

Appraisal of ten years of forest certification

The aim of forest certification, as established by the *Forest Stewardship Council (FSC)* in 1993, was to raise forest management standards in the large tropical forest areas around the world in order to make them more sustainable. Sustainable management implies forest planning based on inventories; monitoring and evaluation; improved silvicultural techniques and biodiversity conservation. Tropical forests present an enormous management challenge due to a complex set of issues. In terms of the forests themselves, they often have more than 400 different tree species and cover a large surface area. Governments in these areas often have limited resources and capacity; the rights of the local communities tend to be largely ignored; tenure rights are often poorly defined and in some cases corruption is institutionalised. Of the 100 million hectares of forest certified worldwide, only 3% are in tropical settings, and of this certified tropical area only a very small percentage is in natural forest settings.

In its short existence, the expectations placed on forest certification have been too high. The study *"Certification in complex socio-political settings"*, edited by Forest Trends, sets out the main challenges faced by certification as it enters its second decade – in particular, finding ways to certify forests in the tropics and in "transition economies". There, the situation is exacerbated by the general lack of good governance and policy projects, not to mention

weak markets and continuing donor dependence. However, the study also analyses experiences and capitalization in several regions with a view to improving future certification initiatives. Various norms, including the *FSC*, the *Pan European Forest Certification scheme (PEFC)*, as well as national and private-sector initiatives, have produced promising results in Russia and Central and South America.

The Russian case reflects various aspects of sustainable forest management in practice. The certification project *Priluzye Model Forest (PMF)*, which covers 795,000 ha in the Komi Republic in northeast Russia, was launched in 1996 by the WWF. In 2002, the NGO Silver Taiga took over the reins with financial support from the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC). One interesting part of this project was the development of a mapping system for high conservation value

*Certified forest operation in Objachevo, Komi Republic.
Photo: J. Blaser, 2002*



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SPECIAL FEATURE

forests (HCVF) which comprise about 11% of the model forest area. The inventory method was again adopted by regional forest authorities in 2001, resulting in the mapping of 5.5 million ha of HCVF in the Komi Republic. Since the exploitation of HCVF in theory requires FSC approval, the various project partners were encouraged to set up a regional FSC Working Group. Although this process has had a positive impact on the planning of sustainable forest management, it has yet to become fully integrated in current forest practices. The process in Russia suffers from a weak institutional basis: instability of local forestry authorities, short-term concessions and little knowledge of the value added gained through certification, to name but a few.

Nevertheless, IKEA works closely with the WWF to develop the "staircase" model in Russia, an innovative certification approach. It is based on an audit to pinpoint non-compliance of current forestry practices with the sustainable forest management standard. The next step is to develop a plan of action to remedy the situation, and then regularly check its impact and any positive developments to which it may give rise. IKEA uses this model to increase the quantity of certified wood and to ensure that its home furnishing products come from sustainable forests.

SOURCE

Certification in complex socio-political settings: looking forward to the next decade. Ed. Michael Richards. *Forest Trends*, 2004. 33 p. www.forest-trends.org/resources/pdf/Complex%20Settings.pdf

For further reading:

La certificación forestal y las comunidades: mirando hacia la siguiente década. Ed. Augusta Molnar. *Forest Trends*, 2003. 91 p. www.gtz.de/forest_certification/download/d66s.pdf

Etude de faisabilité sur la certification forestière panafricaine. Ed. Indufor Oy. *INDUFOR*, 2002. 112 p. www.gtz.de/forest_certification/download/d63f.pdf

Does globalisation foster or endanger adapted and diversified agriculture?

Liberalisation of world trade is continuing, although negotiations are very difficult as a result of the different positions taken on liberalisation of agriculture. Two recent publications discuss consequences and opportunities related to agricultural liberalisation from different perspectives. Colin Hines believes that diversified local food systems, and hence food security, are endangered. Global enterprises are increasingly influencing agricultural production. Increases in production are being achieved at the cost of employment conditions and environmental and social conditions. Hines advocates "localisation" of economic life, with a focus on local self-determination and independence.

The authors of the discussion paper entitled "Agriculture and Rural Development", on the other hand, believe that liberalisation offers an opportunity for smallholders. By diversifying their product range and moving away from industrial monocultures, they will be able to profit from liberalised world trade. But diversified production systems, adapted to natural conditions, must be able to respond with flexibility to the needs and demands of the market. Access to current market information, new technologies, and educating farmers are the most important conditions for successful diversification. International donors must offer support if poor population groups are also to benefit from these opportunities.

SOURCES

A Global Look to the Local: Replacing economic globalisation with democratic localisation. Colin Hines. IIED 2003. 79 p.
www.iied.org/docs/sarl/GlobaltoLocal_Hines.pdf

Agricultural Diversification for the Poor: Guidelines for Practitioners. Shawki Barghouti et al. *Agriculture and Rural Development Discussion Paper 1.* The World Bank. 2004. 48p.
[http://inweb18.worldbank.org/ESSD/ardext.nsf/11ByDocName/AgriculturalDiversificationforthePoorGuidelinesforPractitioners/\\$FILE/Diversification_Web.pdf](http://inweb18.worldbank.org/ESSD/ardext.nsf/11ByDocName/AgriculturalDiversificationforthePoorGuidelinesforPractitioners/$FILE/Diversification_Web.pdf)

Agriculture Investment Sourcebook

One important pillar of the World Bank's new rural strategy is the promotion of agricultural growth to reduce poverty, while also giving consideration to sustainable management of natural resources. A new online sourcebook aims to help implement this goal. This reference work gives project directors and other interested parties an overview of positive (along with some negative) best practices and innovations relating to agricultural investments to alleviate poverty.

The sourcebook is divided into 11 thematic modules covering political-institutional, technological, ecological and economic issues. Each module contains a general overview, summaries of best practices in specific areas of investment, and examples of concrete innovative cases. The publication offers quick insight into different thematic areas, although it contains no details about planning and implementation of investments.

While the first edition of this sourcebook is based primarily on best practices garnered by the World Bank, incorporation of best practices from other development organisations and countries is planned for later editions.

SOURCE

Agriculture Investment Sourcebook. World Bank. 2004.
www-esd.worldbank.org/ais/

Workshop on decentralisation, federal systems in forestry and national forest programmes

This country-led initiative organized by Switzerland (SAEFL, SDC, Intercooperation) and Indonesia (Government and CIFOR) in support of the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) sought ways to improve the quality of "on the ground" forest-related activities. Questions regarding the balance between centralization and decentralization, with a special focus on problems that occur during transitional phases of the decentralization processes, were discussed. As Jagmohan Maini, a UN professional, said, "the many thoughtful presentations and the outputs from the Working Groups at the Workshop collectively constitute a very significant contribution to the UNFF process, particularly in structuring the future deliberations and debate on the topic in a more systematic manner, in terms of concepts and the vocabulary". A side event was organized at the 4th meeting of the UNFF in Geneva on 4th May, with more than 60 participants, to inform the intergovernmental community about the outcome of the Interlaken workshop. Concerning decisions of the UNFF in connection with the Interlaken Workshop, delegates succeeded in introducing the term "decentralization" into the resolution on Social and Cultural Aspects of Forests. OP 8 accordingly reads: "Encourages countries as appropriate to explore options for decentralization of decision making on sustainable forest management, including through sharing experiences and lessons learned, as a possible means to effectively address social and cultural aspects."

An unedited draft report is available on www.intercooperation.ch/offers/events/interlaken-2004/InterlakenUneditedDraftReport.pdf and will be improved to become an official UN document, which will be translated into the 6 languages of the UN for the UNFF meeting in 2005 in New York. As other possible outcomes, several countries, including Indonesia and Switzerland, are now analyzing ways to promote realistic assessment and implementation of decentralized forest management processes.

SOURCE

Interlaken Workshop on decentralization, federal systems in forestry and national forest programmes, 27–30 April 2004, Interlaken, Switzerland
www.iisd.ca/sd/forest/sdlak

Mobility is critical for conservation

Mobile peoples make valuable contributions to biodiversity conservation through resource use that has been adapted to natural conditions over hundreds of years, particularly in arid regions. Their migrations across different habitats and sometimes across national boundaries create linkages between different ecological zones, thereby increasing the dispersion of seeds and insects. These traditions have created biological corridors that are very important today for the preservation of entire landscapes.

The World Alliance of Mobile Indigenous Peoples, founded in 2003 at the World Parks Congress, is committed to work for the recognition and the rights of mobile population groups, through better knowledge transfer and by exerting influence on legislation, policies and programmes. The new alliance is also and above all committed to ensuring that protected areas are not used to exclude mobile indigenous peoples from their traditional grazing and migratory areas.

SOURCE

World Alliance of Mobile Indigenous Peoples. 2003.
www.iucn.org/themes/ceesp/WAMIP.htm

New land laws in Africa: Are they equitable and efficient?

In the last two decades traditional rules on land ownership and land use have been incorporated into new land laws in sub-Saharan African countries. Greater attention has been given to the rights of vulnerable population groups such as women, pastoralists and migrants, and responsibility for the granting of land rights and registration has been partly handed over to local institutions. But is this enough for equitable and efficient regulation of land ownership as an important condition for sustainable land management? An IIED study made a comprehensive analysis of the current status of land ownership and administration, drawing conclusions from experience in areas such as land security, redistribution of land, decentralised management, and improved conditions among vulnerable groups. A lack of institutions, an insufficiently informed population, and the need for increased linkage between land reforms and development were three of the shortcomings identified.

Unfortunately, few concrete proposals have been elaborated to assist the different actors concerned in making further improvements with respect to land issues. The diversity of social, legal and historical conditions is so vast in African countries that such an aim would be difficult to achieve in the scope of a summary study such as this one.

SOURCE

Land Tenure and Administration in Africa: Lessons of Experience and Emerging Issues. Lorenzo Cotula, Camilla Toulmin, Ced Hesse. IIED, FAO 2004. 44p.
ISBN: 1 84369 497 2

Implementation

National forest policy in Kyrgyzstan

A "community of practice" assembled at a meeting organised by the FAO in November 2003 to examine the instruments used to evaluate stakeholder participation in national forest programmes. One paper presented at this meeting offers a step-by-step guide to the experiences of Kyrgyzstan in relation to participation in its national forest programme over the past five years. It highlights elements that could prompt similar evaluation processes for different situations. The principles, defined by the *National Concept for Forestry Development*, concern biodiversity conservation and combating poverty. The evaluation criteria applied in Kyrgyzstan mainly focus on improving the image of the national forestry service and promoting sustainable use of forestry resources among the local population. The paper also examines the indicators (at the development stage) and relevant verifiers to assess the participation of forest rangers in management planning, the distribution of profits from the sale of forestry products to benefit households, and to measure both the number of stakeholders involved in community-based forest management and the surface area of new plantations.

SOURCES

Enhancing stakeholder participation in national forest programmes. Proceedings of the second technical meeting of the community of practice, Rome, 24–25 November 2003. 3 p.
www.fao.org/DOCREP/MEETING/007/AC922E/AC922E00.HTM
Annex 5, National Forest Policy in Kyrgyzstan: 5 years on the road with participation. 16 p.
www.fao.org/DOCREP/MEETING/007/AC922E/AC922E07.htm

Livestock services and poverty reduction

The marked increase in demand for meat and dairy products in developing countries could prove an opportunity for millions of poor livestock keepers. However, livestock services provided by development programmes so far are not sufficiently oriented towards small-scale livestock farming and poverty reduction. A new study based on literature and case studies has investigated into the question of what measures are needed to change this.

The following two prerequisites are seen as pivotal for successful implementation: On the one hand, it is necessary to identify those regions and production systems where livestock development is most liable to efficiently contribute to poverty reduction. On the other hand, poor livestock keepers must be much better integrated into planning and implementation processes of development programmes.

Apart from these, the study suggests many other measures to improve livestock services, such as an efficient distribution of roles between the public and private sectors, a more

A M'Borroro shepherd with his herd.

IFAD Central African Republic-National Livestock Project.

Photo: Roberto Faidutti (IFAD)



specific integration of women, consideration of the special concerns of communities suffering from AIDS, promotion of producer organisations, use of better adapted technologies, and financial services for the poorest. Very little attention is given to the consideration of environmental concerns.

SOURCE

Livestock services and the poor. A global initiative. Collecting, coordinating and sharing experiences. IFAD, DANIDA, The World Bank. Rome, March 2004. 152 p. www.ifad.org/Irkm/book/english.pdf

For further reading:

The Role of Livestock in Economic Development and Poverty Reduction. Martin Upton. Pro-Poor Livestock Policy Initiative Working Paper No. 10, FAO, 11. February 2004. 66p. www.fao.org/ag/againfo/projects/en/ppipi/docarc/wp10.pdf

Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) and rural development in India

Three ICT projects in India strive to achieve one common goal: to provide the rural population with useful information. Village centres equipped with computers and internet access – so-called kiosks – function as information hubs and can be consulted by farmers seeking information on the weather, market prices, and agricultural know-how; project employees provide advice. One of the projects is run by the government, the second by a sugar cooperative with government support, and the third is run by an agricultural supply company. A study examined all three projects. Its findings indicate that the kiosks are most frequently visited by young, rather well-educated men. Surprisingly, in the state-run project poor population groups have participated to a representative extent. Everywhere, kiosks were met with great interest by the rural population, although ICT has been used predominantly for communication and less for searching for information. Due to their different nature, the three projects were hardly comparable.

Even though the study shows that the potential of ICT is by no means exhausted, these projects are more than just conventional extension services with a particularly generous computer budget. Numerous initiatives by the

state, NGOs and the private sector to introduce ICT in rural regions will certainly develop quickly. They will contribute to narrowing the digital gap between rural and urban areas.

SOURCE

Information and Communication Technology in Agricultural Development: A Comparative Analysis of Three Projects from India. Shaik. N. Meera, Anita Jhamtani, D. U. M. Rao. In: AgREN Network Paper No.135, odi, January 2004. 20p. www.odi.org.uk/agren/papers/agrenpaper_135.pdf

Improving private sector participation (PSP) in water supply and sanitation services

One of the Millennium Development Goals is to halve the percentage of the world's population with no access to clean drinking water, sanitary installations and waste water treatment plants by 2015. This goal can only be achieved if government institutions, multilateral organisations, the private sector, and civil society join forces. Better integrating the private sector is one possibility to improve efficiency in the water sector. However, there is often a lack of guidelines and instruments to help plan and implement effective, efficient and equitable PSP projects.

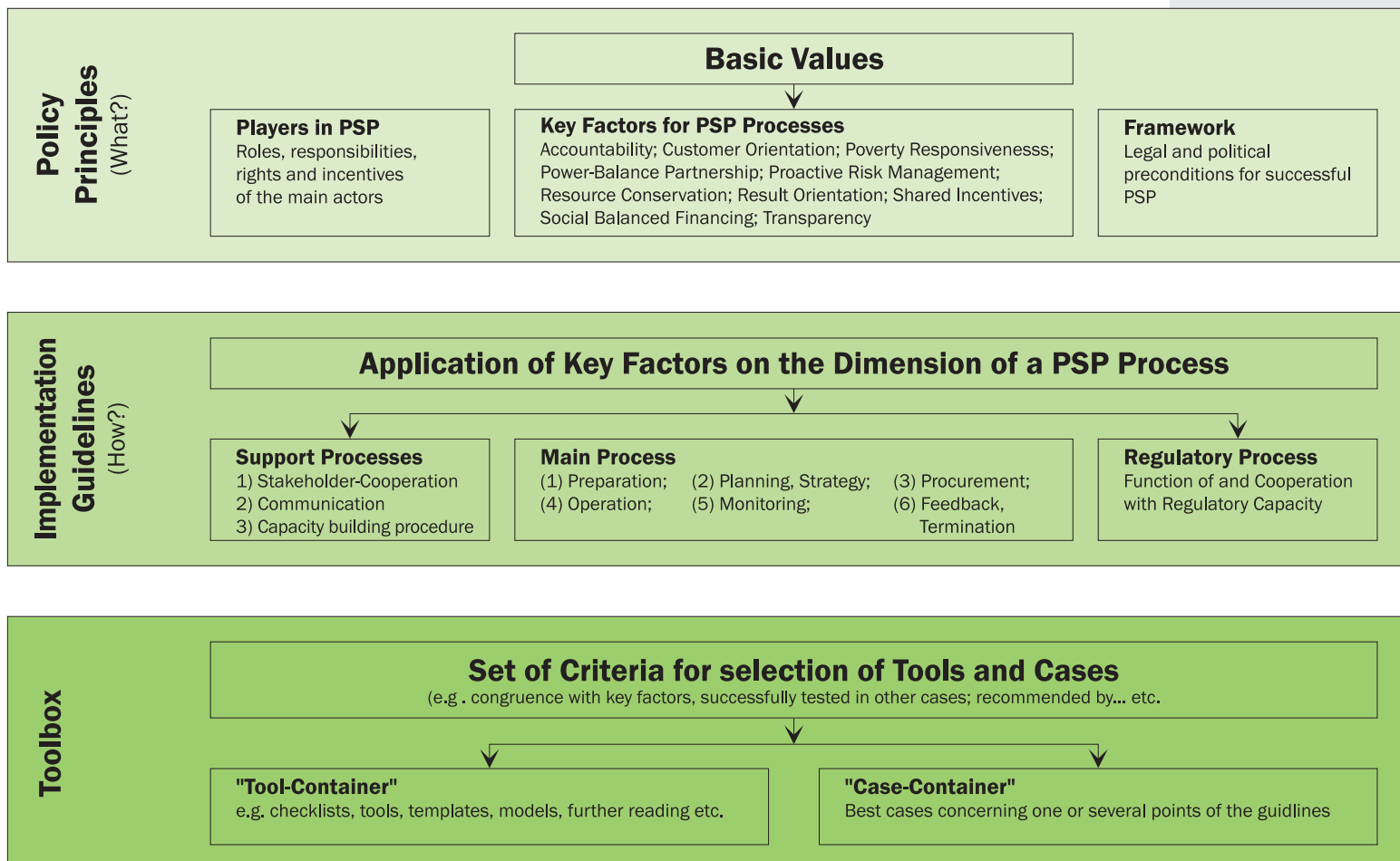
Together, the Swiss Government, represented by the SDC and seco, and Swiss Re have launched an initiative to develop policy principles describing stakeholders' basic values, key factors, functions, and responsibilities, as well as implementation guidelines for specialists featuring information on specific tools and examples of successful PSP projects.

Among others, the initiative mentions the following key factors as necessary preconditions for successful private sector participation: poverty responsiveness, resource conservation, transparency, socially and economically balanced financing, and proactive risk management.

A toolbox with a set of checklists, tools, references and case studies will provide support for operational implementation of PSP projects.

SOURCE

Policy Principles and Implementation Guidelines for Private Sector Participation in Sustainable Water Supply and Sanitation Services. Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation SDC, SwissRe, State Secretariat for Economic Affairs seco. April 2004. www.pspwater.org/public/index.html



The three interlinked products that are being developed by the PSP Water Initiative.

New Rice for Africa

Sierra Leonean researcher Dr. Monty Jones has been decorated with the World Food Prize 2004 for his development of a New Rice for Africa (NERICA). By crossing high-yield Asian varieties with a locally well-adapted African variety, he managed to breed a promising new kind of rice. The most important advantages of NERICA are: higher yields, shorter vegetation period, higher protein content and resistance against pests and draught.

Such a rice variety has a great potential in West and Central Africa. The food situation in this area is critical. In addition, the demand for rice increases by 6% every year due to urbanisation and changing consumption habits. To meet these needs, rice is imported at high costs. The 20 million local small-scale producers – a large portion of them being women – do not have the money necessary to increase the yield of conventional varieties by irrigation, fertilisation or pesticides. NERICA can help improve this situation. In 1996 the first farmers evaluated the new varieties. During recent years the cultivation area of NERICA has grown considerably in the highlands of West and Central Africa. The NERICA project intends to introduce the rice variety also in the lowlands, where the climate is different, and in East Africa. The great breakthrough has yet to come: The adoption of new products by farmers takes time.

SOURCES

Chinese and African Scientists Named Co-Winners of the 2004 World Food Prize. Press Release. The World Food Prize Foundation. 3 p.

www.worldfoodprize.org/04laureates/prelease.htm

NERICA on the move. A symbol of hope for rice farmers in Africa. West Africa Rice Development Association (WARDA) – 2003. 5 p.
www.warda.org/NERICA%20flyer/technology.htm

New Rice for Africa: NERICA – Rice for Life. West Africa Rice Development Association (WARDA), 2001. 8 p.
www.warda.org/publications/NERICA8.pdf



Farmers assessing Participatory Varietal Selection (PVS) trials, forest zone, The Gambia. Photo: WARDA

Impressum

InfoResources News is published five times a year in English, French and Spanish, both as an electronic and as a print version. This newsletter is free of charge and can be ordered at the address given below.

InfoResources is a network providing and disseminating information on natural resources in international cooperation and is based on three information services: Infoforest/Intercooperation, Info Service CDE and InfoAgrar. InfoResources is financed by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC).

Editorial team:

Ruth Wenger, Susanne Wymann von Dach, Felix Hintermann

Contact:

*InfoResources
Länggasse 85
3052 Zollikofen
Tel.: +41 31 910 21 91
Fax: +41 31 910 21 54
info@inforesources.ch
www.inforesources.ch*