

**APPLICATION OF
NATIONAL
CRITERIA AND
INDICATORS

FOR

SUSTAINABLE
MANAGEMENT OF
NATURAL TROPICAL
FORESTS**



PAPUA NEW GUINEA FOREST AUTHORITY

30TH AUGUST 2003

1. INTRODUCTION

At its Twenty-ninth Session in Yokohama in November 2000, the International Tropical Timber Council strongly urged member countries to use the ITTO Criteria and Indicators for reporting to ITTO on the progress made towards the Year 2000 Objective [Decision 2 (XXIX)]. It also requested the Executive-Director to develop a format to facilitate the reporting of progress in implementing the ITTO Criteria and Indicators.

Two Formats have been prepared in response to these Decisions, one for the National Level and one for the Forest Management Unit Level.

The National Level Format consists of two parts:

- ⇒ A Questionnaire designed to collect data on all the ITTO Criteria and Indicators; and
- ⇒ A Summary of Highlights, which will present the most significant features of the Questionnaire, particularly progress towards sustainable management or special difficulties encountered.

The reports based upon these Formats are important documents. They will bring to fruition the objectives of the criteria and indicators – to assist countries in the process of achieving sustainable forest management and to give a clear signal to the outside world and to those who purchase tropical timber products that ITTO producer countries are making real progress towards sustainable forest management.

The Papua New Guinea Forest Authority, who is the regulatory government agency overseeing the implementation of sustainable forest management principles has compiled the country report for Papua New Guinea.

Many of the indicators are quantitative and do not cause any problems if the data are available. But many are qualitative, concerning the existence and implementation of guidelines, procedures etc. As far as possible, subjective terms have been avoided. Altogether, the PNG National Report was compiled based on the first set of seven (7) criteria and their varying number of indicators: The Criteria include:

2. CRITERIA AND INDICATORS

Criterion 1: Enabling Conditions For Sustainable Forest Management

This criterion addresses the general institutional requirements that are necessary to make sustainable forest management possible. Most of them cover the policy, legal and institutional frameworks and are mainly descriptive in nature. Taken together, the information gathered indicates the extent of a country's political commitment to sustainable forest management.

Criterion 2: Forest Resource Security

Sustainable forest management is a long-term enterprise and depends critically upon the stability and security of a nation's forest estate. Hence, this criterion lays the basic foundation for sustainable forest practices. It considers comprehensively the extent and percentage of land under natural and plantation forests, the needs for the conservation of biological diversity and the aspirations of present and future generations in relation to forest goods and services in the overall context of national economic planning, as well as in the quest to achieve sustainable development.

Criterion 3: Forest Ecosystem Health And Condition

This criterion relates to the condition of a country's forests and the healthy biological functioning of its forest ecosystems. Forest conditions and health can be affected by a variety of human actions and natural occurrences, from air pollution, fire, flooding and storms to insects and diseases.

Criterion 4: Flow Of Forest Produce

This criterion is concerned with forest management for the production of wood and non-wood forest products. Such production can only be sustained in the long-term if it is economically and financially viable, environmentally sound and socially acceptable.

Forests earmarked for timber production are able to fulfil a number of other important forest functions, such as environmental protection and the conservation of species and ecosystems. These multiple roles of forest should be safeguarded by the application of sound management practices that maintain the potential of the forest resource to yield the full range of benefits to society.

Criterion 5: Biological Diversity

This criterion relates to the conservation and maintenance of biological diversity, including ecosystems, species and genetic diversity. The general principles are spelt out in the ITTO Guidelines on the Conservation of Biological Diversity in Tropical Production Forests (ITTO Policy Development Series No.5).

Criterion 6: Soil And Water

This criterion deals with the protection of soil and water in the forest. The importance of this is two-fold. First, it has a bearing on maintaining the productivity and quality of soil and water within the forest and its related aquatic ecosystems (and therefore on the health and condition of the forest, Criterion 3); secondly, it also plays a crucial role outside the forest in maintaining downstream water quality and flow and in reducing flooding and sedimentation.

Criterion 7: Economic, Social And Cultural Aspects

This criterion deals with the economic, social and cultural aspects of the forest, besides those mentioned under Criterion 4 - Flow of Forest Produce, Criterion 5 - Biological Diversity and Criterion 6 - Soil and Water. In this regard, a well-managed forest is a constantly self-renewing resource and it produces a host of benefits, ranging from high quality timber to satisfying the basic needs of people living in and around the forest. It also contributes to the well being and enhances the quality of life of the population in providing opportunities for recreation and eco-tourism, as well as in generating employment and investment in the processing industries. Hence, if sustainably managed, the forest has the potential to make an important contribution to the overall sustainable development of the country.

There is also a section on definitions of commonly used terms. Additional terminologies and definitions as it relates to forestry in Papua New Guinea have been added to the ITTO list.

3. DEFINITIONS

The following are definitions of important terms as they are used in this Papua New Guinea Country Report, largely taken from ITTO's Criteria and Indicators for Sustainable Management of Natural Tropical Forests¹ and FAO's Forest Resource Assessment 2000². Additional terminologies are included as used in Papua New Guinea.

Biological Diversity

The variability among living organisms from all sources including, inter alia, terrestrial, marine and other aquatic ecosystems and the ecological complexes of which they are part; this includes diversity within species, between species and of ecosystems (Source: The Convention on Biological Diversity).

Criterion

An aspect that is considered important by which sustainable forest management may be assessed. A criterion is accompanied by a set of related indicators.

Encroachment

The act or action of using forest land contrary to the provisions provided for in forestry laws and regulations with regard to forest land uses.

¹ Criteria and Indicators for Sustainable Management of Natural Tropical Forests. ITTO Policy Development Series No. 7. ITTO, Yokohama 1998.

² FRA 2000 Terms and Definitions. Forest Resources Assessment Programme. Working Paper 1, FAO, Rome, 1998.

Forest Management Unit

A forest management unit (FMU) is a clearly defined forest area, managed to a set of explicit objectives and according to a long-term management plan.

Forest Management Agreement

A Forest Management and Agreement (FMA) is the Papua New Guinea equivalent of a forest management unit (FMU).

Forest Type

A naturally occurring community of trees and associated plant species of definite botanical composition with uniform physiognomy (structure) and growing in uniform ecological conditions whose species composition remains relatively stable over time. These are most often scientifically described at the 'association' level.

Indicator

A quantitative, qualitative or descriptive attribute that, when periodically measured or monitored, indicates the direction of change.

Natural Forest

Forest land composed of indigenous trees, not planted by man, which is further classified using the criteria of forest formation (or type), degree of human disturbance or modification and human interference, and normally owned by customary land groups called clans.

Natural Forest Reforestation

Natural forest areas, which, have been logged but have been or will be rehabilitated with natural rainforest indigenous species.

Permanent Forest Estate

Land, whether public or private, secured by law and kept under permanent forest cover. This includes land for the production of timber and other forest products, for the protection of soil and water, and for the conservation of biological diversity, as well as land intended to fulfil a combination of these functions.

Plantation Forest

Forest stands established by planting or/and seeding in the process of afforestation or reforestation which are either of introduced species (all planted stands) or intensively managed stands of indigenous species, which meet all the following criteria: one or two species, even-aged, regular spacing.

Resource Owners or landowners

Customary landholders, who are also owners of forests on the land from whom forest management and development rights are acquired by the state through Forest Management Agreements for fifty (50) years, on a thirty-five (35) year cutting cycle.

Sustainable Forest Management

Sustainable forest management is the process of managing forest to achieve one or more clearly specified objectives of management with regard to the production of a continuous flow of desired forest products and services without undue reduction of its inherent values and future productivity and without undue undesirable effects on the physical and social environment.

4. THE NATIONAL REPORT

The National Report was completed in 2003 and sent to ITTO for its compilation of status reports on the status of all such reports for the Tropical Forest zone countries. The report in general revealed that there has been some progress in sustainable forest management of Natural Tropical Forests in Papua New Guinea since 1995.

The report also revealed that PNG is well equipped with enabling conditions to attain sustainable forest management. In this regard, the forest industry is over regulated as compared to the other South Pacific Island countries' institutional framework settings or enabling conditions for attaining sustainable forest management. Nevertheless, due to financial and manpower constraints one hundred percent (100%) enforcement is quite difficult to achieve, considering the remoteness of forest concessions and their inaccessibility by the cheapest means of transport that is land transport (motor vehicle).

While the National Report provides an overview of the trends and progresses in sustainable forest management, PNG is yet to trial the Application of ITTO Criteria and Indicators for Sustainable Forest Management of Natural Tropical Forests at the Forest Management Unit Level (FMU). Due to financial constraints these C & Is have not been tested at the FMU level to measure the significance, practicability and the suitability of these C & Is. A total of nine representative concessions throughout PNG has been selected, however, to date there is no progress because of lack of funding. Including a train the trainers' workshop for the three regions (MOMASE, New Guinea Islands and Southern Region), an estimated funding of K100,000 (or USD30,000 equivalent) is required for the FMU level exercise.

4.1 Institutions/agencies consulted for the National Report

Papua New Guinea Forest Authority, in consultation with Department of Environment and Conservation and the National Agriculture Quarantine and Inspection Authority completed this report. However, the feed-back from Department of Environment and

Conservation was very poor resulting in the bulk of the Criteria and Indicators relating to regulatory functions vested under this department not been completed, especially for Criteria 4 & 5. Thus, leaves a gap on the ecological functions and aspects relating to sustainable forest management in this report.

4.2 National Focal Point

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