosphere Reserve functions through proper management of landscapes involving local stakeholders" (Indonesia)".

⁶ "Improve forest governance in Mozambique".

Fellowship report

An ITTO Fellow from 2009 returns with a second Fellowship in 2020 as he further develops his professional trajectory

by Felipe Veluk Gutierrez

University of Florida School of Forest Resources and Conservation and the Tropical Conservation and Development Program (felipe.gutierrez@ufl.edu)



Serene: The author on site in the Brazilian Amazon. Photo: © F.V. Gutierrez

My story with the ITTO Fellowship Programme began in 2009 while doing fieldwork in the highlands of southwest Guatemala. I was in the second year of my studies at the Tropical Agricultural Research and Higher Education Center (CATIE), Costa Rica, where I was pursuing a master's degree in the management and conservation of tropical forests and biodiversity. I remember walking the busy multi-ethnic streets of San Marcos, Guatemala, looking for an internet cafe to print the remaining documents of my application before sealing the papers in an envelope and sending them across the world to ITTO headquarters in Yokohama, Japan.

The news about the approval of my first ITTO Fellowship came a few months later. It turned out to be a very important point in my career because it helped me successfully conclude my master's degree and embark on my next professional endeavours.

My experiences in Costa Rica and Guatemala could not have been more fulfilling or mind–heart opening. But, before jumping into that, let me give you some background. I'm a proud, inquisitive Brazilian social forester, and after graduating in 2002 from my alma mater, the University of São Paulo, I wanted to gain forestry experiences around the world. I spent a year as a visiting practitioner working on various fronts related to forest management and wildfire prevention and control in the forest department of the state government of New South Wales, Australia. After that, I worked at a pulp-and-paper joint-venture company in southeastern Bahía, Brazil. During this time, I also led a parallel voluntary project on ethno-tourism and biocultural diversity conservation¹ with an amazing, creative and resilient community of Pataxó indigenous people. However, the “wind and tide” were shifting, and I decided it was time

to move on, invest in my education and learn more about tropical forest management and biodiversity conservation—and this led me, a year or so later, to CATIE.

Located in Turrialba, a two-hour drive east of Costa Rica's capital, San José, CATIE is immersed in a lush, green, picturesque rural valley, with a vibrant small farming community and a dynamic ecotourism hub, including famous white-water rafting rivers like Pacuare and Reventazón. CATIE is also surrounded by monumental natural–historical features, such as an active volcano and pre-Columbian archaeological ruins at the Guayabo National Monument. Most fascinating and dear to me, however, were its people and cultures and the lifelong friendships I made. In CATIE, I experienced for the first time a diverse community of staff, teachers, researchers, students and other colleagues from all corners of the globe, especially Latin America and the Caribbean. At that time, CATIE had four master's degree programmes, with integrated curricula in agroforestry systems; watershed management; rural socioeconomics; and the management and conservation of tropical forests and biodiversity (I attended the latter).

Moreover, CATIE's top-notch interdisciplinary education was (and still is) rooted in a hands-on, team-building atmosphere, where learning–teaching became an everyday binomial equation. In and through CATIE and my experience in Costa Rica and Guatemala, I had the privilege of meeting phenomenal change-makers from Latin America, within and beyond academia. That includes my dear friends, inspiring community leaders and nature–culture guardians of San Pablo, a small rural Guatemalan community in the foothills of Tacaná Volcano on the border with Mexico, where I lived for several fieldwork months.

¹ For more information on biocultural diversity conservation, visit Terralingua's website at <https://terralingua.org>

During this time, I learned more about the unsettling complexity and beauty of multifunctional landscapes, with a conceptual and empirical immersion on topics related to forest governance, ecosystem services, biocultural diversity conservation and the co-management of natural resources and territories. From this experience, supported by my ITTO Fellowship, and my day-by-day routine with regular people, friends and colleagues, I became not only a more aware–motivated–engaged social forester, but also a more grounded, knowledgeable and inspired Latin American, spreading my wings beyond the geographical–cultural cocoon of my beloved Brazil. (A glad coincidence: the photo on ITTO’s Fellowship Programme webpage² is from a CATIE field trip in Costa Rica—*Pura vida!*, or Pure life!, as the national motto says.)

In my masters, I worked with participatory–action research, developing a mixed–methods framework for collecting and analysing quali–quantitative data. The aim was to better understand human–landscape interactions and to identify opportunities for conservation and the improvement of livelihoods in rural communities in southwest Guatemala. This research also involved multicriteria decision analysis through mapping and a geographic information system, tools I’ve used throughout my career that support complex and interconnected spatial and beyond–spatial information processing. I’ve also participated in collaborative and interdisciplinary research projects with stakeholders outside academia (with non–governmental organizations, governmental agencies, local communities and the private sector), facilitating group discussions and strategic planning processes. Later on, I published a paper with CATIE professors Dr Ronnie de Camino and Dr Alejandro Imbach (Gutierrez et al. 2012³), presenting a portion of my master’s dissertation.

My master’s degree at CATIE and my experience in Central America were the bedrock of my subsequent professional (and personal) life paths. Between 2013 and 2014 I worked as the Amazon programme regional manager for Conservation International Brazil, leading various integrated multistakeholder projects in the states of Amapá and Pará. In collaboration with the federal and state governments, we supported the development of two major state policies: on forest concessions; and on climate change and payments for ecosystem services. Other activities included working with biodiversity corridors and protected–area governance; capacity building and co–management for wood and non–wood forest products (such as açai berries) in state and national parks; providing training on agroecology family gardens with riverine dwellers (*ribeirinhos*, as we say in Portuguese) and on sustainable community fishery agreements; and facilitating the creation of a state forest endowment fund and its conservation financing mechanisms.

Between 2012 and 2017, I also worked in the Caribbean—in the Dominican Republic and my now–adopted beloved home, Puerto Rico—where I coordinated three consecutive projects on: 1) forest law enforcement, governance and trade in the Colinas Bajas Model Forest region in the Dominican Republic, sponsored by the Food and Agriculture Organization



Heavy burden and resilience: Woodfuel is a common forest product in rural Guatemala. Photo: © F.V. Gutierrez

of the United Nations; 2) community–based forest management and elementary education in the vicinity of the Bosque Escuela La Olimpia and Bosque del Pueblo protected areas in Puerto Rico; and 3) the University of Puerto Rico’s outdoor classroom school garden initiative, funded by the United States Department of Agriculture.

I am now pursuing a doctorate at the University of Florida’s School of Forest Resources and Conservation⁴ in the United States of America, with an emphasis on tropical conservation and development. I am also a graduate research assistant and Brazil mosaic co–coordinator at the Governance and Infrastructure in the Amazon Project,⁵ funded by the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation and nested in the University of Florida’s Center for Latin American Studies Tropical Conservation and Development Program.⁶

In the last ten years, Brazil has seen the emergence of several collectives based on non–wood forest products such as Amazonian nut (also known as Brazil nut, *Bertholletia excelsa*), açai berries and Arapaima fish, aiming more broadly to collaboratively tackle the value chains of these important tropical forest commodities. Amazonian–nut initiatives such as Rede de Cantinas da Terra do Meio,⁷ Guardians of the Forest⁸ and Semear Castanha⁹ are supported by a vast network of governmental and non–governmental organizations, forest–based grassroot organizations, research, funding and cooperation institutions, and various corporations. A group of Amazonian–nut experts is now creating an Amazonian–nut “observatory”.

4 <http://sfrc.ufl.edu>

5 <https://giamazon.org>

6 <http://uftcd.org>

7 www.youtube.com/watch?v=EXI5wQGawnQ

8 https://youtu.be/Q_UYZ1DVESE

9 <https://iieb.org.br/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/Guia-do-formador-castanheiro-DIGITAL.pdf>

2 www.itto.int/fellowship

3 Mapping priority areas for forest landscape restoration and improvement of rural community livelihoods in Guatemala’s San Marcos highlands.



Amazonian-nut tree: Its seeds are the focus of the author's PhD research on social innovation, collective action and biocultural diversity conservation in the Brazilian Amazon. *Photo: © André Tomasi*

My research seeks to explore this niche. It aims to understand if and how these collective actions and related social innovations are catalyzing Amazonian-nut value chain development while promoting biocultural conservation in the Brazilian Amazon—a novel combined approach with only limited study and understanding to date among researchers, scholars and practitioners (Maffi & Woodley 2012; Gavin et al. 2015; Secco et al. 2019; Farinha et al. 2020; Weiss et al. 2020). Specifically, my research seeks to explore the regional and case-specific circumstances (the “arena”) in which these social mobilizations, innovations and value-chain collaborative efforts occur; who are the stakeholders and what are their roles; what are the enabling and limiting factors; what strategies and actions have been adopted to promote sustainability, livelihood support and biocultural conservation (mainly in sustainable-use extractive reserves and indigenous territories); and what are the envisioned ways for moving forward.

So, in the midst of an unprecedented, life-changing year for all humanity, on a sunny, blue-sky morning in November 2020, I received an email with the great news that my application for a second ITTO Fellowship had been “successful and approved by the ITTO Fellowship Selection Panel”. This award could not have arrived at a better moment, just like ten years ago, when it helped me complete my masters. Now, the ITTO Fellowship will help cover my fieldwork expenses for 2021—because, in 2020, I could not go to the Brazilian Amazon to engage with local partners and communities and start collecting data.



Hard nut to crack: The author is studying if and how collective actions and related social innovations are catalyzing Amazonian-nut value chain development and biocultural conservation in the Brazilian Amazon. *Photo: Henning Schlottmann https://commons.m.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Brazil_nuts_9576.jpg*

The University of Florida's interdisciplinary and collaborative learning environment has been a paramount opportunity for enhancing my research skills and practice. The support I receive from the School of Forest Resources and Conservation and the Tropical Conservation and Development Program—both ground-breaking education centres—have been and will continue to provide me with the knowledge, motivation and tools to complete my PhD. This will enable me to take the next steps in my career and, most importantly, to extend its impacts in the fields and regions in which I work. The ITTO Fellowship will help push me in that direction.

I plan to continue working in the Brazilian Amazon after I complete my PhD. My dream is to co-found a hybrid citizen-sector organization and continue supporting various forest management and biocultural diversity conservation practices in the region. The focus would be on education



Masterful backdrop: The author's study region for his master's thesis in the highlands of southwest Guatemala. Photo: © P.V. Gutierrez

and capacity building to encourage forest-based change-makers and social entrepreneurs committed to building more creative, sustainable and resilient communities and territories. Over the last two decades, I have witnessed and better understood the potential of human development, social coalitions and movements for positively transforming our relationships with nature and other people. In many ways, the commitment and legacy of CATIE and the University of Florida, echoed by its faculty members and scientific activism, have inspired me to follow a similar path. Therefore, I expect to not only promote education and training to individuals inside the realms of academia but also to on-the-ground practitioners and, most importantly, to community leaders and grassroots organizations.

I aspire to continue strengthening scientific ties with the University of Florida and other research centres, non-governmental organizations and governmental agencies in Brazil, the United States of America, Japan, and our neighbouring Amazonian countries. With a very multidisciplinary, creative, restless, pragmatic and teamwork spirit, I will keep advocating for tropical forest conservation and biocultural diversity protection—by writing project and research proposals and managing grants, delivering papers and attending national and international conferences, investing in citizen science, volunteering, engaging in popular environmental communication, and more. I express my gratitude to the ITTO Fellowship Programme. I am looking forward to the next ten years of my professional–personal endeavours and growth, hoping to building bridges for collaboration among people and organizations who share the same passion and commitment while inspiring and being inspired by others, like you.

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Pent-up demand and huge household savings in Europe could be unleashed in 2021

by Mike Adams

Compiled from ITTO's Tropical Timber Market Report and other sources (itto@itto.int)



Sign of the times: Many businesses, such as this one in Sheffield, United Kingdom, shuttered in 2020 due to the pandemic, but there could be a bounce-back in Europe in 2021. Photo: Tim Dennell (www.flickr.com/photos/shefftim/albums/72157713538756686)

The global outbreak of COVID-19 and the containment measures implemented by governments are having serious impacts on the global economy. Border closures, travel restrictions and measures to slow the contagion have disrupted productive activities. These will have long-term economic consequences.

The World Bank forecasts that global gross domestic product may have shrunk by more than 5% in 2020, which would be its sharpest contraction since the Second World War. It will be the worst recession since the Great Depression and far worse than the global financial crisis of 2009.

Unsurprisingly, this major global disruption is leading to reduced production and thus trade—locally, regionally and globally. Although the pandemic is a health crisis, the unavoidable declines in trade and output will have painful consequences for households and businesses.

According to the Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, Mukhisa Kituyi, “It is imperative, therefore, that we keep trade flowing. This calls for heightened coordination across sectors and countries to restore business confidence, stimulate demand and accelerate economic recovery. And while at it, we need to lay the foundations for a strong, sustained and socially inclusive recovery”.¹

Europe has not been spared the ravages of the COVID-19 pandemic. Demand for wood products fell in 2020, and the low level of international trade that took place was disrupted. The trade continues to suffer delays in delivery and rising shipping costs because of the uneven dispersal of shipping containers around the world, which is causing surpluses at some ports and shortages in others.

Economists now predict that the European Union (EU) economy will begin recovery in the second quarter of 2021 but that a bounce-back could be sharp, at least initially, when restrictions are eased and infections subside as vaccines are rolled out.

Europeans have been saving at record pace amid the COVID-19 pandemic. Some did so willingly but many others have been acting out of fear; as a population, Europeans haven't been this thrifty for decades, and they are hoarding hundreds of billions of euros in cash and bank deposits amid growing uncertainty unleashed by the pandemic. The household savings rate—the percentage of income that households keep in savings rather than consume—in the eurozone was as high as 22% in the third quarter of 2020, according to estimates.

Pent-up demand for just about everything could unleash a torrent of spending in the second half of 2021. This, along with the EU's unprecedented EUR 1.8 trillion recovery fund and multiyear budget, should spur growth.

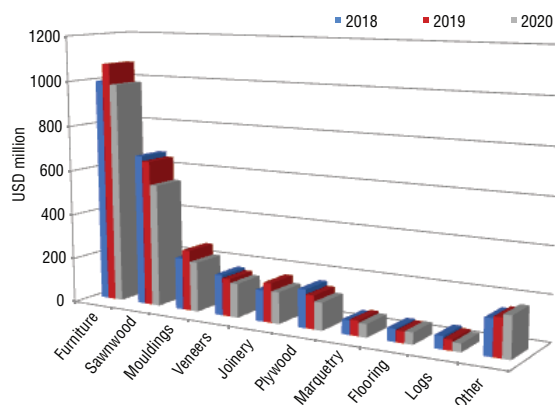
Tropical wood product imports down across the board in 2020

The value of EU27 (i.e. excluding the United Kingdom—UK) imports of tropical wood products was USD 2.48 billion between January and October in 2020, 12% less than in 2019. This was still higher than forecasts made earlier in the year when the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic hit the continent. The resultant widespread lockdowns had severe impacts on the EU27 economy and for exporting tropical countries.

In the year to October, EU27 import values declined by 8% (year-on-year) for wood furniture from tropical countries, to USD 982 million; by 16% for tropical sawnwood,

¹ <https://unctad.org/news/covid-19-global-trade-value-chains-taxation-and-recovery>

Figure 1: EU27 tropical timber imports by product, January–October 2018, 2019, 2020



Note: Includes all products in Harmonized System Chapter 44 (wood) from countries wholly located in the tropics plus products identified as “tropical” from Brazil and all other non-EU countries.

Source: ITTO-IMM analysis of Eurostat.

to USD 545 million; by 18% for tropical moulding imports, to USD 220 million; by 10% for tropical veneer imports, to USD 150 million; by 19% for tropical joinery imports, to USD 139 million; by 18% for tropical plywood, to USD 121 million; and by 21% for log imports, to USD 36 million (Figure 1). On the other hand, the value of tropical flooring imports increased by 3% in the period, to USD 52 million.

Imports fell in all six of the largest EU27 destinations for tropical wood products in the first ten months of 2020—in the Netherlands by 15%, year-on-year (to USD 502 million), France by 11% (to USD 475 million), Germany by 12% (to USD 384 million), Belgium by 8% (to USD 375 million), Italy by 16% (to USD 187 million), Spain by 16% (to USD 126 million) and Sweden by a relatively minimal 4%. On the other hand, imports increased in the first ten months in Denmark by 19% (to USD 113 million) and Poland by 12% (to USD 63 million).

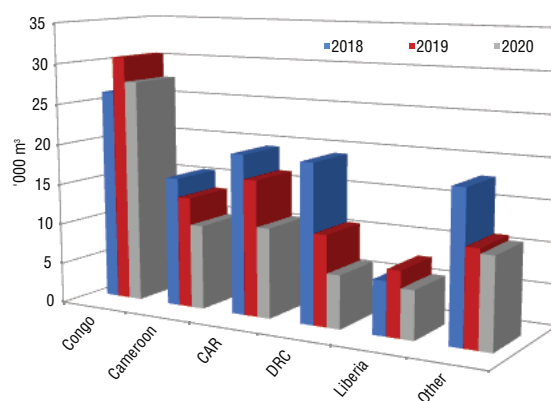
EU27 log imports

EU27 imports of tropical logs plummeted by 21% in the first ten months of 2020, to 72 400 m³. Log imports held up reasonably well from the Congo—the volume was down by only 10% (year-on-year), at 27 600 m³. There were sharp falls, however, in all other leading supply countries: in Cameroon by 24% (to 10 400 m³), the Central African Republic by 34% (to 11 000 m³), the Democratic Republic of the Congo by 41% (to 6500 m³) and Liberia by 26% (to 5900 m³) (Figure 2).

EU27 tropical sawnwood and moulding imports

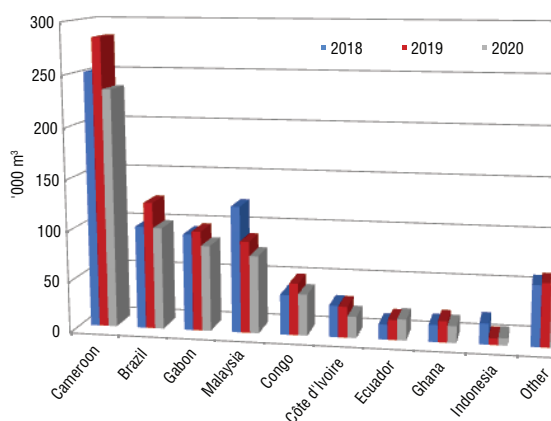
The quantity of EU27 imports of tropical sawnwood fell by 17% in the first ten months of 2020, to 650 800 m³. Imports dropped sharply from all major supply countries, including Cameroon (down by 18%, year-on-year, to 234 600 m³), Brazil (20%, to 100 300 m³), Gabon (14%, to 84 400 m³), Malaysia (15%, to 76 400 m³), the Congo (20%, to 40 700 m³), Côte d’Ivoire (31%, to 20 900 m³) and Ghana (22%, to 16 400 m³).

Figure 2: EU27 tropical log imports, by supply country, January–October 2018, 2019, 2020



Note: CAR = Central African Republic; DRC = Democratic Republic of the Congo.
Source: ITTO-IMM analysis of Eurostat.

Figure 3: EU27 tropical sawnwood imports, by supplier, January–October 2018, 2019, 2020



Source: ITTO-IMM analysis of Eurostat.

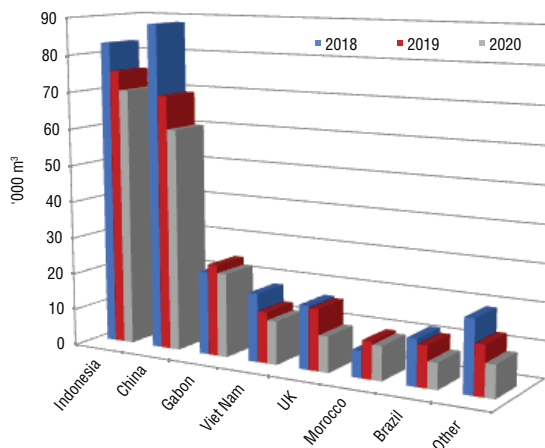
Ecuador bucked the downward trend, with sawnwood exports to the EU27 rising by 6%, year-on-year, to 20 700 m³, much of it heading to Denmark and likely driven by strong demand for balsa for wind turbines. Imports of sawnwood from Indonesia increased by 9% in the period, to 7100 m³, although this followed a 74% reduction in 2018 (Figure 3).

The overall decline in imports of tropical sawnwood in the first ten months of 2020 was mirrored by a similar decline in EU27 imports of tropical mouldings/decking. Imports of this commodity were down by 11% overall, to 143 000 tonnes, and in Brazil (down by 7%, year-on-year, to 64 200 tonnes), Indonesia (–9%, to 45 800 tonnes), Peru (–15%, to 8000 tonnes), Malaysia (–15%, to 6600 tonnes), Gabon (–33%, to 4700 tonnes) and Bolivia (–27%, to 4400 tonnes).

EU27 imports of tropical-faced plywood

Although there were signs of an uptick in the pace of EU27 imports of tropical hardwood-faced plywood in September and October 2020, the import total of 207 000 m³ in the first ten months of the year was down by 15% compared with the same period in 2019.

Figure 4: EU27 tropical plywood imports, by supply country, January–October 2018, 2019, 2020



Source: ITTO-IMM analysis of Eurostat.

Imports fell from all the leading supply countries, including Indonesia (down by 7%, year-on-year, to 70 200 m³), China (–13%, to 60 400 m³), Gabon (–8%, to 22 700 m³), Viet Nam (–15%, to 11 700 m³), Morocco (–8%, to 9300 m³) and Brazil (–37%, to 7000 m³). EU27 imports of tropical hardwood-faced plywood from the UK (a re-export because the UK has no plywood manufacturing capacity) declined by 41% in the period, to 9700 m³ (Figure 4).

EU27 wooden furniture imports from tropical countries

EU27 imports of wood furniture declined sharply from Malaysia and Thailand in the first ten months of 2020, down by 16% (to USD 79 million), year-on-year, and 25% (to USD 26 million), respectively. Imports from the Philippines were more stable, falling by only 2%, to USD 5.5 million.

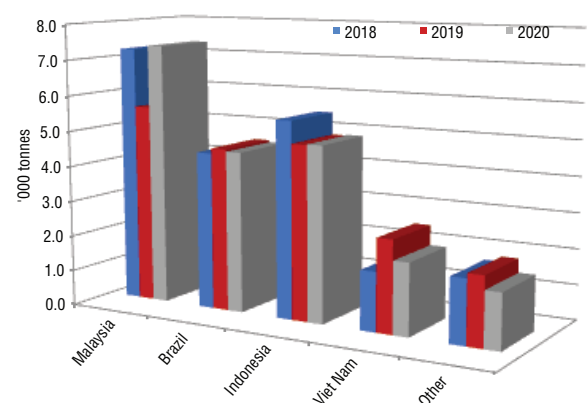
Imports from Indonesia fell by 12%, to USD 267 million, in the first ten months of 2020, year-on-year. This was after a relatively strong performance in 2019, and 2020 imports were still higher than in the same period in 2018. The value of EU27 imports from Viet Nam in January–October 2020 almost matched that of the previous year, falling by only 0.4%, year-on-year, to USD 415 million.

EU27 imports of wood furniture from India were down by 12% in the first ten months of 2020, to USD 182 million. Due partly to supply-side issues, EU furniture imports from India came to an almost complete halt in May 2020 but rebounded strongly in the third quarter, attaining record levels for that time of year.

EU27 tropical flooring imports rise while other joinery imports decline

Given the situation in the wider market, one of the least-expected trends in EU27 import data in the first ten months of 2020 was a slight recovery in imports of tropical flooring products, following a long period of decline. Imports

Figure 5: EU27 tropical flooring imports, by supply country, January–October 2018, 2019, 2020



Source: ITTO-IMM analysis of Eurostat.

increased by 4% in the period, to 20 400 tonnes, with the gain due to a 31% rise in imports from Malaysia (to 7600 tonnes), mostly destined for Belgium. The EU27’s tropical-flooring imports increased slightly (by 0.4%) in the period from Indonesia, to 4900 tonnes, and declined moderately (by 1%) from Brazil, to 4500 tonnes. Imports of this product from Viet Nam fell by 22%, to 2000 tonnes (Figure 5).

Brexit deal does little to reduce UK costs of trading with the EU

The Brexit transitional period came to an end on 31 December 2020 when the UK left the EU single market. The EU–UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement was signed at the last minute on 24 December, combining a free-trade agreement with an overarching governance framework. Brexit now enters a new phase as the two parties work out the details of their future relationship on, for example, trade, financial services and security cooperation.

The signing of the deal means that the worst consequences of a no-deal scenario have been avoided. Notably, no tariffs will be imposed on bilateral trade between the EU and the UK, and there is an agreed governance structure for refining the details of future trade relations in specific sectors and for arbitration in the event of disputes. Nevertheless, the deal does not alter the fact that the UK has left the single market and that the days of “frictionless” trade between the UK and the EU are over.

What this means in practice is becoming apparent, and the deal is notably thin. For example, it doesn’t cover the 80% of the UK economy accounted for by services. Although providing for zero-tariff trade, it does not exempt UK companies from the red tape associated with customs borders, including the need to handle customs declarations for imports and exports.

The complexity of new “rules of origin” has proved highly disruptive for many UK businesses, particularly those that use the UK as a distribution hub for the rest of the EU. The trade agreement only allows for duty- and quota-free trade between the UK and the EU if exports meet stringent content requirements. Manufacturers must use a specific and high

proportion of ingredients or parts made in the UK or the EU, the actual percentage varying depending on the product group.

This means that manufacturers exporting to the EU from the UK, and vice versa, must now be able to prove where all the parts came from. Manufacturers faced with similar free-trade deals will often choose to accept the cost of the tariff because it is less than the cost of the paperwork.

UK trade relations after Brexit

Having achieved Brexit, the question now arises, What exactly does the UK government want to do with it? Given the additional costs and obstacles to trade with the country's nearest neighbours and largest overseas customers, the UK needs to find some benefits.

The country has been busy securing trade agreements since the Brexit decision. In the last two years, the UK has agreed trade deals covering 65 countries outside the EU. Nearly all these just roll over existing EU agreements, however, and largely replicate the terms of trade that the UK previously enjoyed as part of the EU.

An agreement signed with Japan in October was the first to differ from an existing EU deal, going further in areas such as e-commerce and financial services. According to Dr Minako Morita-Jaeger, an international trade policy consultant and Fellow at the University of Sussex, however, "while the Agreement has a certain political significance, its economic impact is likely to be very small. This is because it contains very limited improvements relative to the EU-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement".

The same is true of the UK-Viet Nam Free Trade Agreement, signed on 29 December 2020, which also inherits most of the contents of the EU-Viet Nam Free Trade Agreement. There are minor differences in relation to the UK's commitments to tariff exemption for a limited range of Vietnamese agricultural products and differing commitments from Viet Nam to opening the service market for British businesses.

Potentially more significant, and directly relevant for tropical wood suppliers, was the announcement in January 2021 by the UK Trade Secretary Liz Truss that the UK will shortly submit a formal request to join the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership, the free-trade area comprising Australia, Brunei, Canada, Chile, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore and Viet Nam.

The UK government has taken other steps to integrate with Asia's regional blocs following its successful bid to become a "dialogue partner" of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). With this, the UK gains high-level access to ASEAN as well as enhanced practical cooperation on various policy issues with the regional bloc. It also enables the UK to join other important dialogue partners, including China, India and the United States of America.

Brexit—potential to drive direct imports of tropical woods into the UK

The long-term impacts of Brexit on UK imports of tropical wood products are still far from certain. At present, even the short-term effects are obscured by the unprecedented disruption to supply chains, shipping operations and markets caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Nevertheless, it seems likely that, despite the trade and cooperation agreement with the EU, the relative competitiveness of EU-based suppliers of wood and wood furniture products that previously benefited from frictionless trade will be reduced in the UK market. Tropical suppliers will therefore be competing on a more level playing field.

Moreover, the early signs of serious disruption in the trade between UK distributors and large hardwood traders in continental Europe, notably in Belgium and the Netherlands, has the potential to encourage more direct imports of tropical woods into the UK.

On the other hand, the ability of UK importers themselves to distribute tropical wood products across the EU is much diminished. The potential gains to tropical suppliers from their increased competitiveness in the UK may be insufficient to offset the longer-term drag on economic growth now that the UK has left the single market.

The UK government's own 2018 analysis of the impacts of various UK-EU trading relations following Brexit suggests that, in the scenario closest to the actual outcome (i.e. a free-trade agreement with tariffs on goods and non-tariff barriers equal to those in an average trade deal with the EU), the UK economy will be 4.9–6.7% smaller in 15 years compared with what it would have been if the UK had continued its membership of the EU.

Other implications

The implications of Brexit for tropical wood supplies in the UK were discussed in the December 2020 edition of the *Tropical Timber Market Report*.² The conclusions drawn there with respect to the introduction of the UK's new "global tariff" regime, the due-diligence requirements of the UK Timber Regulation compared with those of the EU Timber Regulation, construction product standards, and phytosanitary requirements, all remain valid. The new UK global tariff applies to all imports (from 1 January 2021) unless (a) the country or region has a trade deal with the UK; (b) the developing country has Generalized System of Preferences status with the UK; or (c) an open product quota has been registered with the World Trade Organization.

Find out more at: www.gov.uk/guidance/tariffs-on-goods-imported-into-the-uk and <https://tff.co.uk/uk-global-tariff-for-wood-and-wood-products-released>

² Volume 24 Number 23, 1–31 December 2020, pages 27–30, available at www.itto.int/market_information_service/back_issues/.

Tropical and topical

Compiled by **Ken Sato** *Amazon could be net contributor to greenhouse-gas emissions*

A study by Kristofer Covey and about 30 co-authors published in *Frontiers in Forests and Global Change* in March 2021 synthesizes current understanding of the sources of, and fluxes in, the major climate-forcing agents in the Amazon Basin. Climate-forcing agents include carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, black carbon, biogenic volatile organic compounds, aerosols, evapotranspiration and albedo, and these respond dynamically to both localized (e.g. fire, land-use change and infrastructure development) and global (e.g. warming and drying) changes. The authors consider that, despite considerable uncertainty, current warming from non-carbon-dioxide agents in the Amazon (especially methane and nitrous oxide) largely offsets—and most likely exceeds—the climate service provided by the biome's absorption of atmospheric carbon dioxide. In other words, the Amazon Basin is probably a net contributor to global warming. The authors say that “genuine efforts to understand and manage the biogeochemistry of climate in a rapidly changing Amazon Basin” require integrated approaches that take much greater account of non-carbon-dioxide factors.

More: www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/ffgc.2021.618401/full

New video portrays sustainable forest-based development in Guatemala

A video produced by ITTO and Guatemala's National Forest Institute (INAB) shows how communities are developing forest-based businesses with green supply chains, including an enterprise making wood-based kitchenware and another creating novelty items using pine needles. The two ventures are increasing incomes along with support for sustainable forest management—and inspiring others.

A priority for INAB is to support forest-related enterprises and entrepreneurs. As part of this, an ITTO-financed project was implemented in Guatemala from 2015 to 2018 with the aim of encouraging informal businesses such as backyard carpentry workshops to formalize and register with the National Forest Registry through the Electronic Forest Enterprise Information System (*Sistema Electrónico de Información de Empresas Forestales—SEINEF*) and thus become part of the country's formal economy.

The project worked with 19 small and medium-sized forest enterprises (known as MSMEs) throughout the country. One of these was Sacalá, a small business (and community of the same name) located in San Martín Jilotepeque, Chimaltenango, not far from Guatemala City. Sacalá, which is featured in the video, received support from the project to develop a business plan, increase management capacity, create a more robust company structure and develop new products and designs.

Watch the video at www.youtube.com/watch?v=SMw33n8VUmM&ab_channel=SFMItto

Community-based forestry in Indonesia needs stronger focus on location, study finds

The success of community-based forestry (CBF) in Indonesia would be enhanced by considering the different physical characteristics of each site and providing the technical support needed to balance the

programme's dual mandate of conservation and poverty alleviation, according to a new study by the United States Agency for International Development and the Center for International Forestry Research. The elevation, slope and proximity to infrastructure – such as roads and villages – affect the outcomes of CBF initiatives and determine the perceptions of farmers in each location. Government support is needed to identify tree species that can help meet reforestation targets in various landscapes while providing clear livelihood benefits.

More: www.cifor.org/knowledge/forests-news/71052

Using birds to help restore degraded forests

In a paper published in the December 2020 edition of the *Journal of Applied Ecology*, Wesley Silva and co-authors propose a new technique they call “induced seed dispersal” designed to amplify the role that many generalist frugivore species of terrestrial mammals, bats and birds play in seed dispersal in forest restoration. The technique, which the authors tested in the Atlantic forest biome in northeastern Brazil, involves offering seeds embedded in the pulp of commercial fruits or whole native fleshy fruits to generalist frugivores, which ingest the seeds and defecate them elsewhere. The scientists set feeders in a restored site and monitored the visiting pattern of the frugivores using camera-traps. They also set seed-traps to retrieve seeds dispersed by frugivores and offered around 1500 seeds per week of a plant, *Cecropia hololeuca* (a pioneer tree species), for a year.

According to the authors, the study demonstrated that the technique can make use of generalist frugivores to assist restoration and regeneration at sites where seed dispersal is compromised by a lack of dispersers or limited seed arrival. Inducing seed dispersal by generalist frugivores, they say, is a low-cost and easily managed technique that can be applied year round in restoration and forest enrichments at all scales.

More: <https://besjournals.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/1365-2664.13731>

Group tells Biden how to help save the Amazon

According to Mongabay, a bipartisan group of former officials in the United States of America has proposed a set of policy recommendations to help President Joe Biden and his administration deliver on their campaign pledge to put USD 20 billion toward the protection of the Amazon rainforest. The group's Amazon Protection Plan has four pillars: 1) mobilizing funding for conservation from private and public sources; 2) building forest-friendly policies into trade agreements; 3) requiring companies to disclose and manage deforestation risk in their supply chains and portfolio investments; and 4) strengthening international diplomacy around forest conservation. The plan makes no mention of sustainable forest management, although it does suggest that the administration direct development assistance towards, among other things, “providing forest-friendly economic development opportunities”, “rewarding jurisdictions that reduce deforestation through results-based payments” and “strengthening land tenure and the rights of indigenous peoples”.

More: <https://news.mongabay.com/2021/01/how-joe-biden-can-best-put-20b-to-work-saving-the-amazon/>; <https://climateprincipals.org/amazon-plan>

Recent editions

Compiled by
Ken Sato

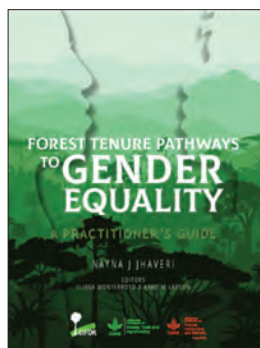


Storck, S. & Oliver, R. 2020. *FLEGT VPA partners in EU timber trade 2019*. Main report. November 2020. ITTO, Yokohama, Japan, and Independent Market Monitor, Brussels.

Available online:
www.flegtim.eu/images/IMM_2018_Annual_Report/Final_clean_version_Natalie_VPA-Partners-in-EU-Timber-Trade-Annual-Report-2018.pdf

This latest annual report of the Independent Market Monitor shows an increasing level of recognition of timber licensing under the European Union (EU)'s Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) initiative as a means to reduce importers' own risk under the EU Timber Regulation and increasing awareness of the wider benefits of implementing voluntary partnership agreements (VPAs) in participating countries. It also finds that EU traders are increasingly familiar with the administrative processes involved in importing FLEGT-licensed timber and that there is a very high level of acceptance of these processes.

The report recognizes the fundamental importance of raising awareness of the long-term benefits of the sustainable use of tropical timber and addressing environmental prejudice in the EU markets. VPA partner countries should be encouraged to develop individual marketing strategies for their FLEGT-licensed timber products in EU markets. The report highlights the importance of continuing efforts to bring more VPA processes to a successful conclusion and to widen the source-base, range and availability of FLEGT-licensed timber and timber products.



Jhaveri, N.J. 2021. *Forest tenure pathways to gender equality: a practitioner's guide*. Center for International Forestry Research, Bogor, Indonesia.

Available online:
www.cifor.org/knowledge/publication/7909

This practitioner's guide explains how to promote gender-responsive forest tenure reform in community-based forest regimes. It provides

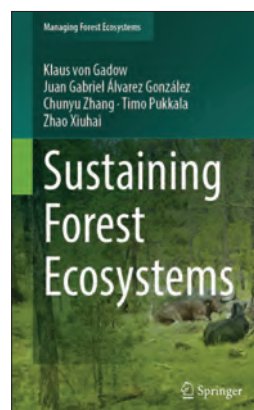
multiple forms of guidance, from conceptual ideas through to operational direction, good practices, case-study insights, research findings and resources for further exploration. The guide is designed to support practitioners from a range of institutions, such as government offices, non-governmental organizations, civil-society organizations, donor agencies, women's organizations, and networks and federations.



Rothrock, P., Weatherer, L., Ellis, K. & Samberg, L. 2021. *Trends in the implementation of ethical supply chains: a 2020 snapshot of the cocoa sector*. Forest Trends, Washington, DC.

Available online:
www.forest-trends.org/publications/trends-in-implementation-of-ethical-supply-chains-cocoa-2020

This book examines trends in the implementation of best practices for achieving ethical supply chains in the cocoa sector. In conducting the analysis, the authors researched and analyzed company sustainability commitments, production and procurement policies, as well as progress reporting against common approaches for pursuing ethical supply chains.



Von Gadow, K., Álvarez González, J.G., Zhang, C., Pukkala, T. & Zhao, X. 2021. *Sustaining forest ecosystems*. Springer Nature, Switzerland.

Available online:
www.springer.com/gp/book/9783030587130

Forest ecosystems encompass a great variety of communities of organisms interacting with their physical environments, from multi-aged natural forests to even-aged monocultures and secondary forests invaded by

foreign species. The challenge is to sustain the ability of these ecosystems to function by adapting to changing climates and satisfying a multitude of human demands. The first chapter of this book sets the scene with a discussion about the effects of forest management on ecosystem services. Details about forest observational infrastructures are introduced in the second chapter. The third chapter presents methods for analyzing forest density and structure. Models for estimating the shape and growth of individual forest trees are introduced in Chapter 4 and models of forest community production in Chapter 5. Methods for sustainable forest design are covered in Chapter 6.

Meetings

ITTO meetings

Postponed—new dates to be confirmed

4th World Teak Conference: Global Teak Market: Challenges and Opportunities for Emerging Markets and Developing Economies

Accra, Ghana

More: www.worldteakconference2020.com

This conference, which ITTO is co-organizing, will address the most crucial issues facing the global teak sector, including: the sustainable management of smallholder teak farming systems to supply markets with high-quality teakwood; improving existing silvicultural systems and practices for better stand management to achieve high-quality teakwood; market structures and value chains for teakwood trading and their impacts on the profitability of teak investments; and evaluating private and public investments in the teak sector and their impacts on socioeconomic conditions and rural livelihoods. The conference will make strategic, conceptual and operational recommendations to support the sustainable development of the teak sector.

8–10 June 2021

International Conference on Forest Education

Online

Contact: www.itto.int/events and www.fao.org/forestry/forest-education/96827/en

This conference will address the problems and challenges in forest education by analyzing relevant ongoing forest-education initiatives, approaches and key players. It will assess ways forward for enhancing forest education and develop a long-term vision and strategic plan to coordinate international efforts to advance forest education, including through an online platform. The conference is being co-organized by ITTO, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the International Union of Forest Research Organizations within the Collaborative Partnership on Forests, with financial support from the German Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture.

2–7 November 2021

57th Session of the International Tropical Timber Council and Sessions of the Associated Committees

Yokohama, Japan

More: www.itto.int

The International Tropical Timber Council is ITTO's governing body. It meets once a year to discuss wide-ranging issues of interest to members, including those related to the legal trade of tropical timber and the sustainable management of tropical forests. Council sessions are open to official delegates and accredited observers.

Other meetings

Postponed—new dates to be confirmed

XV World Forestry Congress

Seoul, Republic of Korea

More: wfc2021korea.org

12–13 April 2021

Forests in Women's Hands: International Conference on Women in Forestry

Online

More: forstfrauen.at/en/konferenz-2021

13–15 April 2021 and Q2 2022

ICLEI (Local Governments for Sustainability) World Congress 2021–2022

Online/Malmö, Sweden

More: <https://worldcongress2021.iclei.org>

28–30 April 2021

16th Session of the United Nations Forum on Forests

New York, USA

More: www.un.org/esa/forests/forum/index.html

2–7 May 2021

16th International Peatland Congress 2020

Tallinn, Estonia

More: www.ipc2020.com

5–8 May 2021

Forestry: Bridge to the Future Sofia, Bulgaria

More: <https://conf2020.forestry-ideas.info>

15–17 June 2021

60th Meeting of the Global Environment Facility Council

Washington, DC, USA

More: www.thegef.org/council-meetings

21–24 June 2021

9th World Conference on Ecological Restoration

Online

More: www.cifor.org/event/9th-world-conference-on-ecological-restoration

22–24 June 2021

3rd IUFRO Acacia Conference 2021

Online/Kuching, Malaysia

More: <https://iufroacacia2020.com>

6–8 July 2021

Treescapes 2021

Online

More: www.birmingham.ac.uk/facilities/mds-cpd/conferences/forest/index.aspx

15–17 July 2021

10th International Wood Construction Forum

Paris, France

More: www.forum-boisconstruction.com

9–12 August 2021

World Conference on Timber Engineering

Santiago, Chile

More: <https://wcte2021.com>

16–18 August 2021

20th Commonwealth Forestry Conference

Online

More: <https://cfc2021.ubc.ca>

16–19 August 2021

MMV10: 10th International Conference on Monitoring and Management of Visitors in Recreational and Protected Areas

Online

More: www.nmbu.no/en/events/mmv10

7–9 September 2021

Decorative Hardwoods Association Annual Meeting

Head Island, USA

More: www.decorativehardwoods.org/events/2021-dha-spring-conference

7–10 September 2021

12th European Conference on Ecological Restoration

Online

More: www.sere2021.org

3–11 September 2021

IUCN World Conservation Congress

Marseille, France

More: www.iucncongress2020.org

20–24 September 2021

Biological Invasions in Forests: Trade, Ecology and Management

Prague, Czechia

More: <https://iufro.v2.czu.cz/en>

27–30 September 2021

Joint Annual Meeting of the Council on Forest Engineering and the International Symposium on Forest Mechanization: Forest Engineering Family—Growing Forward from Our Roots

Online

More: <https://cofe-formec2021.org>

4–6 October 2021

Managerial, Social and Environmental Aspects of the Forest-based Sector for Sustainable Development

Brno, Czechia

More: <https://iufro2021.ldf.mendelu.cz>

11–24 October 2021

15th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity

Kunming, China

More: www.cbd.int/meetings/COP-15

1–12 November 2021

2021 UN Climate Change Conference

Glasgow, UK

More: <https://ukcop26.org>

10–13 November 2021

AUSTIMBER 2020/2021

Victoria, Australia

More: www.austimber.org.au

June 2022

Socio-ecological Conflicts in Forest Management: Risks of (not) Adapting?

Nancy, France

More: <https://workshop.inrae.fr/iufro-risk-analysis-nancy>

1–3 June 2022

Carrefour International du Bois Nantes, France

More: www.timbershow.com

26 June–1 July 2022

Foliar, Shoot, Stem and Rust Diseases of Trees

Durham, USA

More: www.iufro.org/science/divisions/division-7/70000/70200/70202

12–16 September 2022

ForestSAT 2022

Krakow, Poland

<http://forestsatsat2020.forestsat.com>

Note that the above-listed meetings are all subject to date changes and cancellation in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. Some meetings are yet to indicate decisions on postponement or cancellation, or have not yet rescheduled; please check the contact addresses for the latest information.

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

