

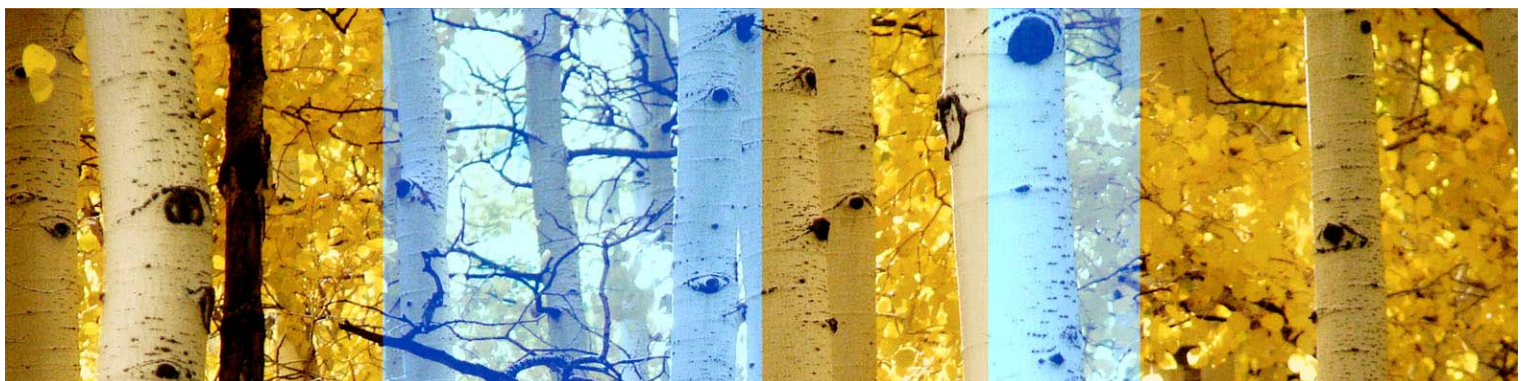
Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland

**Final Evaluation of Regional Forest Projects in Mekong, Andean
and Central America**

Final Report

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	1
1. INTRODUCTION	11
2. DESCRIPTION OF THE CONTEXT AND THE EVALUATED PROJECTS	12
2.1 Finland's development co-operation in the forest sector	12
2.1.1 Finland's Development Policy Programme 2007-2012	12
2.1.2 Finland's Development Policy Programme 2012	13
2.1.3 Finnish development policy guidelines for forest sector 2013	14
2.1.4 2016 Government Report on Development Policy: One World, Common Future – Toward sustainable development	14
2.1.5 Financial support to the forestry sector in Finland's development co-operation	15
2.1.6 Timing of the regional forest projects in relation with MFA policies on development and forests	15
2.1.7 Global context	16
2.2 Presentation of Finnfor-II, ForInfo and MFS regional forestry projects	18
2.2.1 Integrated Environmental and Forest Management Co-operation Project in Central America	18
2.2.2 Sustainable Forest Management Programme	19
2.2.3 Livelihood Improvement through Generation and Ownership of Forest Information by Local People in Products and Services Markets	20
3. EVALUATION METHODOLOGY	22
3.1 Introduction	22
3.2 Strengths and limitations	22
4. KEY FINDINGS	24
4.1 Relevance	25
4.2 Effectiveness	28
4.3 Efficiency	33
4.4 Impact	34
4.5 Sustainability	36
4.6 Aid Effectiveness	38
4.7 Coherence	39
5. CONCLUSIONS	42
5.1 Relevance	42
5.2 Effectiveness	43
5.3 Efficiency	44
5.4 Impact	44
5.5 Sustainability	44
5.6 Aid Effectiveness	45
5.7 Coherence	45
6. RECOMMENDATIONS	46
7. LESSONS LEARNED	48
7.1 Relevance and Design	48
7.2 Effectiveness	48
7.3 Sustainability	49

LIST OF ANNEXES

Annex 1	Terms of reference
Annex 2	Inception report
Annex 3	Detailed methodology
Annex 4	Evaluation matrix
Annex 5	Detailed scoring sheet of evaluation questions
Annex 6	Mission reports (available on request)
Annex 7	References
Annex 8	Documents consulted
Annex 9	People consulted
Annex 10	Evaluation Brief
Annex 11	Presentation on draft final report

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2.1	Forestry aid as a share of total Finnish Official Development Assistance	15
Figure 2.2	Timeline for three regional forest projects regarding Finland's development co-operation policies	16
Figure 2.3	Map of the regional forest projects	18
Figure 4.1	Influence of the three projects on multidimensional poverty reduction	30

LIST OF TABLES

Table 2.1	Summary of Finland's Development Policy 2007-2012	12
Table 2.2	Summary of Finland's Development Policy 2012-2015	13
Table 2.3	Summary of Finland's Development Policy 2016-2019	15
Table 2.4	Finland's multilateral co-operation in the forestry sector 2009-2013 as planned in the 2009 strategy document	17
Table 2.5	Summary table of Finnfor-II	19
Table 2.6	Summary table of MFS programme	20
Table 2.7	Summary table of ForInfo project	21
Table 4.1	Scoring of the three projects by evaluation criteria	24

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ACOFOP	Asociación de Comunidades Forestales de Petén
AU	African Union
CAN	Andean Community
CATIE	Tropical Agricultural Research and Higher Education Centre
CCAD	Central American Commission for Environment and Development
CFE	Community forest enterprise
CGIAR	Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research
CIFOR	Centre for International Forestry Research
COFOP	Asociación de Comunidades Forestales de Petén
CPF	Collaborative Partnership on Forests
CSO	civil society organisation
EARTH University	Universidad EARTH, Escuela de Agricultura de la Región Tropical Húmeda
EEP	Energy and Environment Partnership Programme
EFI	European Forest Institute
EQ	Evaluation Question
EU	European Union
FCPF	Forest Carbon Partnership Facility
FIP	Forest Investment Program
FLEG	Forest Law Enforcement and Governance
FLEGT	Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade
FORMIS	Forest Management Information System
FRA	Global Forest Resources Assessment
FSC	Forest Stewardship Council
FUNDECOR	Fundación Universitaria para el Desarrollo de la Provincia de Córdoba
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GIZ	German Corporation for International Co-operation
GREEN Mekong	Grassroots Equity and Enhanced Network in Mekong
HEI-ICI	Higher Education Co-operation Project
HIV/AIDS	Human immunodeficiency virus / acquired immune deficiency syndrome
HRBA	human rights based approach
ICIPE	International Centre of Insect Physiology and Ecology
ICRAF	World Agroforestry Centre
IICA	Inter-American Institute for Agriculture
INAFOR	National Forestry Institute
ITTO	International Timber Trade Organisation
IUCN	International Union for the Conservation of Nature
IUFRO	International Union of Forest Research Organisations
Lao PDR	Lao People's Democratic Republic
M&E	monitoring and evaluation
MDG	millennium development goal
MFA	Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland
MFS	Sustainable Forest Management Project
MINAE	Ministry of Environment and Energy of Costa Rica
MTK	The Central Union of Agricultural Producers and Forest Owners of Finland
NFA	National Forest Assessments
NFP	National Forest Programme
NGO	non-governmental organisation
NTFP	non-timber forest product
IADB	Inter-American Development Bank
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

OECD DAC	OECD Development Assistance Committee
PAFO	Provincial Agriculture and Forestry Office
PARFORM	Partnership for Forestry Higher Education Co-operation in Mekong Region
PERFOR	Programa Estratégico Regional Forestal
PES	payments for environmental service
PPP	public private partnership
PROFOR	Multi-donor Partnership Programme on Forests
RECOFTC	Regional Community Forestry Training Centre for Asia and the Pacific
RECOFTC-RRI	RECOFTC Rights and Resources Initiative
REDD	Reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation
REDD+	Reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation and the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks in developing countries
SFM	sustainable forest management
SINAC	National System of Conservation Area Costa Rica
SMFE	small and medium forest enterprise
ToC	theory of change
UN	United Nations
UN FAO	UN Food and Agriculture Organisation
UNCCD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNFF	United Nations Forum on Forests
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WB	World Bank
VC	value chain
VCD	value chain development
WISDOM	Wood fuel integrated supply and demand overview mapping
WWF	World Wildlife Fund



PREFACE

This evaluation was commissioned by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland to the consortium composed of Indufor Oy (lead) and Particip GmbH. This report is the product of the authors, and responsibility for the accuracy of the data included in this report rests with the authors. The findings, interpretations, and conclusions presented in this report do not necessarily reflect the views of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland.

Authors:

Egger Topper, Team Leader
Petra Mikkolainen, Deputy Team Leader
James Gasana, Senior Evaluator
Raisa Venäläinen, Senior Evaluator
Jussi Viding, Evaluator
Marian Meller, Evaluator
Maija Peltola, Evaluator
Marco Andrés, Assistant

Contact:

Petra Mikkolainen
Senior Consultant

Indufor Oy
Esterinportt 2
FI-00240 Helsinki
FINLAND

petra.mikkolainen@indufor.fi

Tel. +358 50 321 8217
Fax +358 9 135 2552

indufor@indufor.fi
www.indufor.fi

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

The final evaluation of regional forest projects in Mekong, Andean and Central America is part of a framework agreement for the final evaluations of Finland's regional development co-operation in Latin America, Caribbean, and Mekong and Oceanian regions. Indufor was assigned a subcontract to carry out this individual evaluation, and mobilise a team of seven experts between June and October 2017. The projects covered are:

- The Integrated Environmental and Forest Management Co-operation Project in Central America, Finnfor-II (Central America, 2012–2016);
- Livelihood Improvement through Generation and Ownership of Forest Information by Local People in Products and Services Markets, ForInfo (Mekong, 2011–2015); and
- The Sustainable Forest Management Programme in the Andean region (MFS) (South America, 2011–2016).

In August 2017, the evaluation team undertook field missions to Guatemala, Nicaragua, Costa Rica (Central America), to Thailand, Laos and Cambodia (Mekong), and to Perú and Colombia (Andes) in teams of two or three experts per region.

Purpose and objectives

The purpose of the evaluation is to provide guidance to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland (MFA) in planning and implementing regional forestry projects. However, Finland's development co-operation programme in the Mekong Region is phasing out – even though co-operation with Myanmar is increasing, while in Latin America, Finland's grant-based bilateral development assistance has ended. The focus is therefore on what can be learned from the experience with the regional forestry projects that can be of use for future forest sector co-operation, in Myanmar, Africa or elsewhere, and for future planning of other regional programmes.

The three projects have in common the support to small producers, development of value chains, and the use of participatory approaches. Specific objectives of this evaluation are to:

- Assess the added value of the regional approach compared to a country-based approach;
- Assess the success of the programmes in promoting sustainable forestry based livelihoods and increasing income of small producers;
- Identify the lessons learned from developing value chains and payments for ecosystem services.

Methodology and evaluation questions

The evaluation is structured around the OECD DAC evaluation criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability; it also assesses the aid effectiveness and coherence of the Finnish assistance. The Inception Report (Annex 2) describes the overall approach adopted and the selected methods and analysis used. It presents ten evaluation questions and specific issues to be addressed, criteria for country selection, data sources and tools for data collection and analysis, including an evaluation matrix (Annex 4) used for data collection.

The main evaluation questions are formulated as follows:

1. *To what extent were the programmes consistent with problems and priorities of stakeholders – including Finnish development co-operation objectives and approaches – and final beneficiaries?*
2. *Was the project design appropriate and realistic to achieve the set objectives?*
3. *To what extent have expected results (outputs, outcomes) of the projects, in particular with regard to (1) promoting sustainable forestry-based livelihoods and increased income of small producers; (2) developing value chains and (3) developing retribution mechanisms for ecosystems, materialised?*

4. *What value has the regional approach added, in terms of project effectiveness?*
5. *How well did the various activities transform the available resources into the intended results?*
6. *To what extent have overall project objectives been achieved, and to what extent have the regional projects contributed to the achievements?*
7. *To what extent have the programmes achieved sustainable results, and how has the regional approach affected sustainability?*
8. *How and to what extent have the regional programmes promoted commitment and ownership by the relevant stakeholders?*
9. *What has been the added value of Finland's programmes?*
10. *How has other co-operation between Finland and the concerned countries been taken into account in implementation, and what have been the synergies of the regional programmes with other initiatives, including private sector and civil society co-operation?*

During the inception phase, the main questions were further broken down in sub-questions and judgment criteria that would constitute the evaluation matrix. The team also explored key issues and concepts of the evaluation, notably (1) results chains and logical frameworks; (2) regional dimension; (3) sustainable forestry-based livelihoods; (4) forestry value chain development (5) payment for environmental services (PES); and (6) cross-cutting themes. The results are presented Annex 2.

During the field phase, raw data were collected to feed into evaluation matrices based on which Mission Reports were prepared, as presented in Annex 6. During the reporting phase, these reports provided the basic elements for answering the evaluation questions, at the global level of the evaluation. The main challenge encountered was to arrive at global-level conclusions and recommendations based on evaluations of three highly different projects operating in a multitude of countries, producing a wealth of positive and less convincing results. This challenge was tackled by applying a systematic performance assessment and scoring to each of the projects, based on expert judgment, which resulted in an overall performance table presented in chapter 5 (key findings).

Main findings and conclusions

Relevance

The regional forestry projects are highly relevant to Finnish development policies in terms of sustainable development. They also responded to partner country policy priorities, in particular as far as they promoted sustainable forest management (SFM) as a means to achieve fair economic growth and contribute to reducing poverty and preventing environmental hazards. However, linkages to regional-level policies and strategies were weak. It was not always clear if the regional approach was adopted from a strategic policy or an ecological point of view, or for reasons of gaining efficiency. In the absence of clear guidelines, the projects ended up being multi-country programmes, lacking regional objectives and themes. Theories of change could have helped in linking country level interventions with regional goals.

The projects also responded to direct needs of key stakeholders and final beneficiaries, who were by and large involved in the design process, but interventions did not always target the poorest. Also, in order to achieve real impacts on livelihoods longer term interventions would be needed, as well as careful analysis to ensure that the interventions do not increase inequality.

On Design

Project designs were relevant in their thematic focus on production, small and medium forest enterprises (SMFEs) and value chains, but overambitious in terms of the number of value chains and stakeholders supported, and activities undertaken within a rather limited timeframe. The resulting impact has remained thinly spread, focusing mostly on production and 'upstream' constraints, less on actors and bottlenecks further 'downstream'.

Regional-level outcomes were mostly conceived in terms of knowledge sharing, based on individual field projects and integration of experience in regional institutions' knowledge platforms; opportunities to support regional integration and other regional-level objectives were missed. There is little evidence of any real analysis of alternatives implementation modalities for achievement of higher-level regional objectives. As a result, the 'regional added value' mostly consisted of grafting projects onto the regional networks and collaborative programmes of the regional implementing organisations as an effective delivery mechanism.

Gender equality was not well integrated in the project designs, and the scope for gender action was to a large extent determined by the selection of the value chains, rather than by gender strategies adopted. As most value chains were dominated by male producers, there was limited opportunity to change the gender imbalance. During implementation, gender action was mostly reduced to engaging women during project implementation.

Effectiveness

Overall, the three projects were successful in achieving expected outputs and outcomes in the respective results chains, in particular through their work on forestry value chain development. The experience and positioning of the implementing agencies in the forest sector was of particular importance for achieving planned results, and private sector involvement, either directly in project implementation or through public-private partnerships (PPPs) clearly enhanced effectiveness of the projects.

Most local level achievements are in the field of SFM and community forestry, and increased entrepreneurial awareness and capacities in the target communities. In some cases, particularly in the ForInfo projects and the MFS-supported PES projects, the supported initiatives still need to bear fruit, and more time is needed to allow integration of target small producers in value chains, particularly where there is heavy reliance on intermediaries.

On regional added value

The three projects showed weak effectiveness at regional level, due to weak or absent linkages with regional processes. There were no clear regional scopes and objectives, and there was a tendency towards scattered, country-specific projects. Regional integration and the resolution of cross-border problems were hardly supported. In addition, there was limited replication regionally and globally of pilot experience and good practices, and the projects made limited contributions to policy processes in target countries aimed at creating an enabling environment for development of the forest sector.

Efficiency

The regional forestry projects have been implemented in an efficient manner, thanks to embedment of the regional and field projects in existing networks, structures and ongoing collaborative programmes of the implementing organisations, in collaboration with trusted partners. Country-level presence of coordinators and/or offices and flexibility in implementation turned out to be key success factors.

Impact

Collectively, the three projects were successful in demonstrating that support to forestry value chain development can contribute to inclusive investments and successful business models for improved land governance and livelihoods. The limited scale and duration of the field projects, however, did not allow for making any significant impact on integration of SFM into planning or adjustment of strategies or regulations promoting competitiveness of the forest sector. In addition, regional and global impact would have benefited from more active dissemination of the methods developed and experiences produced, and from better visibility (internet).

The impact of ForInfo and MFS remained below expectations, due mostly to weaknesses in project design, to limited effectiveness in achieving outcomes, and to a relatively short duration (four years) of the Finnish involvement; the complex contexts and ambitious value chain development objectives would require a longer-term commitment to achieve significant impact.

In addition, unlike Finnfor-II, none of their pilot projects have been followed by any significant (Finnish or other) investment.

Sustainability

Two years after end-of-project, the sustainability of the three projects is satisfactory, especially, when it comes to field-level activities. The Finnfor-II and ForInfo projects in particular have contributed to creating economically, institutionally and environmentally sustainable forest-related enterprises. Most processes initiated under these projects are evolving further, benefiting from follow-up initiatives and additional funding. Success factors are the embedment in local and national-level programmes and institutions, the development of local capacities, local or national policy support, and a strong sense of ownership among target groups. While the sustainability of most of the local value chain projects under the MFS programme is ensured, particularly when the private sector is involved, it remained unclear how project results would be integrated in policies and institutions at regional, country and/or local levels.

Aid Effectiveness¹ and Finnish added value

Finnish aid was delivered relatively effectively in terms of ownership, alignment and harmonisation, but less so in terms of clear definition of contributions by the various partners involved in the projects. While field projects were well aligned with government sector strategies and priorities, fostering local ownership, higher level ownership was mostly constrained by the absence or weakness of linkages with national and regional level authorities, in particular in the case of MFS. This reduced opportunities to maximise impact of the valuable local-level experiences.

The added value of Finnish support was weak as it was limited to a specific focus on forestry value chains and private sector involvement. There would have been room for a stronger Finnish signature of the forestry projects. Opportunities to promote Finnish technology or expertise – through matchmaking and using the regional networks and market linkages – and to involve Finnish investors and civil society organisations in a proactive and structured manner were missed. Such co-operation could have been beneficial to producers in the target countries and Finnish investors alike.

Coherence

In general, the regional projects were coherent with Finnish co-operation objectives and with other initiatives supported by Finland and other donors. The portfolio of Finnish interventions in the target countries supported each other at policy level, but during implementation, not all opportunities to optimise synergies were seized. ForInfo, for example, did not create any linkages with the PARFORM project, which is a higher education co-operation project aimed at strengthening Laos and Myanmar's higher forestry education and research systems.

Lessons learned

On the regional dimension

1. A regional (project) approach requires a clear regional policy or strategy to which project objectives can be linked, preferably in combination with a strong implementing organisation with political leverage (all three projects).

¹ With 'aid effectiveness', the evaluation refers to the five fundamental principles outlined in the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (2005); 1. **Ownership**: Developing countries set their own strategies for poverty reduction, improve their institutions and tackle corruption. 2. **Alignment**: Donor countries align behind these objectives and use local systems. 3. **Harmonisation**: Donor countries coordinate, simplify procedures and share information to avoid duplication. 4. **Results**: Developing countries and donors shift focus to development results and results get measured. 5. **Mutual accountability**: Donors and partners are accountable for development results. Results orientation is discussed in other parts of the report and we gave less focus on mutual accountability given that it is less relevant in the context of this report.

2. Without clear theories of change linking local projects results to thematic results and to regional-level outcomes, achievement of regional objectives is unlikely (all three projects).
3. Proper and formalised engagement of government partners in regional projects is critical for achieving results at all levels (local, national and regional) (ForInfo, MFS).

On forestry value chain support

4. A forestry value chain approach is well suited to contributing to both poverty reduction and environmental objectives if it is based on a comprehensive analysis of bottlenecks – including institutional and technical aspects – and if, during implementation, these bottlenecks are properly addressed (all three projects).

On SFM, PES and private sector involvement

5. Sustainable management of community forests and plantations is possible if it leads to an effective increase in production in the forest product value-chains allowing for higher and regular households income (ForInfo, MFS).
6. Design of REDD+ and PES projects should be well articulated with national strategies (MFS).
7. Effective partnerships with the private sector to develop forest based value chains are a key success factor to making tree plantation and SFM attractive for small producers (all three projects).
8. Forestry value chain project design should include flexible financial mechanisms and allow project beneficiaries or implementing organisations to prioritise where to use the funds. (Finnfor II, ForInfo).

On sustainability of results

9. For sustainable project results, it is crucial to include, right from the conception, close co-operation with national partners (such as Forestry Institutes) to ensure continued support to project beneficiaries once the project has phased out (all three projects).
10. Capacity building activities to address communities' needs in resource management and entrepreneurship skills are critical for achieving sustainability of results (all three projects).

Recommendations

1. MFA should provide guidance for the planning of future regional projects and programmes, including analysis of regional and national policies, and ensure they are based on proper identification of joint regional problems and themes, stakeholders and partners.
2. MFA and implementing partners should ensure that regional projects have gender as a crosscutting objective, with adequate budgets supporting the effective implementation of gender equality principles and promoting gender mainstreaming.
3. MFA and its implementing partners should ensure that regional initiatives supporting innovation have robust and systematic M&E and knowledge management systems that allow for learning across projects and feeding documented experience into the policy dialogue.
4. MFA should pursue its support to value chain development initiatives in its regional and country-level forest sector development projects, at an appropriate scale, implemented over a long enough period to reach their purpose.
5. MFA and project partners should facilitate access to follow-up funding opportunities, as and where required. In the Mekong Region, specifically, RECOFTC should seek ways to support the Laotian Bokéo project, in order to complete the work with the ACLEDA Bank and for Cambodia Community Forests.
6. MFA and partner country governments should ensure that contributions to be made by the various governmental, NGO and private sector partners to regional projects are clearly defined and formalised, with attention to linkages with (sub-)national and regional policies and actors.
7. Forestry value chain projects should realise the good potential for Finnish added value by facilitating access to Finnish investors, markets, technology or expertise.

8. MFA should actively explore opportunities to create synergies between its current/future forestry projects and the current private-sector support instruments of Finland's development co-operation.

Findings	Conclusions	Recommendations and Lessons Learned
Relevance		
<p>The overall relevance of the three projects is rated as high; they respond to stakeholder needs and priorities, and stakeholders have, in general, been involved in project design. The regional forestry projects are consistent with the objectives of the Finland's policy for the forest sector, and address sustainable development objectives. Most value chain work targeted poor households but typically include small and medium-size entrepreneurs as well, involved in processing or trading. A more critical choice of value chains could have enhanced the poverty relevance of projects. While there was a policy ambition to work on a regional scale, there were hardly any regional forestry policies or strategies implemented by strong regional organisations that MFA support could be linked up with. As a result, regional-level outcomes and impact are weakly reflected in project objectives. Despite some transboundary elements, the projects were essentially multi-country projects, centred on knowledge transfer and lessons learning. In addition, the selected regional implementing organisations had only limited political clout to influence regional policy processes. The projects were overambitious considering the multiple stakeholders, the high number of field sites and activities in a limited timeframe. Crosscutting objectives (apart from HIV/AIDS) of the Finnish</p>	<p>Overall, the regional forestry projects were highly relevant to Finnish development policies in terms of sustainable development, though addressing the poorest is indirect. They responded to direct needs of key stakeholders and final beneficiaries, who were by and large involved in the design. However, the adoption of a regional approach lacked a clear rationale, be it for strategic policy, ecological or efficiency reasons. While project designs were relevant in terms of their focus on SMFEs, production and value chain development, they were overambitious in terms of the number of value chains, field sites, stakeholders and activities in relation to the limited timeframes. Beyond knowledge sharing based on individual field projects and integration of experience in regional institutions' knowledge platforms, there were few regional-level capacity development results. The absence of a well-integrated gender analysis led to unexploited potential of forest value chains to contribute to a gender equality approach in the design of two of the three projects.</p>	<p>LL1. A forestry value chain approach is well suited to contributing to both poverty reduction and environmental objectives, if it is based on a comprehensive analysis of bottlenecks – including institutional and technical aspects – and if, during implementation, these bottlenecks are properly addressed. LL2. A regional (project) approach requires a clear regional policy or strategy to which project objectives can be linked, preferably in combination with a strong implementing organisation with political leverage. LL3. Without clear theories of change linking local projects results to thematic results and to regional-level outcomes, achievement of regional objectives is unlikely. R1. MFA should provide guidance for the planning of future regional projects and programmes, including analysis of regional and national policies, and ensure they are based on proper identification of joint regional problems and themes, stakeholders and partners. R2. MFA and implementing partners should ensure that regional projects have gender as a crosscutting objective, with adequate budgets supporting the effective implementation of gender equality principles and gender mainstreaming.</p>

Findings	Conclusions	Recommendations and Lessons Learned
<p>development co-operation were sometimes integrated in project design, but not explicitly implemented or followed up. Most of the value chain projects lack a gender analysis.</p>		
Effectiveness		
<p>Overall achievement of expected results is satisfactory, ranging from 'good' (Finnfor-II) to 'substantial problems' (ForInfo and MFS). Results at local and community level have received most attention and are the most tangible and convincing; national and regional level results are relatively weak.</p> <p>The projects mostly achieved expected outputs and outcomes in terms of promoting sustainable forestry-based livelihoods and increased income for small producers, based on value chain development, through a large number of relatively successful field projects.</p> <p>There is evidence of enhanced benefits for small producers in cases of private sector involvement – through direct implementation or PPPs – in terms of secured market access. The projects did not contribute much to changes in policies and practices at local, territorial, national, and regional levels; there are no proper regional-level outcomes, mostly for lack of formulation of such results. In the case of MFS, the regional dimension is least developed due to weak political support for its environmental objectives.</p> <p>Replication of good practice among countries in the region has remained limited; in case of Finnfor and MFS, knowledge documentation and dissemination received limited attention.</p>	<p>Overall, the three projects were successful in achieving expected outputs and outcomes in their value chain development work, resulting in strengthened forestry-based livelihoods and income for small producers, though some of the expected benefits are yet to materialise over time.</p> <p>In none of the three projects did the regional approach add much value to project effectiveness; the interaction with the regional policy level and processes was weak and undefined, and there were hardly any cross-boundary co-operation benefits. The objective of generating and disseminating good practice across the regions was achieved to some extent only.</p>	<p>LL4.Sustainable management of community forests and plantations can be achieved if it leads to an effective increase in production in the forest product value-chains allowing for higher and regular households income.</p> <p>LL5.Design of REDD+ and PES projects should be well articulated with national strategies.</p> <p>LL6.Effective partnerships with the private sector to develop forest based value chains are a key success factor to make tree plantation and SFM attractive for small producers.</p> <p>LL7.Forestry value chain project design should include flexible financial mechanisms allowing project beneficiaries or implementing organisations prioritise the allocation of the funds.</p> <p>LL8.Proper and formalised engagement of government partners in regional projects is critical for achieving results at all levels (local, national and regional).</p>

Findings	Conclusions	Recommendations and Lessons Learned
Efficiency		
<p>Efficiency in all projects was found to be high; it is the highest scoring among the evaluation criteria.</p> <p>An important factor is the efficiency of the implementing organisations; all three, in particular CATIE and RECOFTC, turned out to be committed and efficient organisations for implementation of regional operations. Another success factor was the embedment of the field projects in ongoing programmes.</p> <p>Adaptation to local circumstances and changing market and demand situations, as well as flexible implementation mechanisms are among other factors enhancing efficiency, especially in the case of Finnfor-II and ForInfo. MFS's operational modality was also efficient, in terms of converting inputs into outputs and outcomes (at field project level). Aspects that negatively affected efficiency included delays in starting implementation (MFS and ForInfo), weak M&E (MFS, Finnfor-II) and knowledge management (MFS and Finnfor-II), and absence of thematic experts at country level (MFS).</p>	<p>The regional forestry projects have been implemented in an efficient manner, by embedding (field) projects in existing networks, structures and ongoing collaborative programmes of the regional implementing organisations, in collaboration with trusted partners.</p> <p>Country-level presence of coordinators and/or offices and flexibility in implementation and contractual arrangements turned out to be key success factors.</p>	<p>R3. MFA and its implementing partners should ensure that regional initiatives supporting innovation have robust and systematic M&E and knowledge management systems that allow for learning across projects and feeding documented experience into the policy dialogue.</p>
Impact		
<p>Finnfor-II achieved its objective and produced very tangible impacts on stakeholders at different levels. ForInfo and MFS had 'substantial problems in generating the desired effects; thus far, only one out of seven pilot projects in ForInfo strengthened sustainable forestry-based livelihoods. However, indications are that livelihood impacts can be expected to materialise in some of the other projects as well.</p>	<p>The three projects have demonstrated that support to forestry value chain development can contribute to inclusive investments and successful business models for improved land governance and livelihoods. However, the duration of most projects was too short in relation to production cycles and capacity needs to produce the envisaged longer-term impacts. Most field projects show a good potential to generate improved livelihoods and increased</p>	<p>R4. MFA should pursue its support to value chain development initiatives in its regional and country-level forest sector development projects, at an appropriate scale, implemented over a long enough period to reach their purpose.</p>

Findings	Conclusions	Recommendations and Lessons Learned
<p>For MFS the situation is also very mixed: at local level, field projects contributed to the enhancement of beneficiaries' livelihoods in various ways. At country level, outcomes were insufficiently achieved, due in part to the short project duration. At the regional level, the project did not lay a firm foundation for achieving the intended impact.</p>	<p>income as well as more sustainable forest and plantation management in years to come. The limited scope, scale and duration of most of the projects made integration of sustainable forest and plantation management into local-level planning and adjustment of strategies or regulations promoting competitiveness of the forest sector less successful.</p>	
Sustainability		
<p>Despite limited impact, the overall sustainability of the three projects' results is satisfactory, ranging from 'good' (Finnfor-II and ForInfo) to 'substantial problems' in case of the MFS. The institutional sustainability of the projects varies considerably, between the projects and between levels of intervention, from regional down to national and local levels. All three projects made an important contribution to developing capacities and committing communities and local authorities, but in most cases a need for further development was identified. Financial sustainability of Finnfor-II is promising but weaker for ForInfo and MFS. For all three projects, sustainability of results is negatively affected by limited availability and dissemination of project outputs.</p>	<p>Taking economic, institutional and environmental aspects into consideration, the sustainability of the three projects is overall satisfactory. Most processes supported by the projects are evolving, benefiting from follow-up initiatives and additional funding. Success factors are the embedment of field projects in local and national-level programmes and institutions, the development of local capacities, local or national-level policy support and a strong sense of ownership among target groups.</p>	<p>LL9. For sustainable project results, it is crucial to include, right from the conception, close co-operation with national partners (such as Forestry Institutes) to ensure continued support to project beneficiaries once the project has phased out. LL10. Capacity building activities to address communities' needs in resource management and entrepreneurship skills are critical for achieving sustainability of results. R5. MFA and project partners should facilitate access to follow-up funding opportunities, as and where required. In the Mekong Region, specifically, RECOFTC should seek ways to support the Laotian Bokéo project, in order to complete the work with the ACLEDA Bank and for Cambodia Community Forests.</p>
Aid Effectiveness		
<p>The aid-effectiveness of the three projects was insufficient with scores varying from 'substantial problems' (ForInfo and MFS) to satisfactory (Finnfor-II). While commitment and ownership among local stakeholders and final beneficiaries has been strong, the main constraint was the weakness of linkages of the</p>	<p>Finnish aid has been delivered relatively effectively – in line with principles of the Paris Declaration – in terms of ownership, alignment and harmonisation. However, it was insufficiently defined and formalised how and on what conditions partner governments would contribute.</p>	<p>R6. MFA and partner country governments should ensure that contributions to be made by the various governmental, NGO and private sector partners to regional projects are clearly defined and formalised, with attention to linkages with (sub-) national and regional policies and actors.</p>

Findings	Conclusions	Recommendations and Lessons Learned
<p>programmes with national and regional level authorities. This is particularly true in the case of MFS. Also, country-level contributions were not adequately formulated in the project documents and assumptions underlying these contributions are lacking in the logframes. However, Government representatives were engaged in all three projects, notably through the Steering Committees and through involvement in project implementation.</p> <p>The Finnish support made a modest but valuable contribution to longer-term initiatives that, in most cases, involved various donors. Coordination and complementarity with similar interventions varied.</p> <p>The Finnish added value to the three projects was assessed as insufficient. The focus on the role of the private sector and small enterprises in development of the forestry sector, through a value chain approach, was found to be the most specific added value of the Finnish support. Opportunities to support the countries in formulating policies for forestry sector innovation or make use of Finnish expertise were missed.</p>	<p>The projects showed strong engagement of non-governmental and private sector actors in partnership with governmental institutions. The added value of Finnish support was mostly limited to a specific focus on forestry value chains and private sector involvement. There would have been room for a stronger Finnish signature of the projects.</p>	<p>R7. Forestry value chain projects should realise the good potential for Finnish added value by facilitating access to Finnish investors, markets, technology or expertise.</p>
<p>Coherence</p>		
<p>The policy coherence of the projects was assessed as satisfactory for two of the projects (Finnfor-II and MFS) but insufficient in the case of ForInfo.</p> <p>The projects' objectives contribute in a more or less modest way to Finland's Aid for Trade action plan objectives, notably the forestry value chains, inclusive businesses, women's entrepreneurship and regional cross-border trade.</p>	<p>The regional projects were coherent with Finnish co-operation objectives and with other initiatives supported by Finland and other donors at policy level, but during implementation some opportunities to create synergies with other sector operations were missed.</p>	<p>R8. MFA should actively explore opportunities to create synergies between its current/future forestry projects and the current private-sector support instruments of Finland's development co-operation.</p>

1. INTRODUCTION

This evaluation is part of a framework agreement for the final evaluations of Finland's regional development co-operation in Latin America, Caribbean and Mekong and Oceanian regions. MFA launched the request for companies to present proposals for the assignment in September 2016. The tender consisted of five thematic fields of specialty: water, forest, reconstruction, energy and climate. The award decision was published in January 2017 in which Indufor was awarded the first place in the forest lot. The subcontract to carry out this individual evaluation was signed between MFA and Indufor in June 2017.

The purpose of this final evaluation (in fact, an ex-post evaluation) of three regional forest projects is to provide guidance to the MFA in planning and implementing regional forest projects. In the Mekong Region where Finland's development co-operation programme is phasing out even though co-operation with Myanmar is increasing. In Latin America, by contrast, Finland's grant-based bilateral development assistance has ended.

For this reason, the focus is on what can be learned from the experience with the regional forestry projects that can be of use for future forest sector co-operation (in Myanmar, Africa or elsewhere) and for planning eventual other regional programmes in the future. The three projects have a participatory approach, support to small producers and development of value chains in common. Priority objectives of this evaluation are to assess:

- what was the added value of the regional approach compared to a country-based approach
- how the programmes succeeded in promoting sustainable forestry based livelihoods and increasing income of small producers
- what lessons can be learned from developing value chains and retribution mechanisms for ecosystem services.

The evaluation covers countries in the Andean, Mekong and Central American regions. The fieldwork will take place in selected countries that include different cases illustrating the aspects of the key evaluation issues outlined above. The projects and time spans covered are (1) ForInfo (Mekong, 2011–2015), (2) Finnfor-II (Central America, 2012–2016) and (3) MFS (South America, 2011–2016).

The inception phase of the assignment was initiated in June 2017 and concluded in July. The field missions to the three regional projects were implemented in August 2017. Data analysis and reporting formulation was carried out in September and October 2017.

The report is structured following the evaluation report outline of the MFA of Finland, which is based on the OECD DAC evaluation criteria.

2. DESCRIPTION OF THE CONTEXT AND THE EVALUATED PROJECTS

2.1 Finland's development co-operation in the forest sector

2.1.1 Finland's Development Policy Programme 2007-2012

The key MFA policy framework that guided the programming and implementation Finnfor-II, MFS and ForInfo regional projects was the **2007-2012 Finland's Development Policy Programme** – Towards a Sustainable and Just World Community. The main objective of the policy is the '**eradication of poverty and ecologically sustainable development** according to the Millennium Development Goals agreed jointly in the United Nations' placing emphasis on **climate and the environment**. It also stresses '**crisis prevention and support for peace processes** as an important element in promoting socially sustainable development'. The policy outlines key **cross-cutting themes** to be mainstreamed in all development co-operation, which are:

- Promotion of the rights and the status of women and girls, and promotion of gender and social equality
- Promotion of the rights of groups that are easily excluded; and the promotion of equal opportunities for participation
- Combating HIV/AIDS

Table 2.1 Summary of Finland's Development Policy 2007-2012

Key goals	Poverty eradication; Sustainable development
Themes	Promoting ecologically, economically, and socially sustainable development in accordance with Millennium Development Goals; Climate and environment; Respect for and promotion of human rights; Links between development, security and human rights
Cross-cutting objectives	Gender equality, women, and girls; Social equality and equal opportunities for participation; Combating of HIV/AIDS as a health and social problem
Geographic priorities	Least developed countries
Partner countries	Ethiopia; Kenya; Mozambique; Nepal; Nicaragua; Tanzania; Vietnam; Zambia

The policy also mentions regional co-operation as a complement to other forms of assistance. The policy outlines that 'regional co-operation should always have a distinct **sectoral focus** in support of sustainable development (such as forestry, forest industry, water, environment, climate change, information society, crisis prevention, or peace building) and aim at **regional integration**'. During this period, the MFA did not publish any specific guidelines regarding regional co-operation, only Finnish development policy guidelines for forest sector 2009. However, based on the 2007 Development Policy, the purpose of regional programmes was to improve effectiveness by 'organising Finnish development co-operation into larger entities focusing on specific countries, regions and themes'.

This **Finnish development policy guidelines for forest sector** (2009) were formulated to support the operationalisation of Finland's 2007 Development Policy Programme. It established that 'Finland will from now on aim to exploit its competence and focus its forest sector co-operation on producing **Finnish added value** in international development processes relating to forest and environmental policies and the forest sector. The objective is to strengthen the conditions for **SFM** and thus achieve **fair economic growth, reduce poverty and prevent environmental hazards**'.

The means for Finland to support its partners countries and international forest policy processes were defined as:

- Support for national forest programmes
- Strengthening the importance of the forest sector in combating climate change
- Integration of forest sector development into rural development, national land allocation processes and agriculture policy
- Supporting international forest policy processes (such as United Nations Forum on Forests; UNFF, and the Collaborative Partnership on Forests; CPF, Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) and of the Rio environmental conventions through synergy with regard to forests)

2.1.2 Finland’s Development Policy Programme 2012

In 2012, Finland’s development co-operation policy put stronger emphasis on **human rights-based approach** to development, while the overarching goal remained as the ‘**eradication of extreme poverty** and securing a life of human dignity for all people in accordance with the United Nations (UN) Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)’. The policy focused on five aspects: democratic ownership, accountability, openness, effectiveness, coherence and concentration (on least developed countries). The **cross-cutting** ‘themes’ were upgraded to ‘**objectives**’ including **gender equality, reduction of inequality, and climate sustainability**.

The priority areas of the policy were defined as:

- Democratic and accountable society that promotes human rights
- An inclusive green economy that promotes employment
- Sustainable management of natural resources and environmental protection
- Human development

The Development Policy Programme 2012 also introduced increased support to civil society initiatives.

The forest sector is embedded in the wider framework of the policy’s third priority area (sustainable management of natural resources and environmental protection, while acknowledging the key role of forests by mentioning, for example, ‘the role of forests as a source of food security and livelihood as well as carbon sinks to combat climate change is indisputable’.

Table 2.2 Summary of Finland’s Development Policy 2012-2015

Key goals	Poverty reduction, human rights, and societal equity
Themes	Democratic and accountable society; Inclusive green economy that promotes employment; Sustainable management of natural resources and environmental protection; Human development
Cross-cutting objectives	Gender equality; Reduction of inequality; Climate sustainability
Geographic priorities	Least developed countries; Fragile states
Partner countries	Ethiopia, Kenya, Mozambique, Nepal, Tanzania, Vietnam, Zambia

Regarding regional programmes, the policy is brief but explicit: ‘**Regional programmes must have regional scope and objectives**. Scattered, country-specific projects are discouraged.’ The policy adds that ‘regional programmes differ from country-specific co-operation in that they aim to support **regional integration** and the **resolution of cross-border problems**’.

2.1.3 Finnish development policy guidelines for forest sector 2013

As for the 2007 policy, separate Development Policy Guidelines for Forest Sector (MFA 2013) were formulated to support sector-specific co-operation.

The objectives for Finland's forest-sector development are not obvious in the document, but the following topics are mentioned as priorities:

- Comprehensive governance of the forests of developing countries
- Contribution to international forest policy processes
- Inclusive green economy that promotes employment
- Legal solutions to land tenure issues

Specific themes of Forest co-operation were defined as:

- Rights to forest use, to decision-making and just benefit sharing
- Forests as the source of fuelwood, charcoal and energy
- Forest sector value chains, sustainable production and use
- Support to national forest sector programmes and good governance
- Forests in the combat against climate change
- Forests as a part of the environment, rural areas and the land-use mosaic

In terms of regional co-operation, the guidelines mention several projects in East and West Africa in addition to MFS, Finnfor-II and ForInfo projects. Most African projects focus on small-holder activities such as livelihoods, agroforestry, forest tenure rights, and forest management. A project implemented by ICIPE in Kenya, Ethiopia and Tanzania focusses on ecosystem services generated by the mountain ecosystems as wells strengthening regional actors' capacity.

Other delivery mechanisms in Finland's development co-operation in the forest sector include multi-lateral co-operation with UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), the World Bank (Multi-donor Partnership Programme on Forests PROFOR and Forest Carbon Partnership Facility FCPF), research co-operation with key international research institutions (e.g. Centre for International Forestry Research CIFOR, World Agroforestry Centre ICFRAF; International Union of Forest Research Organisations IUFRO; United Nations Forum on Forests UNFF; International Timber Trade Organisation ITTO; European Forest Institute EFI; Global Environment Facility GEF). With civil society MFA cooperates in the forest sector though Finnish and foreign civil society organisations (CSOs).

2.1.4 2016 Government Report on Development Policy: One World, Common Future – Toward sustainable development

The current development policy is guided by the Government Report on Development Policy: One World, Common Future – Toward sustainable development published in February 2016 (MFA 2016). It is aligned with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the core goal remaining as the eradication of extreme poverty and reduction of poverty and inequality. The priority areas of the policy are:

- Enhancing the rights and status of women and girls
- Improving the economies of developing countries to ensure more jobs
- Livelihood opportunities and well-being
- Democratic and better-functioning societies
- Increased food security and better access to water and energy
- Sustainability of natural resources

Forests are included under the wider umbrella of sustainable management of natural resources. In terms of regional initiatives, Finland's support will focus on Africa with the aim to contribute to the solving of cross-border problems. In general, co-operation with the private sector through access to finance for investments that enable sustainable development in the target countries is emphasised more than in the previous development co-operation policies of Finland.

Table 2.3 Summary of Finland's Development Policy 2016-2019

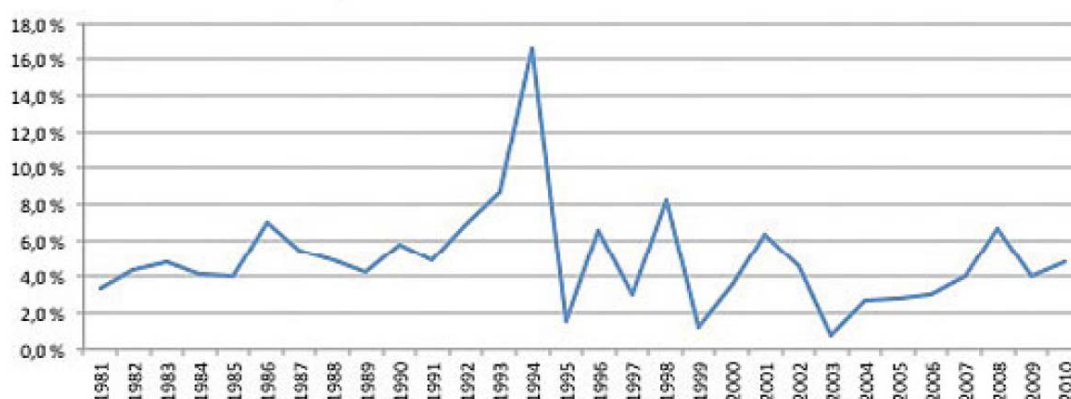
Key goals	Poverty reduction; Reduction of inequality; Realisation of human rights; Support for the Sustainable Development Goals
Themes	Rights of women and girls; Reinforcing economies to generate more jobs, livelihoods and well-being; Democratic and well-functioning societies; Food security, access to water and energy, and the sustainable use of natural resources
Cross-cutting objectives	Gender equality; The rights of the most vulnerable; Climate change preparedness and mitigation
Geographic priorities	Least developed countries, the most fragile states and those suffering from conflicts or climate and natural disasters
Partner countries	Afghanistan; Ethiopia; Kenya; Mozambique; Myanmar; Nepal; Somalia; Tanzania; Zambia

In this latest policy, Finland supports regional co-operation mainly in Africa with the objective to contribute to solving cross-border problems. The aid will be channelled through co-operation with the African Union (AU), the Energy and Environment Partnership Programme (EEP) of Southern and East Africa, as well as through the EU Trust Fund for Stability.

2.1.5 Financial support to the forestry sector in Finland's development co-operation

Finland's support for forestry in the development co-operation portfolio since 1981 has varied from approximately 2% to 8% (apart from one exception). The Figure 2.1 demonstrates the yearly levels of forestry aid as a share of total Finnish Official Development Assistance (ODA) between 1981 and 2010. In 2012, the forestry sector corresponded roughly 4% of the whole development co-operation budget in 2012 (MFA 2013), therefore not indicating any notable increases since the report by Koponen, J. *et al.* (2012).

Figure 2.1 Forestry aid as a share of total Finnish Official Development Assistance



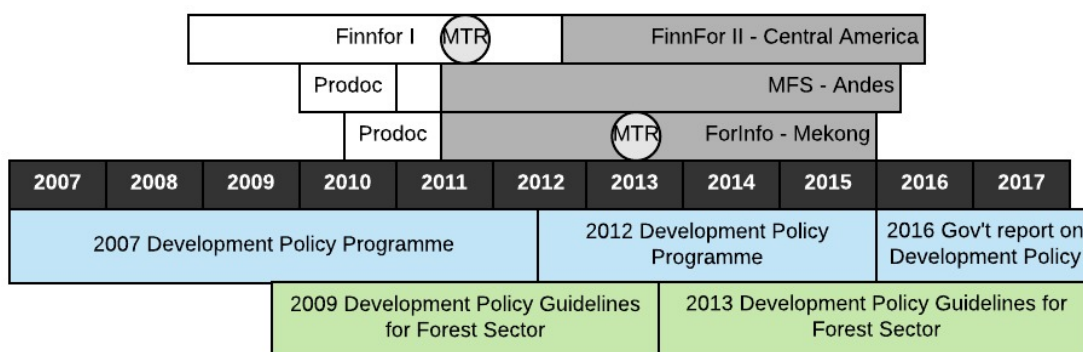
Source: Koponen, J. *et al.* (2012)

2.1.6 Timing of the regional forest projects in relation with MFA policies on development and forests

The MFS, Finnfor-II and ForInfo projects were identified and formulated when the 2007-2012 Development Policy Programme had already been launched. In 2012, the policy was revised after Finnfor-II had just started and the two other projects had been implementing activities for

approximately one year. See Figure 2.2 on the timing of the regional forest projects in relation with Finland’s development co-operation policies.

Figure 2.2 Timeline for three regional forest projects regarding Finland’s development co-operation policies



2.1.7 Global context

According to Finnish development policy guidelines for forest sector 2009, Finland’s strategic international partners in the forestry sector include FAO (forest resource assessments and national forest programmes), World Bank (good governance, financing mechanism for SFM, carbon financing), CIFOR and IUFRO (applied research on forestry, wood technology and forest policy), GEF (financing mechanisms), ICRAF and CATIE (strong regional operators in agroforestry and watershed planning and management), ITTO (trade and development, reducing the illegal timber trade) and EFI (see Table 2.4).

Table 2.4 Finland’s multilateral co-operation in the forestry sector 2009-2013 as planned in the 2009 strategy document

World Bank	<p>Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF): Support to readiness fund to assist developing countries to reach a capacity level at which they will be ready to participate in a future system for positive incentives to REDD.</p> <p>The Multidonor Partnership Programme on Forests (PROFOR) and Forest Law Enforcement and Governance (FLEG) programs: Support to sound policies and measures that take a holistic approach to forest conservation and management, and good governance.</p> <p>Forest Investment Program (FIP): to pilot and demonstrate new approaches to forest management that lead to major impacts in reducing greenhouse gas emissions from forests</p>
FAO	<p>Global Forest Resources Assessment (FRA) Technical expertise for NFA (National Forest Assessments) and FRA processes.</p> <p>Sustainable Forest Management in a Changing Climate: Support to FAO’s methodology development and capacity building in developing countries. Aim to enhance forests and trees role in mitigation of and adaptation to Climate Change.</p> <p>National Forest Programme (NFP) Facility: Core support to facilitation of national forest planning processes in developing countries.</p>
EU	<p>European Union (EU) Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) Facility: Support to policies and measures to improve forest governance and reduce illegal logging.</p> <p>Reduction of Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation (REDD) support (discussion on-going).</p>
Research	<p>Core Support to CGIAR institutes. CGIAR is a global research partnership for a food-secure future formerly known as the Consultative Group for International Agricultural Research. (Centre for International Forestry Research CIFOR; World Agroforestry Centre ICRAF)</p> <p>Thematic support: i) Forests and Climate Change (CIFOR), ii) World Forest Society and Environment (Union of Forest Research Organisations IUFRO), iii) Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF) special themes</p>
International conventions	<p>Support to International Conventions (forest related): United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), Global Environment Facility (GEF), United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF), International Tropical Timber Agreement</p>
NGOs	<p>World Wildlife Fund (WWF), International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), Central Union of Agricultural Producers and Forest Owners (MTK), Siemenuu Foundation</p>

Source: MFA (2009) Development Policy Guidelines Forestry Sector 2009.

At the European level, Finland’s focus has been on improving forest governance and reducing illegal logging in developing countries through FLEGT Action Plan and through EFI. Finnish co-operation has also supported elimination of deforestation in developing countries by providing funds to EU REDD Facility and to FCPF, hosted by the World Bank.

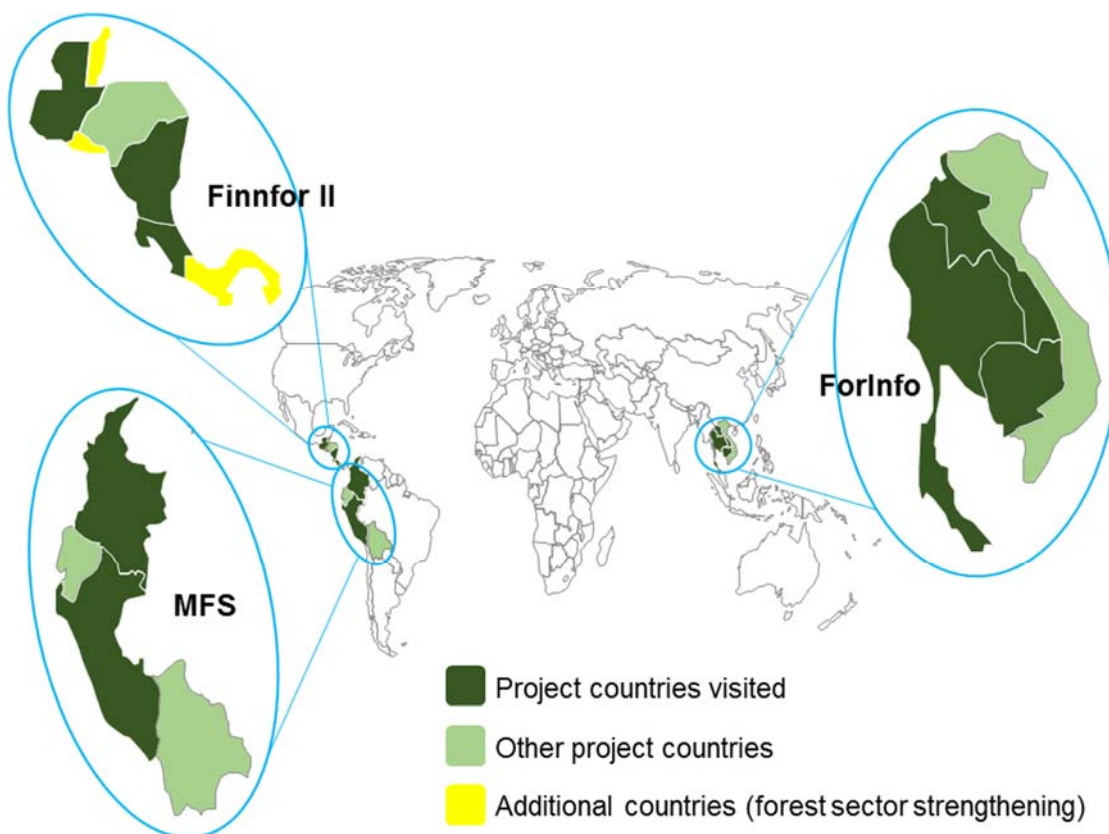
The 2013 Development Policy Guidelines for the Forestry Sector discusses the global context more extensively than its predecessor. The policy underlines the importance of the UN Environmental Agreements and the Sustainable Development Goals. Linked to these is the Non-Legally Binding Instrument, UNFF, which forms the basis for Finland’s co-operation in the forestry sector. UNFF’s objectives are:

- **Reverse the loss of forest cover worldwide through sustainable forest management**, including protection, restoration, afforestation and reforestation, and increase efforts to prevent forest degradation;
- **Enhance forest-based economic, social and environmental benefits**, including by improving the **livelihoods** of forest dependent people;
- **Increase significantly the area of protected forests** worldwide and other areas of sustainably managed forests, as well as the proportion of forest products from sustainably managed forests;
- **Reverse the decline in official development assistance for sustainable forest management**, and mobilise significantly increased, new and additional financial resources from all sources for the implementation of sustainable forest management.

2.2 Presentation of Finnfor-II, ForInfo and MFS regional forestry projects

The following sections present a brief overview of the three regional projects. More detailed information on their objectives, activities and target groups can be obtained from the field mission reports in Annex 6. The map of the projects is presented in Figure 2.3.

Figure 2.3 Map of the regional forest projects



2.2.1 Integrated Environmental and Forest Management Co-operation Project in Central America

The Integrated Environmental and Forest Management Co-operation Project in Central America (Finnfor-II) ran from 1 October 2012 until 31 March 2016 and was implemented by CATIE with a budget of EUR 3.8 million.

Its general objective was that 'forest sector producers, organisations and institutions identify, analyse and eliminate the barriers that affect the production of forest goods and services [...] in order to improve the livelihoods of the local population in the project's selected territories'. These livelihood improvements should be achieved by developing and strengthening small and medium forest enterprises, producer groups and service providers through improved wood product value chains (overall project purpose), especially in El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua. In addition, efforts and resources should be leveraged to strengthen the forest sector in the same countries as well as in Belize, Costa Rica and Panama, through cooperative networks within and outside the region.

Table 2.5 Summary table of Finnfor-II

Project name	Integrated Environmental and Forest Management Co-operation Project in Central America (Finnfor-II)
Implementing organisation	Tropical Agricultural Research and Higher Education Centre (CATIE) (international organisation)
Countries	Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua (El Salvador, Belize, Panama)
Dates	1 October 2012 – 31 March 2016
Budget	EUR 3.8 million
Number of sub-projects	9 value chains (Guatemala-4, Nicaragua-2, Costa Rica-1, Honduras-2)
Delivery mechanism	Direct identification of value chains to be supported based on the experiences in the first phase (Finnfor-I)
Key thematic areas	Forest value chains, livelihoods, knowledge sharing
Regional objectives	Knowledge sharing across countries; contribute to implementation of the Regional Strategic Program for Forestry of the Central American Commission for Environment and Development (CCAD).

The final logical framework lists four key results: (1) developed wood product value chains to improve the distribution of benefits from forest production; (2) improved capacity of local governance bodies to integrate SFM and value chains in development plans; (3) strengthened networks of forest research plots to promote innovation and training for forest governance and management; (4) improved management practices of Finnfor-II and CATIE.

The results should be achieved through a set of four action lines, which include: (1) generating information and knowledge management processes related to forest sector development; (2) business and technical assistance; (3) strengthening of forest management capacities through training; (4) enabling institutional conditions in the political-legal and regulatory frameworks and investment environment.

2.2.2 Sustainable Forest Management Programme

The Sustainable Forest Management (MFS) Programme is the result of a Co-operation Agreement between MFA Finland and the Inter-American Institute for Agriculture (IICA), in February 2011. The Objective of the Programme was to achieve a greater contribution of forest resources to sustainable development in the Andean Region. Its purpose was to support the introduction and adoption of innovations, and to eliminate bottlenecks that impede the development of the forestry sector, through public and private actors of the participating countries in order to contribute to the sustainability of forest resources management and the expansion of forest plantations.

To achieve its purpose, it implemented activities in four axes: Diversification of – and value addition to – forest products, Payment for environmental services, Community forest management, and Multi-Stakeholder consultation and partnerships for SFM. The program logic was structured around a logframe that was revised in the end of 2014. The activities are structured in three components with a corresponding result (*‘resultado’* corresponding to the output-level in the simplified results chain, see Annex 2) for each component, and a fourth Programme management component, as follows:

- Result/Component 1: ‘(Natural) Forest management’. Innovations to achieve greater economic, social and environmental efficiency of forest management in the participating countries validated
- Result/Component 2 ‘Forest plantations’. Innovations to achieve greater economic, social and environmental impacts of plantations in the participating countries validated
- Result/Component 3 ‘Coordination and exchange of experience’. Knowledge and skills of innovative practices in the participating agencies strengthened and experiences in SFM promoted
- Result/Component 4 ‘Programme management’.

Table 2.6 Summary table of MFS programme

Project name	Sustainable Forest Management Programme (MFS)
Implementing organisation	Inter-American Institute for Agriculture (IICA) (international organisation)
Countries	Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru
Dates	February 2011 – February 2016
Budget	EUR 8.08 Million
Number of sub-projects	24
Delivery mechanism	Two rounds of calls for proposals, field projects implemented by civil society organisations (CSOs) and private companies Regional activities such as training courses and events
Key thematic areas	Forest management, forest plantations, Payments for Environmental Service (PES; water, REDD+, tourism), value chains, livelihoods
Regional objectives	Knowledge sharing

2.2.3 Livelihood Improvement through Generation and Ownership of Forest Information by Local People in Products and Services Markets

The ForInfo project (*Livelihood Improvement through Generation and Ownership of Forest Information by Local People in Products and Services Markets*) aimed at promoting local communities’ access to information and forest products and services markets. The project developed field-tested forestry information methodologies. It was implemented from 2011 to 2015, in eight sites in the four countries of the Lower Mekong region: Cambodia, Lao PDR, Thailand, and Vietnam. The project was managed by RECOFTC with 2 M€ funding support from the Government of Finland and it worked together with the ministries of forestry or environment in the project countries.

The project consisted of six outputs (components): Initiation of ForInfo in project countries; Documentation of best practices; Piloting of selected best practices on information generation; Piloting of information and data sharing mechanisms; Assessing the role of information in benefit sharing and dissemination of field-tested methodologies.

The underlying assumption (the project logic) was that improved availability and access to information would generate *‘improved forestry-based livelihoods through generation and*

ownership of Forest Information by local people. The project aimed at making information on good practices available and accessible and applicable to stakeholders and improving their understanding and skills in the generation of information. The key stakeholders of the project (as defined in project documentation) were government extension services in charge of Community Forests and private sector. The (final) beneficiaries of the project were community forest user groups and plantation smallholders.

Table 2.7 Summary table of ForInfo project

Project name	Livelihood Improvement through Generation and Ownership of Forest Information by Local People in Products and Services Markets (ForInfo)
Implementing organisation	Centre for People and Forests (RECOFTC) (international organisation)
Countries	Cambodia, Laos, Thailand, Vietnam
Dates	1 April 2011 to 31 March 2014; extended to 31 December 2015
Budget	EUR 2 Million
Number of sub-projects	8 field projects
Delivery mechanism	Direct identification of field activities centrally managed from RECOFTC office in Thailand
Key thematic areas	Forest management, livelihoods, knowledge sharing, technology transfer
Regional objectives	Dissemination of best practices, knowledge sharing

3. EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The Inception Report (Annex 2) describes in detail the general approach and the selected methods and analysis used for this evaluation. It presents evaluation questions (10) and specific issues to be addressed, criteria for country selection, data sources and data collection procedures and instruments, methods used data and analysis, as well as a draft evaluation matrix used by all experts for data collection. A final version of the matrix is presented in Annex 4.

The matrix is a work tool to ensure a degree of objectivity and a harmonised approach, among team members, in answering the evaluation questions. The grades credited to each evaluation criterion are calculated through a combination of grades attributed to each of the sub-questions. Not all sub-questions are given the same weight; the chosen weighting of questions and sub-questions is based on a consensus among the expert opinion of the six team members. The overall score is based on the relevance to Finnish and partner government policies (30%) and to key stakeholders and final beneficiaries (30%), on the quality of the design of the project (30%), and on the integration of cross-cutting objectives in the design (10%). Obviously, these weights could be modified, and this could have some implications for calculations of overall scores.

During the inception and desk phase, the team further explored the key concepts to be addressed during the evaluation to formulate relevant questions and judgment criteria and arrive at a common reference framework. Based on the ToR, the following 'key issues' were identified: (1) results chains and logical frameworks; (2) the regional dimension; (3) sustainable forestry-based livelihoods; (4) forestry value chain development (5) Payment for environmental services (PES); and (6) cross-cutting themes. The results of these explorations are presented hereafter, in this annex.

During the field work phase, raw data were collected to feed into evaluation matrices, based on which Mission Reports were prepared, as presented in Annex 6. During the reporting phase, these reports provided the basic elements for answering the evaluation questions, at the global level of the evaluation. The team worked together for three days in order to share findings, review performance (scoring) of each of the projects, and arrive at tentative overall conclusions and recommendations. This constituted the starting point for elaboration of the final report.

3.2 Strengths and limitations

Some of the strengths and limitations of the approach and methodology used, which are likely to affect the validity of the results of the evaluation, are the following:

1. A key challenge was to synthesise conclusions at the global level, based on evaluations of three very different projects, each of which operated in a multitude of countries, producing both positive and less convincing results. Many of the lessons learned concern the individual field projects, where (f)actors of success can be identified, while the evaluation was mostly concerned with the overall regional interventions. This challenge was tackled by applying a systematic scoring of performance to each of the projects based on the expert judgment of two experts, which resulted in the overall performance table presented in Chapter 4.
2. While the evaluation is considered a 'final evaluation', it is in fact an ex-post evaluation, conducted approximately two years after closure of the projects. This posed some challenges to identifying and contacting the persons who had been involved in project implementation as well as project beneficiaries. However, for all three projects, former project team members were found to be highly available and collaborative and the evaluation team is confident of having consulted a proper sample of key stakeholders involved in or affected by the projects. Annex 9 lists the main persons met in the various countries.

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3. The two years' time lapse, since end-of-project, enhances the validity of the assessment of impact and sustainability. The team could verify to what extent the projects have actually affected stakeholders beyond the target group on policy processes, and to what extent processes of change induced by the projects have been sustained over time. Conclusions and recommendations on impact and sustainability are therefore considered to be valid.

4. KEY FINDINGS

Below table summarises performance (scoring) of the three projects on the different evaluation criteria, based on findings under each of the (10) main evaluation questions. The scores by evaluation question are, in turn, based on scores for more detailed sub-questions, which can be consulted in Annex 5

Table 4.1 Scoring of the three projects by evaluation criteria

Evaluation Question (EQ)	Weight	Finnfor -II	ForInfo	MFS	Overall
Relevance	1	3.52	2.82	2.58	2.97
EQ1: To what extent were the programmes consistent with problems and priorities of stakeholders – including Finland’s development co-operation objectives and approaches – and of final beneficiaries?	0.6	4.00	3.50	3.50	3.67
EQ2: Was the project design appropriate and realistic to achieve the set objectives?	0.4	2.80	1.80	1.20	1.93
Effectiveness	1	3.05	2.35	2.05	2.48
EQ3: To what extent have expected results (outputs, outcomes) of the projects, in particular with regard to (1) promoting sustainable forestry-based livelihoods and increased income of small producers; (2) developing value chains and (3) developing retribution mechanisms for ecosystems, materialised?	0.7	3.50	2.50	2.50	2.83
EQ4: What value has the regional approach added, in terms of project effectiveness?	0.3	2.00	2.00	1.00	1.67
Efficiency	1	3.40	3.00	3.15	3.18
EQ5: How well did the various activities transform the available resources into the intended results?	1	3.40	3.00	3.15	3.18
Impact	1	3.40	2.40	1.60	2.47
EQ6: To what extent have overall project objectives been achieved, and to what extent have the regional projects contributed to the achievements?	1	3.40	2.40	1.60	2.47
Sustainability	1	3.30	3.10	1.80	2.73
EQ7: To what extent have the programmes achieved sustainable results, and how has the regional approach affected sustainability?	1	3.30	3.10	1.80	2.73
Aid effectiveness	1	2.80	2.40	2.00	2.40
EQ8: How and to what extent have the regional programmes promoted commitment and ownership by the relevant stakeholders?	0.8	3.00	2.50	2.00	2.50
EQ9: What has been the added value of Finland’s programmes?	0.2	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00
Coherence	1	3.00	2.50	3.50	3.00
EQ10: How has other co-operation between Finland and the concerned countries been taken into account in implementation, and what have been the synergies of the regional programmes with other initiatives, including private sector and civil society co-operation?	1	3.00	2.50	3.50	3.00
Overall average	7	3.21	2.65	2.38	2.75

Scale: 4 = very good (green); 3 = satisfactory-good (yellow); 2 = substantial problems (orange); 1 = serious deficiencies (red)

The scoring of projects against evaluation criteria shows an overall satisfactory evaluation of the three regional projects. Finnfor-II performed the best, followed by the ForInfo project; the MFS programme performed significantly weaker. Finnfor-II's success is mostly owed to high relevance and proper integration into ongoing programmes – it could also build on an earlier first phase, which contributed to good impact and sustainability. ForInfo was less effective and achieved less impact, in part due to the limited project duration, but showed good potential for further impact. MFS' performance was 'problematic', starting with a poor design, in particular regarding regional dimension of the programme. While field projects mostly showed good results, the impact on a regional level was very limited.

On individual evaluation criteria, the collective performance of the three projects gives a mixed picture: relevance and efficiency, sustainability and coherence are satisfactory to good, with efficiency scoring highest. Effectiveness and impact, as well as aid effectiveness showed substantial problems. Note that performance on some of the criteria is made up of different elements (and evaluation questions) for which scores can differ significantly. Project relevance, for example, was overall high (3.76), but design flaws, particularly in the MFS programme, have substantially reduced the overall score for relevance. Likewise, while overall effectiveness was satisfactory, such as in field projects, the limited added value of the regional project/programme (score 1.67) reduced the overall effectiveness score.

4.1 Relevance

EQ1: To what extent were the programmes consistent with problems and priorities of stakeholders – including Finland's development co-operation objectives and approaches – and of final beneficiaries?

The overall performance of the three projects with regard to relevance is rated is high (scoring 3.7), with individual scores ranging from 'very high' for Finnfor-II (score 4.0) to 'high' for ForInfo and MFS (score 3.5).

The regional forestry projects were and are highly relevant to the Finnish development policies in terms of sustainable development, though addressing the poorest is indirect. The objectives of the regional projects are consistent with the key goals and themes of Finland's Development Policy Programme 2007, which was in force when the projects were designed. The policy relevance may even have increased with regard to the 2012 Development policy programme, which put emphasis on civil society engagement (e.g. Community Forest Groups) and with the 2016 Government Report on Development Policy, which emphasises corporate social responsibility through collaboration between companies, organisations and public authorities. From 2007 to 2012 the geographical priorities of the Finnish development co-operation were on the least developed countries, and out of the partner countries of the evaluated regional programmes only Vietnam and Nicaragua pertained to this category.

Forestry value chain work typically involves both poor producers (at the field level) and small or medium-size entrepreneurs involved in processing or trading. It was found that most activities (pilot projects) did target poor households, but in some cases, they targeted medium-size farm enterprises – for example the teak-for-export growers in the Costa Rican Finnfor II project - while there was scope to target value chains that involves poorer (but probably not the poorest) households, notably those who produce for the domestic market. However, the economic relevance and impact of that value chain would have been much less important.

Under MFS, the Reforesta Perú initiative was led by a private investor doing business with smallholders and reaching out to indigenous communities to help them restore degraded land and earn income from forest plantations. This did not materialize yet, but the effort to reach out was recognised. A similar example is the Guyausa tree products chain in Ecuador (by Fundación Runa), a strong enterprise which exports to US markets and works closely with indigenous communities who provide the tree leaves, with an equitable sharing of benefits. Other examples are the Partnerships & Technology for Sustainability (PaTS) and the bio-jewellery project in Peru, which is built on the knowledge and skills of the local indigenous

women. It is still small in scale and needs to strengthen its value chain. In brief, there is much diversity among the value chains, but all of them have the potential to take into account local livelihoods and ensure equitable sharing of benefits.

The regional projects are also relevant to the objectives of Finland's policy for the forest sector, which are to strengthen the conditions for SFM, and thus achieve fair economic growth, reduce poverty and prevent environmental hazards, and cater to the needs of the beneficiary communities. However, the relevance was found to be reduced by weak consideration, during project identification, of forest sector development bottlenecks, of communities' socio-organisational, institutional and capacity development needs, as well as their need to have a voice in the political processes that take place in the forest sector.

However, the articulation with partner government policies was weak. Although the interventions appear to have been in line with national priorities and objectives of the participating countries, the link and contribution of the project interventions to the policy level remained weak. In ForInfo, some of the pilot projects were envisioned to provide lessons for policy formulation. However, some of these lessons are still being produced (e.g. teak collaterals in Lao PDR) or have not materialized due to changes in policy environment (Seima in Cambodia, pilots in Thailand). In MFS, for example in Peru, the interventions were relevant to the strategies and plans of sub-national governments, but these governments have not been associated with MFS processes. The field visit revealed that SERFOR (National Forest Service under the Ministry of Agriculture) and the Ministry of Environment had very limited knowledge of MFS despite the fact that, during project implementation, these institutions were formulating new legal frameworks and policies (the new forest law and the National Strategy for Forests and Climate Change, respectively). While MFS had some involvement in these processes, the evidence obtained during the field visit suggests that the project was not considered a key partner in either of these cases. Similarly, in Colombia, the field projects were relevant to policies and laws on the sustainable use of biodiversity, to the National Strategy on Payments for Environmental Services, to the National Policy of Integral Management of Biodiversity, to the forestry incentive certificate and to the national strategy for green business. They were also relevant to the plans and strategies of the Regional Autonomous Corporations, which in some cases manifested a keen interest in the results and in being associated with implementation. However, it was observed that projects lacked articulation with the governmental entities that develop and implement these instruments and policies. MFS could have chosen more strategic entry points and mechanisms for policy influence in each country and contributed to the formulation of concrete proposals.

Project relevance to final beneficiaries was overall high as most field projects responded to the diverse needs of final beneficiaries. For example, in the "Model for restoration and tourism use" project in Colombia, the intervention allowed for the development of capacities of three cooperatives, the strengthening of the chain of existing markets, and for promotion of the conservation and sustainable use of ornamental species. Aspects that increased the projects' relevance to the final beneficiaries include extensive consultations during the project formulation (MFS, ForInfo) and flexibility in the type of proposals that were considered eligible in the calls for proposals (MFS) or in implementation modalities (Finnfor II). Typical shortcomings in MFS field projects included unachieved objectives, not meeting raised expectations or a lack of consultation during field project formulation.

Crosscutting objectives (apart from HIV/AIDS) of the Finnish development co-operation were to some extent integrated in project design but not explicitly implemented or followed up. Specific targets were set for gender equality and e.g. for the ethnic minorities (e.g. ForInfo), but specific actions to achieve these targets were not defined, implemented or monitored. The Human Rights Based Approach (HRBA) was not explicitly reflected in the objectives of the projects and the project documentation provided limited analysis of the rights and duties of the rights holders and duty bearers. Similarly, the HRBA principles of beneficiary participation in project formulation, implementation and monitoring has not taken place in all projects.

EQ2: Was the project design appropriate and realistic to achieve the set objectives?

Overall, performance on project design scored poorly, with individual scores ranging from 'satisfactory' for Finnfor-II (score 2.8) to 'substantial problems' for ForInfo (score 1.8) and 'serious deficiencies' in the case of MFS (score 1.2).

While there was a policy ambition to work more on a regional scale, also in view of phasing out of bilateral co-operation with some countries, there were hardly any regional policies or strategies that MFA funded forestry support could be linked up with. The regional projects built on long-standing Finnish co-operation in each of the regions, in particular in Central and South America. Finnish co-operation had the ambition and reputation to contribute to regional integration, reduce conflict and foster peace (particularly in Central America). At the same time, there was a mandate to work more on a regional scale, and technical co-operation activities in the forestry sector were considered to be 'neutral' and well suited to contribute to that objective. However, there were no proper regional policies and strategies to link up to.

Regional-level outcomes and impacts are weakly reflected in project objectives and expected results. Despite some transboundary elements, the projects were essentially multi-country projects, centred on knowledge transfer and lessons learning, rather than interventions supporting regional integration and resolution of cross-border problems (MFA of Finland 2012). This is also reflected in the projects' monitoring frameworks and logframes, which failed to link the contribution of country projects to regional level plans or policies, through a theory of change or otherwise.

In addition, the selected regional implementing organisations had only limited political clout to influence regional policy processes. In the absence of regional strategies, it was decided to look for successful activities in the different countries and ways to bring these together and scale them up (verbal communication), using a regional organisation. In other words, the regional dimension would be limited to 'activities in the region' and 'implementation through a regional organisation'. MFA of Finland seems to have been aware of the challenge of identifying the right partners in order to ensure regional co-operation would be 'more than a collection of country projects'. It selected trusted and technically competent implementing organisations with relevant networks, in particular CATIE and RECOFTC. These organisations, however, had but only limited influence on regional policy processes.

The project designs were ambitious considering the multiple stakeholders, the high number of field sites and activities, and the limited timeframe. A comprehensive forestry value chain approach would have required a longer-term (indicatively 10 years) perspective. The projects included neither an explicit Theory of Change (ToC) at regional level, nor any ToC for interventions in different thematic areas at country and sub-national levels. The causal pathways from local projects to the Regional Projects' objective were not explicitly formulated.

A weakness observed in most of the value chain projects is the absence of a gender analysis. There is little evidence that a gender perspective was discussed during the design, or that there would have been any particular attention to ensuring equal opportunities for participation by women and men. Only the ForInfo included reasonable gender considerations in the project design. Consequently, the supported value chains are mostly dominated by men, with a few exceptions. Most field projects did attempt to develop initiatives to improve the situation of women in the value chains, and financed complementary activities for women (e.g. tree nurseries or packaging of charcoal) with varying success.

4.2 Effectiveness

EQ3: To what extent have expected results (outputs, outcomes) of the projects, in particular with regard to (1) promoting sustainable forestry-based livelihoods and increased income of small producers; (2) developing value chains and (3) developing retribution mechanisms for ecosystems, materialised?

The achievement of expected results for the three projects collectively is satisfactory (score 2.83). However, scores across projects range from ‘good’ for Finnfor-II (score 3.50) to ‘substantial problems’ for ForInfo (score 2.50) and MFS (score 2.50). Results at local and community level have received most attention and are by far the most tangible and convincing, while national and regional level results are relatively weak. Hereafter, we provide a summary of achievements by project first, followed by a review of results in the different thematic areas targeted by the projects.

In the Central American Region, Finnfor-II achieved its expected outputs and outcomes in most (5/7) of the supported value chains, in particular in terms of improving forestry-based livelihoods and income of small (and medium) producers, through its work on value chain development. Finnfor-II focused its activities on value chain development and marked a shift in focus from conservation oriented forestry to generating income with forestry products. There was a clear focus on improved livelihoods and income, and higher and diversified income for small producers was realised through increased production volume and market access (Nicaragua, Guatemala) and/or better prices (Costa Rica). In some cases, time constraints did not allow for achieving a transformation of the production chain into a full value chain (with shifts in profit margins along the chain). Several constraints in the (downstream part of the) value chain could not be addressed and heavy reliance on intermediaries remains. PES activities were not identified as key constraints in the various VCs and were not targeted.

Moving to the territorial level, there was limited attention for incorporation of SFM and value chain work into territorial planning and capacity development. While there is little evidence of integration of forestry value chains into local development or low carbon development plans, in Costa Rica good integration with local level (territorial) planning processes was observed, thanks to the strong partnership with the local governmental organisation. Capacity development mostly happened through exchange visits between the countries.

Methods and knowledge of Value Chain (VC) approaches have been well documented and are being incorporated in education curricula benefiting the countries of Central America. During a modification of the project document, however, the expected result on ‘knowledge generation and strengthening of research education and outreach’ was re-centred on ‘improved management practices of the Finnfor-II project and CATIE’. The revised result seems less relevant than the original, though, since knowledge generation, documentation and dissemination would have constituted a meaningful result, particularly in light of the regional dimension of the project, which ultimately received too little explicit attention.

In the Mekong Region, ForInfo contributed in a modest way to developing best practices to be replicated regionally and globally, most initiatives still need to bear fruit. ForInfo established effective linkages between communities and sawmills and other local businesses. Even if the ultimate objective – of using the plantations as a collateral for bank loans – was not achieved, it was successful in increasing entrepreneurial awareness and capacities in the target communities, even if the capacities are still limited to carry out the activities independently. In addition, the project cooperated effectively with the local PAFO officers that are now able to carry out the field work required to issue teak certificates for plantation smallholders. Replication among participating countries has been limited though some replication beyond the project scope has taken place. Entrepreneurial capacities and awareness increased but are still in an early stage. The capacity for SFM increased in those community forests enjoying clear and recognised tenure arrangements and where management plans are commonly followed. The project has managed to increase final beneficiaries’ role in the value chains of some forest

products (e.g. mushroom, rattan, teak) and in Vietnam, the project contributed to the development of an FSC-certified tree grower group. However, most of these processes are still in very early stage and/or have fallen short of the final goal.

Capacity development at institutional (RECOFTC) level was not an explicit objective. However, through regional initiatives such as the ForInfo project, RECOFTC has reportedly become more actively involved in Lao PDR (notably in the Livelihood Improvement through Generation and Ownership of Forest Information by Local People in Products and Service Markets project in Bokéo, the RECOFTC-RRI partnership and REDD-related regional projects, such as Grassroots Capacity Building for REDD+ and the Grassroots Equity and Enhanced Network in Mekong – GREEN Mekong), while continuing to involve Lao participants in its regional training and seminars.

Furthermore, replication among participating countries in the regions has been limited. At the pilot project site level, three pilot projects out of seven tested new methodologies and contributed to the project purpose. Replication among participating countries in the regions has been limited. Promising replication opportunities seem to be linked only with bamboo harvesting technologies.

Nonetheless, there are several good examples of replication in the regions. RECOFTC included learning from the project sites in its training programmes, and it is reported that in the training event on small-scale appropriate harvesting technology with participants from Myanmar, China, Thailand, Vietnam and Laos, it used the developed training guidebook, machine and equipment, and fact sheet. The project did not lead to extensive curriculum revisions as indicated in the log frame but examples on lessons learned were incorporated in the existing materials.

In the Andean Region, MFS funded 24 local projects which produced satisfactory results in terms of generating innovation. Overall project effectiveness, however, was limited due to a weak articulation between the local projects and (sub-)national processes.

Given the sizable number of field projects in MFS (24), the evaluation assessed the project effectiveness by means of a portfolio analysis supported by field visits to selected projects. The performance of the local projects was assessed along these aspects: (i) consistency and sustainability of innovation effects, (ii) capacity building, (iii) influencing decision-making, policy, practice, (iv) dissemination, knowledge transfer; and (v) benefits to beneficiaries. A scoring scale of 1 to 4 on each aspect was used as follows: Unsatisfactory: 1; Moderately satisfactory: 2; Performing well: 3; Highly satisfactory: 4. The overall score across field projects is 2.6, varying from moderately satisfactory for Bolivia (2.4), Colombia (2.6), and Peru (2.3), to performing well for Ecuador (3.0). The areas of moderately to highly satisfactory performance are capacity building (3.2), benefits to beneficiaries (3.2), and consistency and sustainability of innovation effects (2.6). The areas of underperformance that tend to reduce the overall Regional Project scoring are: influencing decision-making, policy and practices (score 1.8), and dissemination and knowledge transfer (score 1.7). With regard to final beneficiaries, typical benefits included non-timber forest products and related process upgrading, and capacity building.

MFS funded 10 projects aimed at generating innovation in the area of value addition/value chain development. Two models of market access were applied; in the first, a company needs to consolidate its network of providers; examples are the *Jagua Natural Blue² for Export* (Colombia) and the *Guayusa* project that developed products derived from the tree (Ecuador). In the second model, which was followed by one project in Bolivia only, a marketing service platform is established and becomes an additional link in the chain. In general, projects following the first model have provided more benefits to communities. They have also proven the value added of the PPPs, in terms of production, access to responsible markets, income to communities, and participation in the value chains. In both models, the projects have shown that value chain development has a potential to provide quicker benefits when it is connected to

² Natural blue is extracted from the *Genipa americana* tree locally known as *jagua* or *huito*.

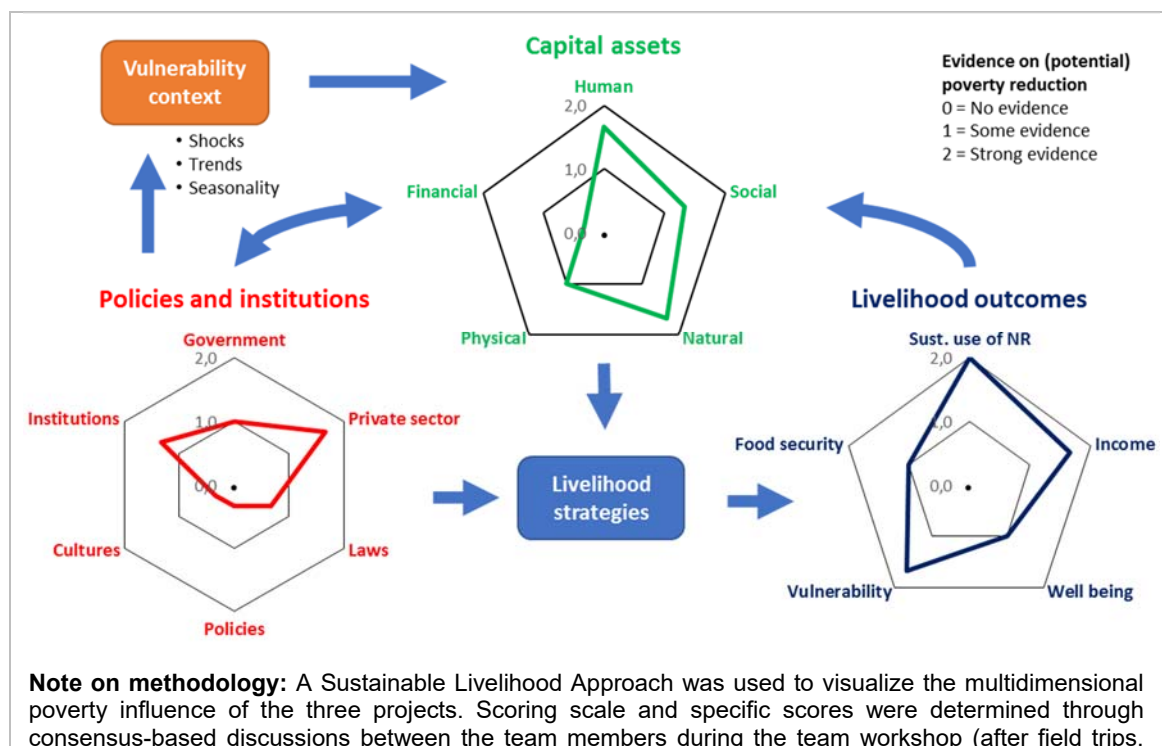
forest management, compared to value chains alone or forest management alone, especially when private sector actors are involved.

However, the field projects were not well linked to country-level or regional processes, nor with each other, and despite exchange visits, exchange of experience remained limited. The themes were addressed in silos, with the exception of a few projects which demonstrated that value chains and community forest management could well be integrated.

The three projects achieved expected outputs and outcomes in most of the supported value chains, in particular in terms of promoting sustainable forestry-based livelihoods and increased income for small producers. A clear focus on increased production volumes, quality and market access resulted in higher and diversified income for small producers and improved livelihoods in each of the three projects. Income generating activities undertaken by the projects also included innovative livelihoods options such as adding value to non-timber forest products. Community forest management activities were also well conducted and helped reduce forest degradation, increase productivity, strengthen livelihoods and reduce poverty of target communities. The factor that most contributed to achieving expected outputs is arguably the support services (notably training) provided by the projects, which allowed the beneficiaries to increase their income. The training courses provided community members with practical knowledge and skills, which they could apply in improving productivity, managing their resources or adding value to their production.

From the perspective of multidimensional poverty reduction, the three projects influenced various aspects of well-being (Figure 4.1). In terms of capital assets, most positive influence was seen on the human, social and natural assets. The projects enhanced the involvement of institutions and the private sector in improving and diversifying livelihood strategies. Consequently, the final beneficiaries were observed to reduce their vulnerability and demonstrate improvements in income generation, especially in terms of sustainable use of natural resources. Evidence on impact on policies, on the other hand, is weak, which seems to reflect the fact that this was not really tackled by most projects.

Figure 4.1 Influence of the three projects on multidimensional poverty reduction



interviews and document review). This figure represents the average scores from all three projects. The scores should not be considered as exact science but rather as indication of aspects of poverty addressed by the projects.

In addition, there is evidence of enhanced effectiveness thanks to private sector involvement, either directly for implementation or through PPPs. In the Andean Region, the value addition and value chain development projects were directly implemented by private sector organisations, while in Colombia one project was successfully implemented in a PPP arrangement. The involvement of the private sector was beneficial for small producers of NTFPs, who gained a secured (or potentially secured) access to markets. The private sector benefited from having direct contacts with producers and assured supplies, in terms of quantity, quality and regularity. The income benefits for the producers also reflected positively on sustainability of forest and plantation management.

In contrast to local-level benefits, the regional projects did not contribute much to changes in policies and practices at local, territorial, national, and regional levels. Overall effectiveness in using the results from local level projects to influence policies at country and regional levels was modest. The projects failed to use their results for policy dialogues, for influencing decision-making or to achieve changes in policies and strategies allowing for replication and scaling up. A key cause for limited effectiveness of the projects at country level, in the case of MFS, was weak levels of political commitment to the success of the projects, and a lack of country-level contextualised theories of change.

Replication among participating countries in the regions has been limited. At the pilot project site level, three pilot projects out of seven tested new methodologies and contributed to the project purpose. Replication among participating countries in the regions has been limited. Promising replication opportunities seem to be linked only with bamboo harvesting technologies.

Results regarding retribution mechanisms for ecosystems were only pursued and achieved in the Andean Region, where PES was one of the focal areas. Performance at project level was good, but benefits to target groups still need time to materialise. Of the three projects, MFS was the only one to have a substantial focus on PES. In total, ten field projects worked on PES (Bolivia: 1; Colombia: 3; Ecuador: 1; Peru: 5) and constituted cases for one or more of the following sub-themes: CO₂ sinks, biodiversity, water catchment protection. Five out of ten projects successfully conducted awareness activities targeting beneficiaries, two projects carried out studies, and none was involved in south-south exchange of experience. The assessment of the results shows that only two projects (Peru) contributed to the enabling environment, three had a potential to scale up, and five had a potential to achieve the expected impact for the beneficiaries. The analysis also shows that overall, REDD+ and PES project clusters lacked an articulated theory of change showing how the innovations, in addition to giving incentives to beneficiary communities and stakeholders, would support processes that lead to their institutionalisation at the completion of the MFS programme.

EQ4: What value has the regional approach added, in terms of project effectiveness?

The regional approach effectiveness in the three Projects varied from having serious deficiencies to having substantial problems (score: 1.67). Project scores vary from serious deficiencies for MFS (score 1.0), to substantial problems for Finnfor-II (2.0) and ForInfo (2.0).

In the Central American Region, Finnfor-II lacked a proper regional approach. Beyond implementation of field projects through a regional institution there were no objectives related to co-operation or integration among the participating countries. While there was a distinct sectoral focus, and reference is made to the Regional Strategic Program for Forestry (PERFOR) of the Central American Commission for Environment and Development (CCAD), there were no regional co-operation plans assessing regional actors, issues or objectives. In essence, each country worked on specific value chains, based on local assets and needs and within their contexts. There was one case of cross-boundary activities (Costa Rica-Nicaraguan trade in charcoal), but little lesson learning or other outcomes beyond the country level.

However, three regional elements did contribute to project results:

1. Regional-level technology transfer by producers: Nicaraguan beneficiaries and staff of public institutions travelled to Honduras to study the brick kiln technology for charcoal;
2. Access to a market in the region: charcoal producers were linked up (albeit through intermediaries) with a Costa Rican supermarket chain;
3. Cross-country knowledge transfer: Experiences and methodologies from one country were exchanged with other countries, facilitated by Finnfor-II-CATIE. Guatemala stakeholders, for example, visited Costa Rica to share the mahogany study results and their experience in value chain development. However, beyond these visits there was no follow-up given to these exchanges.

Finnfor-II's cross-border activities in the tri-border area of Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras failed to materialise. The cross-border objectives of the *Trifinio* Region project (the tri-border area of Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras) was mostly defeated by security concerns. Finnfor-II worked here for a few months, supporting a forest analysis, commercial strategy and a study of drivers of deforestation. There was no further follow-up to these initial studies and Finnfor-II's attention and resources were concentrated in *Petén* (Guatemala).

All in all, there are no proper regional-level outcomes or ownership in Finnfor-II, beyond the knowledge and experience gained through the individual field projects, which were integrated in CATIE's knowledge base, available to countries in the region, and in their academic courses. This seems to be a missed opportunity when there are several initiatives ongoing to strengthen commercial integration, e.g. between Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador. A regional approach could have helped define common objectives, for example by targeting the same pool of buyers or supporting a regional network of forest-related products that would cater to bigger and more demanding markets than individual VCs.

With regard to ForInfo, RECOFTC, as a well-regarded regional organisation in the Mekong Region, was well positioned for project implementation and achieving the project purpose of making information on good practices available, accessible and applicable to stakeholders in the region, and improving their understanding and skills in the generation of information. It played this role to a fair extent, notably by making contents available on their website. The evaluation also found that the materials uploaded online had been downloaded frequently by visitors contributing to the key outcome of the project. The pilot projects, however, were independently implemented and did not benefit much from being part of a regional program.

In the Andean Region, too, MFS interventions reduced a regional project to a multi-country funding facility, supporting clusters of local, isolated projects. The Project Document did not refer to any political priority of the Andean Community (CAN) on the development of the forest sector in its member countries, or to any joint resolution of member countries to cooperate for the implementation of the MFS. While it provided a good description of how the project would be coordinated in the four countries, it did not clarify what working regionally would imply for successful implementation of MFS. Of the 24 projects funded by MFS, none was designed as regional, and the only 'regional' aspects were the activities that revolved around training workshops, meetings of implementing partners, communication, and the exchange platform.

The regional dimension of MFS was further weakened when, in 2013, the CAN decided to drop environmental issues from its political agenda and abandoned its role as facilitator of the Steering Committee of MFS. The project's response was to remain focused on local projects. This experience suggests that a multi-country framework developed to fit country-level project clusters is unfit for a regional implementation model in the absence of a proper theory of change that takes the political economy setting into account. To circumvent the 'regionality' challenge, MFS opted for implementing local projects, submitted by partner organisations, which were not linked to any regional political strategy in the framework of CAN. While this approach allowed flexibility to address local needs, it did not allow generating a critical mass of evidence in respective thematic areas and create a wider impact on policies and practices in the Region.

4.3 Efficiency

EQ5: How well did the various activities transform the available resources into the intended results?

Efficiency in all three projects was found to be high. In fact, efficiency was the highest scoring among the seven evaluation criteria with scores of 3.0 to 3.4 on a scale of 1 to 4.

An important factor is the efficiency of the implementing organisation itself; all three organisations, in particular CATIE and RECOFTC, proved to be committed and efficient in implementation of regional operations. The presence of country-level coordinators and/or offices (CATIE, RECOFTC) to guide and support the local projects and link up with the regional project was a critical factor. In the case of ForInfo, for example, the appointment of a local coordinator was crucial for production of most outputs.

Another success factor was the embedment of the field projects in ongoing programmes. Again, in the cases of CATIE and RECOFTC, implemented in collaboration with trusted partners and involvement of permanent institutional structures and donors. Since no separate project management structures were required in the various countries, management costs could be kept to a minimum. In this regard, some field-based operators questioned the need for involvement of a regional organisation (such as CATIE), arguing that management (overhead) costs could be avoided if Finland would directly support field-level organisations in the intervention area. While this may be so, this modality seems little realistic, as it would likely enhance management costs for the Finnish Co-operation Agencies and increase risks related to implementation by smaller local organisations.

Adaptation to local circumstances and changing market and demand situations, as well as flexible implementation mechanisms were cited as other factors enhancing efficiency, especially in the case of Finnfor-II and ForInfo. For example, while CATIE's financial-administrative systems were ill-suited to transfer funds to local community forest enterprises (CFEs) and support small investments (e.g. dryers) in Guatemala, Finnfor-II managed to find ways to do these transfers, showing flexibility, innovation and perseverance during project implementation.

MFS's operational modality was also efficient, in terms of converting inputs into outputs and outcomes (at field project level). The procedures used to select projects to be funded ensured proper selection of the most appropriate and competent implementing partners, who were in a position to make a relatively high counterpart contribution to the field projects. At field level, the MFS programme produced very good results, such as the Reforesta forest plantation project in Peruvian Amazonia and the *Ilex guayusa* project in Ecuadorian Amazonia.

Aspects that negatively affected efficiency negatively included delays in starting up implementation (MFS and ForInfo), weak monitoring & evaluation (MFS and Finnfor-II), knowledge management systems (MFS and Finnfor-II), and absence of (forestry) thematic experts at country level (MFS). MFS and ForInfo projects' overall efficiency was negatively affected by the **delays** in starting up implementation. The belated start reduced the effective duration of field projects to approximately two years. Delays in starting up activities and mobilizing experts reduced efficiency of the ForInfo project as well, but both projects were able to accelerate their pace of implementation and catch up on incurred delays. Only MFS was granted a no-cost extension.

Efficiency was also affected by a weak monitoring & evaluation system, in the case of MFS, and of Finnfor-II in its early stages. The software tool used for monitoring focused mostly on budget execution and failed to bring up evidence of impact from its programmatic and non-programmatic activities. Finnfor-II initially faced the same challenge, but was able to adjust its M&E system to capture field-level impacts. In addition, knowledge management activities in MFS and Finnfor-II have been limited, with only few projects having their experiences published (MFS) and lack of focus in this work area (Finnfor-II). In terms of **knowledge management**, an effort to systematise experiences was limited to eight local projects only in MFS. In addition to

these cases, a larger number of other documents were produced by consultants (see MFS website <http://www.forestalsostenibleandina.net>), but not from MFS's own field experience. Knowledge management was also relatively weak in the Finnfor-II project, which had cancelled this work area as one of its expected results. A factor that mostly affected efficiency, in the case of MFS, was the **absence of (forestry) thematic experts** at country level, particularly in the areas of PES and value chains. The lack of methodological advice contributed to a relative isolation of pilot projects.

4.4 Impact

EQ6: To what extent have overall project objectives been achieved, and to what extent have the regional projects contributed to the achievements?

The average impact of the three projects is not satisfactory (score 2.47). Scores of the individual projects range from 'good' for Finnfor-II (score 3.4) to 'substantial problems' for ForInfo (score 2.4) and MFS (score 1.6).

Finnfor-II's general objective was to improve the livelihoods of local populations (SMFEs and producer groups) in selected territories through identification, analysis and elimination of the barriers that affect the production of forest goods and services.

Finnfor-II achieved its objective and produced very tangible impacts on stakeholders at different levels. It fostered access to and income from natural assets, resulting in tangible benefits for producer groups and SMFEs in selected value chains. The value chain work was particularly successful in Guatemala, mostly thanks to the embedment in a longer-term multi-donor collaborative initiative. Finnfor-II prepared producers to negotiate with potential buyers, add value to the products in situ or through processing, increasing their income. A success factor is that the barriers were identified through participatory 'diagnostic studies', which included technical issues as well as socio-economic and finance- and market-related constraints. One or more key constraints were addressed through action plans that included a mix of technical capacity building and investment elements. This comprehensive analysis allowed for proper targeting of activities that would produce tangible impact. The collaboration with local institutions (INAFOR, SINAC, ACOFOP) was another key factor for successful engagement with final beneficiaries.

Still, the limited scope, scale and duration of most of the field (pilot) projects made integration of sustainable forest and plantation management into local-level planning and adjustment of strategies or regulations that promote competitiveness of the forest sector less successful. In Costa Rica, for example, while the project was able to facilitate the negotiation of significantly higher prices for exported teak, the overall profitability of the teak exports value chain has not been sufficiently demonstrated as production aspects were not addressed. This points to a need for a more comprehensive approach that tackles all key constraints, both in upstream and downstream parts of the value chains.

For the **ForInfo** project, the overall objective was to strengthen sustainable forestry-based livelihoods through developed replicable models for market access. The aim was for local people to benefit from improved access to information and to forest product and carbon markets and payments for environmental services (PES). The project purpose to generate quality information to be applied by local communities, which would in turn contribute to an increased market access and benefits in forest products, carbon and environmental services markets

One pilot project out of seven in ForInfo managed to strengthen sustainable forestry-based livelihoods, while there are indications that livelihood impacts may be expected to materialise in some of the other projects as well. The main reason for limited impact – in terms of income generation – is the fairly short project duration (4 years) in relation to value chain processes that require a medium-long term to produce tangible impacts; most processes initiated by ForInfo are still ongoing and yet to bear fruits. In Bokèo (northern Laos), for instance, 130 certificates were issued but most teak farmers with certificates have not yet sold any timber.

Also, talks were held with private sector companies in Thailand for sales of bamboo energy chips, but the expected harvesting volume was not achieved since markets were not established in time. Likewise, higher prices were negotiated with a local sawmill based on direct sourcing from teak certificate smallholders, but sales volumes for certified plantations were still very low at the time of project completion. Still, a significant volume can be expected to be extracted from 16 villages during the upcoming harvesting season (dry season). Lastly, negotiations with a private bank (ACLEDA) for provision of loans based on teak ownership certificate have been held but no loans have been issued yet.

While real impacts in financial terms are still limited and based on mainly NTFPs, the Cambodian community forest group mentioned that the community forestry systems have enhanced co-operation and collaboration in the communities, strengthening the social capital. Likewise, the Lao teak farmers do enjoy a strengthened position in the local teak value chain, based on an agreement with a local sawmill guaranteeing direct procurement of teak from certificate holders, cutting out the middlemen.

The objective of the **MFS** programme was to achieve a greater contribution of forest resources to sustainable development in the Andean Region, through the introduction and adoption of innovations and the elimination of bottlenecks that impede the development of the forestry sector, with involvement of public and private actors of the participating countries. Hereafter, we discuss project impact at local, national and regional levels.

MFS did not lay a firm foundation for achieving the intended impact at the regional level. Firstly, the commitment of Andean Region countries to a '*regional process that builds broadly-supported regional strategies to address key multi-country constraints to the development of the forest sector*' was not very strong, as illustrated by the Andean Community's (CAN) exit from MFS's processes. Secondly there is little evidence of any national policy-makers and development actors using MFS results for decision-making on forest sector development; thirdly, the continued loss of forest area in each of the target countries also suggests that the project has not been able to make a difference.

At country level, outcomes were insufficiently achieved, due in part to the short project duration. Despite the achievement of a Platform for Exchange of Experience, the Project has not sufficiently catalysed regional or country-level multi-stakeholder processes aimed at ***influencing forest sector development policies***. Positive experiences in value chain upgrading and innovations in community forest management – contributing to enhanced livelihoods and poverty reduction – have not (yet) informed policy processes in the region (and have not yet been published by the project either). And while many PES innovations proved to be effective, the project failed to publish evidence on their potential to enhance livelihood assets.

At local level, however, field projects did contribute to the enhancement of beneficiaries' livelihoods in various ways. There were strong results in the domains of human capital, notably enhanced skills at the level of communities, and of natural capital development in support of management of community forests and improved supply of forest products, NTFPs and ecosystem services. Production and value addition activities supported by the pilot projects also increased households' income. Lastly, even though some of the projects collaborated with communities and producers' cooperatives to strengthen their organisational skills (for example, the model for restoration and tourism in Colombia, or the Guayusa project in Ecuador), generally the contribution in terms of social capital development at grassroots level was low, due to a relatively weak social engagement of MFS.

Impacts on gender equality were weak, in all three projects; most benefits accrued to men. MFS had no gender analysis or strategy at regional project level (refer EQ2), nor any particular attention to ensuring equal opportunities for participation by women and men. Otherwise, a gender focus was apparent in only a limited number of the MFS supported field activities. In the portfolio analysis of MFS, out of 20 projects, 83% fell in the category 'gender-aware', i.e. they included gender-disaggregated numbers of beneficiaries. The Finnfor-II project, too, did attempt to develop initiatives to improve the situation of women in the value chains and financed some complementary activities for the spouses of male producers, for example tree

nurseries or packaging of charcoal. Consequently, the supported value chains are mostly dominated by men, with the exception of the ramón or Maya seed value chains in Guatemala, which are women-dominated and did contribute to gender equality. In the ForInfo project, the project design took gender mainstreaming into account, however, these aspects were not implemented consistently. For example, there were no specific actions targeting women. The evaluation team observed, however, that women in Laos and Cambodia were actively engaged.

Emergent (unintended) impacts

Two projects (ForInfo and Finnfor-II) have reported positive unintended (emergent) impacts as well. An unintended impact of **ForInfo** is for the teak smallholders to consider the timber as their main social security asset, reducing their vulnerability. Market studies also identified opportunities for an enhanced role of the Lao teak plantations and the Cambodian NTFP in value chains, connecting the communities with responsible buyers paying commonly agreed fees. This opportunity, however, would still require further upscaling, but the applied method has been demonstrated to work. Emergent impacts at the regional level are harder to verify, but stakeholders indicated an interest from several countries (e.g. Mongolia, Vietnam, Indonesia, Ethiopia) in the harvesting technologies demonstrated in Lao PDR (especially bamboo harvesting). It is also worth mentioning that the first experiences with the Woodfuel Integrated Supply/Demand Overview Mapping (WISDOM) tool have reportedly been embedded in National Biomass Energy Strategy in Nepal with support by GIZ. WISDOM can be applied in the future for energy planning on village development committee level. The main emergent positive effects of the **Finnfor-II** project in Nicaragua are in terms of (1) employment: Beneficiaries reported different types of employment effects, including hiring of other community members for the production process or for packaging, or the use of new knowledge to become a remunerated charcoal kiln builder; (2) business expansion: some beneficiaries have invested in capital assets using savings from project-supported activities (i.e. charcoal stoves); and (3) health benefits: new technology (stoves) produce less smoke and reduce workloads, resulting in improvements in the quality of work and life.

4.5 Sustainability

EQ7: To what extent have the programmes achieved sustainable results, and how has the regional approach affected sustainability?

Despite limited impact, the overall sustainability of the three projects' results is satisfactory (score 2.73), with individual scores ranging from 'good' for Finnfor-II (score 3.3) and ForInfo (score 3.1) to 'substantial problems' in case of the MFS (score 1.8). The institutional sustainability of the three projects varies considerably, between the three projects and between levels of intervention, from regional down to national and local levels.

At national and local level, project results enjoyed more policy support and did influence policies to some extent. Institutional sustainability of project results at local and national level is generally good, thanks to proper embedding of interventions into permanent institutional structures, alignment of interventions with local and national policy frameworks and plans, and to the use of existing local networks. The Finnfor-II project, in particular, could build on long-standing Finnish support to CATIE as an academic institution. CATIE has incorporated project experience and lessons into its academic programme, particularly through the Latin American Chair on Forest Policy and Economics of the Forest programme, which was created by CATIE to institutionalise the knowledge gained. National level policies in Nicaragua, Costa Rican and Guatemala were supported and/or influenced. In Costa Rica, for example, Finnfor-II support reportedly contributed to formulation of a new Directive on Design and Implementation of Forestry and Rural Development Programmes (ProBosques DR), based on the model developed in Hojancha. In ForInfo, too, institutional commitment at local level was strong, though further financial and technical support is required to sustain the processes initiated.

The interactions between the projects and regional policy processes were generally limited and below expectations. All projects have much focused on achieving local level

results, and were insufficiently prepared for contributing to regional policy or integration processes. In the context of a regional approach, it would be expected that the regional project contributes to creating an enabling environment, in the participating countries, for adoption and scaling up of innovations through policy changes and investments in forest sector development. In terms of supporting political, institutional and other changes, however, none of the three projects performed very well.

Overall, Finnfor II has contributed to creating economically and environmentally sustainable forest-related enterprises. However, while the project document refers to the priorities of the Regional Strategic Program for Forestry (PERFOR) of the Central American Commission for Environment and Development (CCAD), it is unclear how project results contributed to regional policy processes, and there is little evidence of any project-induced changes in regional policies. The necessary feedback mechanisms have not been foreseen in the project document.

In the case of ForInfo, the limited policy interaction relates to the fact that many of the activities were demonstration activities. Only successful and sustainable impacts would have the potential to be used for “lobbying for change”. It is still too early for the successful cases to have such impact, while other cases failed to influence policies due to changes in political support.

In the MFS project the lack of clarity of the regional approach prevented paying attention to country-level institutional frameworks; the project confined itself to implementing local projects and failed to work on modalities to scale up and sustain project results towards wider impacts. The project’s sustainability strategy mostly concerned the local projects to be funded, and sustainability of the regional project itself was described in very general terms, centred on IICA’s *intention* to develop a forestry portfolio in future. It was unclear how project results would be integrated in national or regional policies or institutions and how activities would be funded in future. The shortcomings in terms of sustainability are due to the project formulation and set-up as well as lack of comprehensive exit strategy that would take into account institutional follow-up both inside and outside IICA (i.e. at governmental level).

All three projects made an important contribution to development of capacities and commitment of communities and local authorities, but in most cases a need for further development was identified. Close co-operation with local authorities and communities was found to have enhanced the sustainability of processes and results. In Laos, for example, it was found that the local organisation (PAFO) is able to issue teak certificates on its own, and that if funding for travel and per diem would be made available if necessary. Likewise, Cambodian communities confirmed that their capacities for community forestry had been strengthened, though a need to learn more about financial management was identified. Cambodian communities confirmed that their capacities for community forestry had been strengthened, though a need to learn more for instance about financial management was identified. Likewise, in Nicaragua (Finnfor-II), the local institution (INAFOR-León) continues following up with beneficiaries on legal issues (registration of plantations, transport permits for charcoal), but does not provide any training, market intelligence or other initiatives for accessing new markets anymore, since end-of-project.

In Colombia, many (MFS) projects were well anchored in the work of the regional autonomous corporations; they are considered as financial stimuli that add value and have the potential to accelerate progress toward the changes pursued by MFS, at sub-national and local levels. One of the positive effects of such anchorage is the high degree of relevance and alignment of the projects with priorities of the Corporations and needs of the target communities. Value chain projects, when implemented by private sector partners, were found to be promising from a sustainability point of view.

Financial sustainability of Finnfor-II is promising but weaker for ForInfo and MFS. Finnfor-II interventions are by and large ensured as most project-supported initiatives are self-sustaining; Nicaraguan producers, for example, had sufficient time to learn the new production technology and are capable of eventually investing in additional kilns from their profits to further increase their production. In the Guatemala VCs, the organisations have been able to leverage funding to further improve their value chains, and more new community forest enterprises

(CFEs) are interested in piloting new species for commercial exploitation. Low harvesting levels (and a need for upscaling) as well as needs for more investment in infrastructure and market access are constraints that still need to be addressed, though, for the value chains to become financially sustainable.

The financial sustainability of **ForInfo** interventions is less obvious as some of the projects were unable to secure government funding for up-scaling (of the process of obtaining timber certificates, for example), and sustainability is dependent on other donors, both in Laos and Cambodia. After project closure, the number of teak certificates has increased from 130 to 250 (Laos) as a result of external funding sources. Still, this is only a small contribution compared to the national target of 3 000.

In the case of **MFS**, there is no evidence that IICA would continue regional-level forestry interventions given the absence of the topic from its website and strategic plans.

Sustainability of project results is affected by limited availability and dissemination of project outputs, for all three projects. In the case of **Finnfor-II**, the difficult access to the wide range of valuable technical articles, publications and videos produced with project support constrains wider dissemination and possible adoption of project results. As a result, there is little dissemination of best practices outside the CATIE sphere. In addition, the report documenting project results and lessons ('Value chains for forestry products') is still under preparation.

In the case of **ForInfo**, RECOFTC has performed well in terms of dissemination of experience and best practices. It is able to maintain the dissemination of good practices with relatively limited resources, and RECOFTC's Livelihoods and Markets program provides opportunities for further sustainability. The project documentation, however, does not include any analysis of possible linkages to policy and legislation, nor any sustainability analysis from a policy perspective. This is a missed opportunity, since commercial community forestry is generally a complex issue and sharing of good experience is much needed.

The positive experiences and results of the **MFS** programme have not been systematised. Experience exchange and horizontal learning did take place during the project's lifetime, in the form of project managers meetings, project visits and training workshops. In most cases, however, resource and methodological publications have not been produced, and the material available on the websites do not fill this gap.

4.6 Aid Effectiveness

EQ8: How and to what extent have the regional programmes promoted commitment and ownership by the relevant stakeholders?

The overall assessment of aid effectiveness of the three projects was insufficient (score: 2.4) with individual scores varying from 'substantial problems' in case of ForInfo (score: 2.4) and MFS (2.0) to satisfactory in the case of Finnfor-II (2.8). While commitment and ownership among local stakeholders and final beneficiaries is strong, the main constraint was the weakness of linkages with national and regional level authorities, particularly in the MFS.

Overall, country-level contributions were not adequately formulated in the project documents and assumptions underlying these contributions are lacking in the logframes. However, government representatives were engaged in all three projects, notably through the Steering Committees, and relevant government services were actively engaged in project implementation. Whereas significant ownership is reported in case of Finnfor-II, MFS has not adequately promoted commitment and ownership of its interventions by the relevant stakeholders at levels above the local field projects. Likewise, for ForInfo, local-level authorities show strong ownership and commitment, but the linkages with national-level authorities are non-existent.

All three projects engaged non-governmental actors in the implementation. ForInfo, for instance, was managed by a regional organisation (RECOFTC) and field-level implementation

was carried out by NGOs or RECOFTC country offices. The MSF programme was mostly channelled through small or local associations. As for the private sector, the projects engaged private enterprises, which represented an added value in development partnership compared to similar initiatives. Finnfor-II also worked with small and medium-size enterprises and private sector organisations, in close collaboration with NGPs and state institutions.

Coordination and complementarity with similar interventions varied. Whereas Finnfor-II demonstrated good complementarity with other Finnish supported initiatives in the region and ForInfo was integrated in ongoing projects, the MFS reports serious deficiencies in coordinating with other projects operating regionally or nationally, which has led to duplication of some efforts. This lack of coordination also represented a missed opportunity for mutual learning and capitalizing on each other's strengths.

EQ9: What has been the added value of Finland's programmes?

The Finnish added value to the projects was assessed as insufficient for each of the three projects (scores Finnfor-II 2.0, ForInfo 2.0 and MFS: 2.0). Beyond a specific focus on forestry value chains and private sector involvement, there would have been room for a stronger Finnish signature.

The Finnish support made a modest but valuable contribution to longer-term initiatives that, in most cases, involved various donors. The support through regional projects allowed for action that would not have been possible without this external support. The regional projects were flexible, and they addressed issues such as creating new livelihoods and improving the role of primary producers in the forest product value chains, which had been a largely overlooked issue e.g. in the Mekong and Central American regions.

The focus on the role of the private sector and small enterprises in development of the forestry sector, through the value chain approach, was reported as the most specific added value of the Finnish support. Another Finnish added value consisted of Finland's advantage of being politically neutral and its positive reputation and long-term commitment in the forestry sector (MFS).

The MFS was the only one, among the three regional projects, engaging in Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) development (refer EQ3). Its implementation coincided with a period of transformation of global forestry and climate change policies, including a rapid growth of support for REDD+, and significant international attention was given to developing REDD+ frameworks at national level. At least in MFS, this tended to divert donor interest away from forestry production and business development objectives to some extent, which nonetheless provide most tangible benefits to small producers. In this perspective, the focus on the role of the private sector and small enterprises in development of the forestry sector, through the value chain approach, was reported as the most specific added value of the Finnish support.

All three projects missed the opportunity to support the countries in formulating policies for innovation in the forestry sector and making use of Finnish expertise. Several interviewees reported that Finland could have done more to make its significant expertise in the forestry sector available, to promote use of Finnish technology, or to involve Finnish companies, associations or institutions in specific activities, through partnerships.

4.7 Coherence

EQ10: How has other co-operation between Finland and the concerned countries been taken into account in implementation, and what were the synergies of the regional programmes with other initiatives, including private sector and civil society co-operation?

The policy coherence of the projects was assessed as satisfactory, for two of the projects (scores Finnfor-II 3.0 and MFS 3.5), but as insufficient in the case of ForInfo (score 2.5). Beyond

a specific focus on forestry value chains and private sector involvement, in all projects there would have been room for a stronger Finnish signature.

The three Projects are in line with the Finnish Development Co-operation policies and relevant sectoral interventions. According to the Finnish development policy guidelines for the forest sector (p.3), the objective of Finnish aid in the sector is to *'strengthen the conditions for sustainable forest management, and thus achieve fair economic growth, reduce poverty and prevent environmental hazards'*. Project-wise scores vary from 'substantial problems' in case of ForInfo (score: 2.5) to good, in case of Finnfor-II (3.0) and MFS (3.5).

In the Central American Region, **Finnfor-II project objectives and cross-cutting themes were well aligned with Finnish co-operation policies at the time of project design.** Project activities supported the poverty reduction objective and the SFM objective, and helped achieve economic growth while contributing to environmental management. The Finnfor-II support does not directly fall under any of the five large co-operation themes defined in the guidelines, but touches on aspects of climate change mitigation and support to forestry research partnerships as well.

Its objectives are also in line with Finland's Aid for Trade action plan (2012-2015), contributing in varying degrees to four of the eight focal areas, notably (1) Agricultural and forestry value chains, (2) Inclusive business (several of the VCs engage poor and marginalised people in business processes), (3) Women's entrepreneurship, and (4) Regional cross-border trade. Other co-operation activities with target countries were generally well taken into account during project implementation; the Evaluation team did not come across any significant synergies or contradictions with other Finnish co-operation actions.

However, it was observed that Finnfor-II's successes in specific value chains have not been followed through by more investment, by Finnish investors, making use of the experience and lessons learned in the concerned (or other) value chains. The project could have been an opportunity to bring Finnish investors in, but only after end-of-project (November 2016), FINPRO – an organisation that helps Finnish SMEs invest internationally – was invited to participate in a visit to CATIE and have exchanges with a number of Costa Rica based organisations, including FUNDECOR, IUCN, the EARTH University, TEC and the Ministry of Environment and Energy (MINAE) of Costa Rica. The evaluation did not find evidence of any outcome from this visit. Meanwhile, the supported value chains are mostly benefiting trade with USA and Spain, not with Finland. It would seem that earlier and more structural involvement of such organisation to establish networks with local actors, develop market linkages and promote Finnish technology or expertise in forest monitoring could have been beneficial to producers in the target countries and Finnish investors alike.

In the Mekong Region, ForInfo has been active in promoting co-operation with other Finnish-supported projects, such as the FORMIS project in Vietnam and the regional EEP project and SUFORD projects in Lao PDR. There was no co-operation with Finnish NGO projects. Furthermore, the Finnpartnership 2010 – 2015 data show that countries in the Mekong Region have, in general, not been active in the matchmaking activities (establishing business contacts). There have been no matchmaking requests for the forestry sector; during the ForInfo period only three requests have been submitted concerning Food production and ICT in Vietnam. Stakeholders were also not aware of the recent Partnership for Forestry Higher Education Co-operation in Mekong Region (PARFORM), a Higher Education Co-operation Project (HEI-ICI) funded by Finland and coordinated by the University of Helsinki and implemented in partnership with three Universities in Laos, the University of Forestry in Myanmar and Kasetsart University, Thailand. The PARFORM aims to strengthen the Laos and Myanmar's forestry higher education and research performance and upgrade learning tools such as forest measurement instruments, computer equipment, reading materials at library and software to support research and practical training activities by local students and staff. Synergy benefits would seem obvious as Kasetsart University participated in ForInfo trainings and was interested in testing of the equipment.

In the Andean Region, the Finnish development co-operation portfolio was found to be highly coherent across all its instruments. The programmes and projects, including MFS, are very much in line with the Finnish Co-operation policies and interventions in the relevant program areas, and with the priority themes of Finland's Aid for Trade Action Plan 2008-2011. Cross-sectoral linkages are an important feature of Finland's co-operation policy, and the evaluation found evidence that the projects implemented in the region supported efforts for cross-sectoral co-operation in target countries with respect to land-use and the respective policy dialogue.

With MFS, Finland joined other donors and agencies such as Norway, USAID, GiZ, GEF, UNDP, the FIP of IADB, the World Bank, and UNEP and Norway to support the implementation of government policies relating to environment and the forest sector. Within this context, some NGOs implementing MFS funded projects have provide inputs to the development of Peru's environmental policy, particularly in water management.

5. CONCLUSIONS

5.1 Relevance

1a. Overall, the regional forestry projects are highly relevant to Finnish development policies in terms of sustainable development, though addressing the poorest is indirect.

They also responded to partner country policy priorities, in particular in terms of promoting SFM as a means to achieve fair economic growth and contribute to reducing poverty and preventing environmental hazards. However, two of the three projects (ForInfo, MFS) were only remotely linked to regional-level policies and strategies, which limited their relevance.

1b. The projects also responded to direct needs of key stakeholders and final beneficiaries, who were by and large involved in the design process.

In order to achieve real impacts on livelihoods, however, longer term interventions would be needed, as well as careful analysis to ensure that the interventions do not increase inequality. In addition, the projects fostered civil society engagement, for example through the Community Forestry Groups, as well as corporate social responsibility, by fostering collaboration between companies, civil organisations and public authorities.

1c. The adoption of a regional approach lacked a clear rationale, be it for strategic policy, ecological or efficiency reasons.

In the absence of clear guidelines, the projects ended up being multi-county programmes, lacking regional objectives and themes. This was also reflected in the projects' monitoring frameworks and logframes which failed to link the contribution of country projects to the regional level. Theories of change could have helped in linking country level interventions with regional goals.

On Design

2a. Project designs were relevant in terms of their thematic focus on production, SMFEs and value chain development, but overambitious considering the number of value chains supported, and of field sites, stakeholders and activities in relation to a limited timeframe.

The resulting impact has remained thinly spread with a focus mostly on producers and 'upstream' constraints, and less so on processing and actors further 'downstream' the VCs.

2b. Beyond knowledge sharing based on individual field projects and integration of experience in regional institutions' knowledge platforms, there are few regional-level capacity development results.

Opportunities to support regional integration and other regional-level objectives were missed. The 'regional added value' mostly consisted of grafting projects onto the regional networks and collaborative programmes of the regional implementing organisations, as an effective delivery mechanism.

2c. A gender equality approach was not well integrated in the design of two out of the three projects.

The scope for gender action was to a large extent determined by the selection of the value chains rather than by gender strategies adopted. As most value chains were dominated by male producers; there was limited opportunity to change the gender imbalance. During

implementation gender action was mostly reduced to 'women's participation' in activities such as tree nurseries or charcoal packaging.

5.2 Effectiveness

3. Overall, the three projects were overall successful in achieving expected outputs and outcomes in their value chain development work, resulting in strengthened forestry-based livelihoods and income for small producers, though some of the expected benefits are yet to materialise over time.

Most local level achievements are in the field of SFM and community forestry and increased entrepreneurial awareness and capacities in the target communities. Value chain development projects with a perspective of enhanced market access for communities have demonstrated a high potential for broad benefits to the poor and vulnerable populations and positive effects for forest management. Activities focusing on value chain development allowed projects to contribute to higher and diversified income for small producers was realised through increased production volume and market access. However, there is a need to identify initiatives with a strong business case and explicitly follow value chain approaches that benefit the poor.

For MFS where PES was one of the focus themes, local activities were not designed on the basis of articulated theories of Change, showing how the innovations would support sub-national and country processes and therefore failed to lead to their institutionalisation. However, they have shown that there is a potential for the productive options and PES to contribute to the diversification of sources of income for rural families.

In some cases, particularly in the ForInfo projects and the MFS-supported PES projects, the supported initiatives still need to bear fruit. Private sector involvement, either directly in project implementation or through PPPs, clearly enhanced effectiveness of the projects.

The experience and positioning of the implementing agencies in the forest sector was of particular importance for achieving planned results. Time constraints did not allow for achieving the outcomes as planned. More time is needed to allow integration of target small producers in value chains, particularly where there is heavy reliance on intermediaries.

On Regional Added Value

4. In none of the three projects did the regional approach add much value to project effectiveness; the interaction with the regional policy level and processes was weak and undefined, and there were hardly any cross-boundary co-operation benefits. The objective of generating and disseminating good practice across the regions was achieved to some extent only.

There is limited replication, regionally and globally, of pilot experience and good practices, and the projects made limited contributions to policy processes aimed at creating enabling environment for the development of the forest sector in target countries. In the case of Finnfor-II and ForInfo, the main added value of the regional approach consisted of the benefits coming with the choice of the implementing organisation, allowing to build field projects upon ongoing collaborative programmes in the region, which enhanced effectiveness as well as impact and sustainability. This was less the case with the MFS programme implemented by IICA, which unlike CATIE and RECOFTC had no track record in implementing such important forestry project and lacked sector expertise. In all three cases, the opportunities to support regional co-operation and integration were missed.

The added value of the regional approach consisted mainly in providing funding to local development project implementers, which did not require a regional project. With respect to training, organizing training events for participants from target countries at the same time with the same trainers and training modules was more efficient for exchanges in addition to being more cost effective than organizing several in-country trainings.

5.3 Efficiency

5. The regional forestry projects have been implemented in an efficient manner, by embedding (field) projects in existing networks, structures and ongoing collaborative programmes of the regional implementing organisations, in collaboration with trusted partners.

6. Country-level presence of coordinators and/or offices and flexibility in implementation and contractual arrangements turned out to be key success factors.

5.4 Impact

7. The three projects demonstrated that support to forestry value chain development can contribute to inclusive investments and successful business models for improved land governance and livelihoods

Only the Finnfor-II project achieved its overall objective of improved livelihoods through elimination of barriers in forestry value chains, and produced very tangible impacts on stakeholders at different levels. It fostered access to and income from natural assets, resulting in concrete benefits for producer groups and SMFEs in selected value chains.

8. However, the duration of most projects was too short in relation to production cycles and capacity needs to produce the envisaged longer-term impacts. Most field projects show a good potential to generate improved livelihoods and increased income as well as more sustainable forest and plantation management in years to come.

9. The limited scope, scale and duration of most of the projects made integration of sustainable forest and plantation management into local-level planning and adjustment of strategies or regulations promoting competitiveness of the forest sector less successful. In addition, regional and global impact would have benefited from active dissemination of the different methods and experiences produced and better visibility (internet).

5.5 Sustainability

10. Taking financial-economic, institutional and environmental aspects into consideration, two years after end-of-project, the sustainability of the three projects is overall satisfactory. Most processes supported by the projects are evolving, benefiting from follow-up initiatives and additional funding.

The Finnfor-II and ForInfo projects have contributed to creating economically, institutionally and environmentally sustainable forest-related enterprises. Most processes initiated under these projects continue or are growing, as a result of their embedment in local and national-level programmes and institutions, development of local capacities, enjoyment of local or national policy support, and a strong sense of ownership among target groups. Some pilot projects have contributed to follow-up initiatives and leveraged additional funding.

Success factors are the embedment of field projects in local and national-level programmes and institutions, the development of local capacities, local or national-level policy support and a strong sense of ownership among target groups.

11. The sustainability of MFS is weaker compared to the two other programmes.

While the sustainability of most of its local value chain projects is ensured, particularly in those cases where the private sector was involved, it remained unclear how project results would be integrated in policies and institutions at regional, country and/or local levels. It also seems unlikely that IICA will continue pursuing forestry agenda actively in the near future.

5.6 Aid Effectiveness

12. Finnish aid has been delivered relatively effectively – in line with principles of the Paris Declaration – in terms of ownership, alignment and harmonisation. However, it was insufficiently defined and formalised how and on what conditions partner governments would contribute.

Field projects were well aligned with government sector strategies and priorities (ownership). Ownership was mostly constrained by the absence or weakness of linkages with national and regional level authorities, particularly in the case of MFS. This reduced opportunities to maximise impact of the valuable local-level experiences. The projects were well embedded in existing administrative structures of the implementing organisations, involved civil society and private sector actors, and activities were integrated into ongoing programmes of the relevant public and private sector organisations, sometimes with support from various donors (alignment). Only in the case of MFS, there was some evidence of duplication with other projects (harmonisation). Regarding results-based management, the projects had some weaknesses as discussed under the criterion of effectiveness, e.g. lack of robust M&E systems.

On Finnish added value

13. The added value of Finnish support was weak as it was limited to a specific focus on forestry value chains and private sector involvement. There would have been room for a stronger Finnish signature of the forestry projects.

5.7 Coherence

14. The regional projects were coherent with Finnish co-operation objectives and with other initiatives supported by Finland and other donors at policy level, but during implementation some opportunities to create synergies with other sector operations were missed.

The portfolio of Finnish interventions in the target countries supported each other at policy level. Opportunities to promote Finnish technology or expertise – through matchmaking and using the regional networks and market linkages – and to involve Finnish investors and civil society organisations in a proactive and structured manner were missed. Such co-operation could have been beneficial to producers in the target countries and Finnish investors alike.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1 (pertaining to C1c and C2b)

MFA should provide guidance for the planning of future regional projects and programmes, including analysis of regional and national policies, and ensure they are based on proper identification of joint regional problems and themes, stakeholders and partners.

The MFA should ensure that the design is based on identification of joint regional problems and themes, and consider using political economy analysis, in order to identify obstacles and constraints, as well as opportunities for leveraging policy changes needed for (forest) sector development. Future programmes should be framed around a common regional-level objective and contain a limited number of activities (and related indicators) contributing this objective. A regional objective could, for example, strengthen commercial integration between countries, target a same pool of buyers through action in various countries, or support a regional network of (forest-related) products that would cater to larger and more demanding markets than individual value chains. Regional projects should include a (minimum) 6-months' inception phase during which the feasibility studies would be conducted, baselines set, and monitoring frameworks finalised.

Recommendation 2 (pertaining to C2c)

MFA and implementing partners should ensure that regional projects have gender as a crosscutting objective, with adequate budgets supporting the effective implementation of gender equality principles and promotion of gender mainstreaming in all interventions.

In order to achieve relevant impact with regard to gender equality, gender should be addressed from the very conception of the project, including a robust gender analysis, with actions promoting behavioural changes targeting both household and community levels. Teams of consultants should also have sufficient gender expertise.

Recommendation 3 (pertaining to C5 on efficiency)

MFA and its implementing partners should ensure that regional initiatives supporting innovation (projects) have robust and systematic M&E and knowledge management systems that follow progress in implementation, provide relevant information for evaluations, serve as a platform for exchange of experience across projects, and allow feeding documented experience into the policy dialogue.

Recommendation 4 (pertaining to C2a, C3 and C6)

MFA should pursue its support to value chain development initiatives in its regional and country-level forest sector development projects, at an appropriate scale, implemented over a long enough period to reach their purpose.

These initiatives should be of an appropriate scale, implemented over a long enough period to reach their purpose and promote PPPs. Pilot projects should be accompanied with evaluation prior to scaling-up, and given sufficiently long implementation periods so that modifications can be made and tested in different contexts. Design of value chain development interventions should adopt a comprehensive approach, addressing both upstream and downstream constraints, including technical (e.g. technology, marketing) and institutional aspects (e.g. access or user rights, capacity development, policies) in a global perspective and with realistic timeframes, with the ultimate aim to improve poor livelihoods. Only in a medium to long-term perspective (beyond one project cycle) would it be realistic to expect achieving significant impact on livelihoods and influencing the relevant local, national or regional government policies, strategies and plans.

Recommendation 5 (pertaining to C7, applying specifically to ForInfo)

MFA and project partners should facilitate access to follow-up funding opportunities, as and when required. In the Mekong Region, RECOFTC should seek ways to support the Laotian Bokéo project, in order to complete the work with the ACLEDA Bank and for Cambodia Community Forests to acquire necessary financial management skills.

This may be done in co-operation with the existing projects and the forthcoming International Climate Initiative (IKI) project. It should also support the local authorities in their attempts to ensure funding for follow-up activities, e.g. for the timber certificates.

Recommendation 6 (pertaining to C8)

MFA and partner country governments should ensure that contributions to be made by the various governmental, NGO and private sector partners to regional projects are clearly defined and formalised, with attention to linkages with (sub-) national and regional policies and actors.

Recommendation 7 (pertaining to C9)

Forestry value chain projects should realise the good potential for Finnish added value by facilitating access to Finnish investors, markets, technology or expertise.

Coherence (pertaining to C10)

MFA should actively explore opportunities to create synergies between its current/future forestry projects and the current private-sector support instruments of Finland's development co-operation.

7. LESSONS LEARNED

7.1 Relevance and Design

Lesson 1 – Relevance and Design of Value Chain Projects

A forestry value chain approach is well suited to contributing to both poverty reduction and environmental objectives, if it is based on a comprehensive analysis of bottlenecks – including institutional and technical aspects – and if, during implementation, these bottlenecks are properly addressed.

While upstream (production-related) elements seem relatively easy to address, the development of downstream linkages, including connections with end clients, requires significant entrepreneurial capacity of producers and a long-term commitment to support. For a more inclusive poverty reduction approach, any project design would also require a gender analysis to understand the different roles that women and men play in timber and non-timber value chains, and the best ways to contribute to enhanced equality.

Lesson 2 – Regional Dimension

A regional (project) approach requires a clear regional policy or strategy to which project objectives can be linked, preferably in combination with a strong implementing organisation with political leverage.

Lesson 3 – Regional Dimension

Without clear theories of change linking local projects results to thematic results and to regional-level outcomes, achievement of regional objectives is unlikely.

Regional projects need clear integrated theories of change which show how work at local, country, thematic and regional levels will ultimately contribute to the planned outcomes and overall objectives.

7.2 Effectiveness

Lesson 4 – Sustainable Forest Management

Sustainable management of community forests and plantations is possible if it leads to an effective increase in production in the forest product value-chains allowing for higher and regular households income.

Many local projects in the three regions have shown that supporting small producers to have linkages with downstream value chain actors and to improve access to markets makes SFM more attractive to them. Some of the most successful VC local projects have been those working on NTFPs for value addition and for access to national and international markets. The benefits of community participation in forest product value-chains depend not only on the capacities of small producers, but also on the quality of linkages established with downstream operators.

Lesson 5 – Payment for Ecosystem Services

Design of REDD+ and PES projects should be well articulated with national strategies.

The governance REDD+ and the processes of constructing agreements between various communities, and between these and a large number of state and non-state actors make difficult the attainment of outcomes in the duration of a project. Project designs should therefore show clearly how these processes will be institutionalised before the closure of the project.

Lesson 6 – Private Sector Partnerships

Effective partnerships with the private sector to develop forest based value chains are a key success factor to making tree plantation and SFM attractive for small producers.

Developing successful value chains requires entrepreneurship skills. While a development program can support VC initiatives, success can be sustainably achieved if the initiatives are developed by leading downstream actors within the chain. The challenge for a forest sector development project is to help its target communities identify private sector partners who will be in a position to make them improve access to national and international markets.

Lesson 7 – Flexible Financial Mechanisms

Forestry value chain project design should include flexible financial mechanisms and allow project beneficiaries or implementing organisations prioritise where to use the funds.

One of Finfor-II's success stories in Guatemala was the establishment of a revolving fund hosted by the FORESCOM (Community Enterprise for Forest Services), which is related to ACOFOP (Association of Forestry Communities of Petén). Previously, no such financing mechanism existed in the Petén region, and small-scale forest entrepreneurs were obliged to apply for high-interest loans from private banks. At the same time, the Nicaraguan experience with revolving funds showed that administrative boards lacked capacity to manage these complex financial facilities, causing many beneficiaries to disengage from the funds. Proper capacity development, provided by an external financial intermediary, needs to be ensured.

Lesson 8 – Engagement of Government Partners

Proper and formalised engagement of government partners in regional projects is critical for achieving results at all levels (local, national and regional).

To achieve their objectives, regional projects require that partners in target countries agree to actively provide political and institutional support to the processes that that will be put in place. Their engagement needs to be formalised in a joint declaration or memorandum.

7.3 Sustainability

Lesson 9 – Role of National Partners

For sustainable project results, it is crucial to include, right from the conception, close co-operation with national partners (such as Forestry Institutes) to ensure continued support to project beneficiaries once the project has phased out.

In the case of Nicaragua, for example, the strategic partnership with the national forestry institute (INAFOR) provided for (1) good field-level knowledge allowing to identify target groups and beneficiaries; (2) opportunities to ensure access rights and long-term benefits through the formal registration of resources and assets (Eucalyptus plantations, biomass-supplying farms); and (3) continued advisory services to project beneficiaries, after end-of-project, with support from other donors.

Lesson 10 – Capacity Development

Capacity building activities to address communities' needs in resource management and entrepreneurship skills are critical for achieving sustainability of results.

The three projects have had important achievements in thematic areas for which capacity building activities have focused on enabling members of the target communities, including the poorest, to develop skills for managing their resources or to add value to their forest timber and non-timber products.



Annex 1

Terms of Reference



79812501, 48903501, 38905501

Terms of Reference for an Evaluation

Final evaluation of regional forest projects in Mekong, Andean and Central America

1. Background to the evaluation

Three regional forest projects are evaluated together: Livelihood improvement through generation and ownership of forest information by local people in products and services markets (ForInfo) in the Mekong Region, the Integrated Environmental and Forest Management Cooperation Project in Central America, (Finnfor II) and the Sustainable Forest Management Programme in the Andean region (MFS). In the core of the three projects have been improved livelihoods and local people's meaningful engagement in sustainable forest management. All three projects have worked with small producers of forest products. The aim was to develop value chains for forest products and to improve the role and entrepreneurial capacity of local people within them. Appropriate technologies have been developed for local people to ensure income levels competitive with income from alternative uses of forest land. The purpose of this final evaluation of three forest projects is to provide guidance to the MFA in planning and implementing regional forest projects.

1.1. Context

Finland has decided to withdraw from development cooperation in the Andean region and Central America, and all grant-based development cooperation projects will end by mid-2017. In the Mekong Region, Finland will focus its development assistance in Myanmar. In Vietnam, Finland's grant-based bilateral programmes will come to an end in 2018, while loan-based and private sector instruments may be continued. The focus of bilateral relations between the countries is increasingly shifting towards mutually beneficial cooperation and more comprehensive partnerships. A regional programme Mekong Energy and Environmental Partnership (EEP) continues until 2018, and a project for sustainable forest management in Lao PDR (SUFORD-SU) will end in mid-2017. The Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland (MFA) can use the results of this evaluation in forest sector cooperation in Myanmar and in the African context and in planning eventual other regional programmes in the future.

1.2. Description of the projects to be evaluated

Livelihood Improvement through Generation and Ownership of Forest Information by Local People in Products and Services Markets, ForInfo
(2011–2015, 2 MEUR)

The ForInfo project was implemented by the Center for People and Forests, RECOFTC. It operated in four countries: Cambodia, Lao PDR, Thailand and Vietnam. The overall objective of the project was to strengthen sustainable forestry-based livelihoods through developed replicable models for market access. Through this the aim was that local people gain additional benefits through improved access to forest product and carbon markets and payments for environmental services (PES), contributing to poverty reduction, social equity, enhancement of environmental conditions, and mitigation and better adaptation to climate change. The project purpose was that best practices are disseminated and applied on regional scale in sustainable forestry-based livelihood development. The project worked together with the ministries of forestry or environment in project countries.

The Integrated Environmental and Forest Management Cooperation Project in Central America, Finnfor II
(2012–2016, 3.8 MEUR)

The project Finnfor II, funded by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland and implemented by the Tropical Agricultural Research and Higher Education Center (CATIE), aimed at sustainable forest management in order to conserve the biodiversity and reduce land degeneration as well as to increase the incomes of small farmers through silviculture. The project aimed at achieving concrete impacts on sustainable and equitable forest management at local, national and regional levels.

Emphasis was given to:

- 1) Developing / strengthening organized small producers and small and medium forest enterprises (SMFE) in Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and El Salvador, by creating wood product value chains.
- 2) Strengthening the forest sector of Central America, including the above mentioned four countries as well as Panama, Belize and Costa Rica, by leveraging efforts and resources based on cooperative networks within and outside the region.

Finnfor II has been developing and validating participatory approaches and innovative technologies, methodologies and tools that allow communities to manage and use their natural resources in a sustainable manner. They also allow the communities to integrate their producer organizations or SMFEs in value chains, aiming at increased livelihood resilience and improved business viability.

The first phase of the Finnfor Project, Finnfor I, took place 2009–2012. A mid-term evaluation was carried out between April and June 2011 by FCG Consulting Group. The agreement for the second phase of the project run from 1 of October 2012 until 31 of March 2015 and was prolonged until the 31 of March 2016.

The Sustainable Forest Management Programme in the Andean region (MFS)
(2011–2016, 8.08 MEUR)

The overall objective of MFS was to increase contribution of forest to the sustainable development of the Andean region. The programme purpose was to introduce and adopt innovations as well as to remove development bottlenecks in the forest sector in the participating countries, contributing to sustainability of forest management and the expansion of forest plantations. The MFS programme managed a regional, demand-driven fund that co-financed a total of 24 innovative projects, including pre- and feasibility studies as well as demonstrative projects which were carried out by public and private sector entities, academic and research institutions and non-governmental organisations.

The programme covered four main themes: 1) retribution mechanisms for ecosystem services mitigating climate change, 2) retribution mechanisms for water-related ecosystem services and restoration, 3) added value of sustainable forest products, and 4) sustainable community forest management. In addition to co-financing the 24 projects, the programme focused on knowledge management, capacity-building and advocacy as well as promoted the results for increased sustainability and investments to replicate and scale up the innovations.

The programme was implemented by the Inter-American Institute for Agriculture (IICA), with the regional coordination unit in Lima, Peru, and national coordination units in Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru. IICA is a specialized agency of the Organisation of the American States (OAS). The technical assistance for MFS was provided by Niras Finland Oy (2011– 2014) and Orgut Consulting Ab (2014–2016). It is important to understand that the IICA was fully in charge of programme coordination, management and leadership and that the role of the consulting companies was only to provide short and long-term consultants to assist IICA.

1.3. Previous evaluations

ForInfo

A mid-term evaluation was commissioned by RECOFTC in February-March 2013. The project was found highly relevant from an international and regional perspective in its attempts to develop methodologies for increasing the effectiveness of community forestry to generate more benefits from the combined production of both products and services in a sustainable manner.

The effectiveness of the project was found to vary considerably from site to site. Better documentation of experiences and lessons was recommended. Problems were noted in the identification and mobilization of long and short term consultants with the right expertise.

No major concerns were identified related to impact and sustainability, and the project was commended for the various imaginative ways it tried to address these issues, through establishing linkages with other projects and with the RECOFTC country programs.

Finnfor II

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland, in pursuance of the agreement signed with the Tropical Agricultural Research and Higher Education Center (CATIE), carried out the mid-term evaluation of Finnfor Phase I between April 18th and June 30th 2011. The evaluation found that the Project was consistent with policies, laws and needs of the countries of the region in the forestry sector, as well as MFA policy and other cooperation efforts supported by the Government of Finland.

The mid-term evaluation team considered that there was an impressive list of products transformed in regional impacts that merited recommending the next phase of Finnfor Project (Phase II) with the use of value chain approach.

MFS

In 2012, the MFA contracted a consulting company to carry out a joint mid-term evaluation of the Andean regional forest and energy programmes, since both programmes were implemented by the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA). Unfortunately, the evaluation team was unable to finalize the assignment and thus, no approved or usable evaluation report exists. The MFA did not proceed to hire another team to complete the assignment, since meanwhile a decision was taken to terminate the development cooperation in the Andean region. Consequently, it became evident that neither of the programmes would have a phase II and thus there was no longer a need for any mid-term evaluation results.

2. Rationale, purpose and objectives of the evaluation

The purpose of this final evaluation of three regional forest projects is to provide guidance to the MFA in planning and implementing forest and regional projects. In the Mekong Region, Finland's development cooperation programme with Myanmar is increasing. Hence, it would be relevant to consider the implementing organisation's capacity to implement a regional project, and assess synergies with other projects in the area funded by Finland. In Latin America, however, Finland's grant-based development assistance is planned to be ended, which is why the focus is not on assessing implementing organisations as such but on what can be learned from cooperation with this kind of actors. The evaluation is in all cases expected to assess lessons learned from a regional approach and cooperation with different organisations. The three projects have common elements:

participatory approach, support to small producers and development of value chains. The aim of this evaluation is to look into what can be learned from these approaches in forest projects.

The priority objectives of this evaluation are to assess:

- what has been the added value in a regional approach compared to a country-based approach
- how did the programmes succeed in promoting sustainable forestry based livelihoods and increasing income of small producers
- what are the lessons learned of developing value chains and retributions mechanisms for ecosystem services.

The main rationale of this evaluation is to provide objective information to the MFA about the effectiveness and efficiency of regional cooperation as well as the results in the forest sector. Thus, the evaluation focus should be in the regional implementing mechanism and its relation to the achieved results and impacts, and not in evaluating the performance of the partner organisations or other collaborators.

3. Scope of the evaluation

The evaluation covers several countries in the Andean, Mekong Region and Central America. The fieldwork is, however, expected to take place in selected countries, including different cases that illustrate various aspects of the priority issues defined above. In the inception report, the evaluation team will present a plan of countries and sites to be selected.

The time span to be covered is:

ForInfo 2011–2015
 Finnfor II 2012–2016
 MFS 2011–2016

4. Issues to be addressed and evaluation questions

While the evaluation questions below indicate the priority issues under each criterion, the evaluation team should not limit the evaluation to these questions only. More detailed evaluation questions will be presented in the inception report. Due to the differences of approach, the weight of each question needs to be regarded case by case and reflected to the objectives of each programme.

Relevance

- To what extent have the programmes been consistent with the requirement of final beneficiaries? And to what extent have they been consistent with national and/or regional policies and strategies?

Impact

- What are intended and unintended, short- and long-term, positive and negative impacts of promoting forestry based livelihoods and retribution mechanisms for ecosystem services?
- What have been the results and challenges in developing value chains and retribution mechanisms (as applicable to the programme)?
- How the programmes have promoted human rights, gender equality, reduction of inequalities and climate sustainability?

Effectiveness

- How have the partner organisations worked together within each programme, and what can be learned from the regional cooperation?
- To what extent has the regional approach been effective compared to bilateral projects?

Efficiency

- How well the various activities have transformed the available resources into the intended results using the regional instead of bilateral approach?

Aid effectiveness

- How and to what extent have the regional programmes promoted commitment and ownership?

Sustainability

- To what extent the programmes have achieved sustainable results, and how has the regional approach affected to sustainability?
- What are the conditions or factors that are central for sustainability of the results?

Coherence

- How has other cooperation between Finland and countries been taken into account in implementation and what have been the synergies of the regional programmes, including private sector and civil society cooperation?

Added value

- What has been the added value of Finland's programmes?

5. Methodology

The choice of methodology will be left to the evaluation team to propose. With the aim of having an objective and independent evaluation, the team is expected to conduct the evaluation according to international criteria, and professional norms and standards adopted by the MFA (see annexes). The methodology defines methods of data collection and analysis. It is expected that multiple methods are used, both qualitative and quantitative. Consultations with relevant partners and stakeholders will be conducted. Validation of results must be done through multiple sources. Data is disaggregated by relevant categories.

6. The evaluation process and time schedule

The evaluation is expected to be conducted in May/June–September 2017. It will include inception and desk study phases, field work and reporting. Field work will take place in selected countries and sites.

The evaluation team will submit a tentative work plan with curricula vitae of the team members for MFA's approval. Work plan includes roles and division of working days among experts, and a plan for quality assurance.

The assignment will begin with a kick-off meeting with the MFA. When the evaluation team has submitted an inception report, before field work, a meeting will be held between the team and the MFA. Embassies in Hanoi and Lima can be connected via video link.

Background documents will be provided by the MFA.

The evaluation results will be presented to the MFA.

7. Reporting

The evaluation team is requested to submit the following deliverables:

- Inception report
- Presentation on the field findings

- Draft final report
- Final report
- Presentation on the evaluation findings

Inception report: Before fieldwork and based on the desk study, the evaluation team shall present an inception report including detailed and updated work methodologies and work plan, detailed division of labour within the evaluation team, a list of major meetings and interviews planned for the field visits, and detailed evaluation questions linked to the evaluation criteria in an evaluation matrix.

Draft final report of the evaluation will be submitted to the MFA two weeks after the field work. It will combine the desk study and the field findings. The MFA will submit comments to the report, which will then be revised based on these comments.

The final report shall be submitted to the MFA in two weeks after receiving the comments on the draft final report.

Language of the deliverables is English, but the final report shall contain an executive summary both in English and Spanish.

Each deliverable is subjected to specific approval. The evaluation team is able to move to the next phase only after receiving a written statement of acceptance by the MFA.

8. Quality assurance

The evaluation team is expected to propose and implement a quality assurance system for the evaluation. The proposal must specify the quality assurance process, methodology and tools.

9. Expertise required

The evaluation team is expected to contain both international and national experts, and senior and emerging experts. One person shall be nominated as a team leader who should have a proven record of successful team leading of similar evaluations. The number of working days is tentatively 250 in total, including at least 140 days divided between senior level experts. The evaluation team shall ensure solid experience and knowledge in the following fields:

- Programme evaluations in the forest sector
- Knowledge and experience in sustainable forest management, community-based approach and value chains in developing countries, preferably in the Mekong Region, Andes and Central America
- Knowledge and experience in forest-based ecosystem services and retribution mechanisms
- Experience in regional development programmes
- Previous experience of challenge funds is an advantage
- Integrating cross cutting objectives in project planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation: promotion of human rights and gender equality, reduction of inequalities and climate sustainability
- Fluency in Spanish, both written and oral

The team members must not have been involved in implementation of the programmes evaluated or in the implementing organisations. This applies to the sub-projects and other activities financed by the programmes and the organizations implementing these.

10. Budget

The total available budget for this evaluation is 260,000 euros, excluding VAT, which cannot be exceeded. The budget will include the fees of the experts and the reimbursable costs.

11. Mandate

The evaluation team is entitled and expected to discuss matters relevant to this evaluation with pertinent persons and organizations. However, it is not authorized to make any commitments on the behalf of the Government of Finland, those of the partner countries or on behalf of the implementing organisations

Annexes

- Evaluation report quality checklist (OECD/DAC and EU standards), link:
<http://www.uneval.org/document/detail/607>
- Result Based Management in Finland's development cooperation
<http://formin.finland.fi/public/download.aspx?ID=146690&GUID={5B479C3A-0703-45A4-BCDC-C90BC91FE5A4}>

Annexes 1: Link to the MFA evaluation manual:

<http://formin.finland.fi/public/default.aspx?contentid=288455&contentlan=2&culture=en-US>

Annex 2: Outline of an evaluation report

The quality criteria of an evaluation report have been defined by the OECD/DAC and the EU (see table 11 of the manual). The main components of an evaluation report are outlined below. The outline is not compulsory, but intended as a guideline in defining the appropriate table of contents for a specific evaluation. It is recommended that based on this general outline, the evaluators propose a report outline e.g. in their Inception Report.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Providing an overview of the report, highlighting the main findings, conclusions, recommendations and any overall lessons.
- Includes a summary table presenting main findings, conclusions and recommendations and their logical links
 - Relevance: findings – conclusions – recommendations
 - Impact: findings – conclusions – recommendations
 - Effectiveness: findings – conclusions – recommendations
 - Efficiency: findings – conclusions – recommendations
 - Sustainability: findings – conclusions – recommendations
 - Etc.

INTRODUCTION

- Evaluation's rationale, purpose and objectives, scope and main evaluation questions

DESCRIPTION OF THE CONTEXT AND THE EVALUATED PROJECT/PROGRAMME

- Description of the broader context and its influence on the performance of the project/programme.
- Introduction of the intervention being evaluated: objectives including the cross-cutting objectives, implementation strategies, resources for implementation.
- Introduction of the stakeholders and their roles, including both final beneficiaries and involved institutions

KEY FINDINGS

- Empirical data, facts, evidence relevant to the indicators of the evaluation questions.
- Overall progress in the implementation.
- Findings by evaluation criteria / issue (e.g. Relevance, Impact, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Sustainability)

CONCLUSIONS

- The evaluators' assessment of the performance of the project/programme based on the findings in relation to the set evaluation criteria, performance standards or policy issues (e.g. Relevance, Impact, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Sustainability)

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Proposed improvements, changes, action to remedy problems in performance or to capitalise on strengths. Recommendations are based on the findings and conclusions. There should be a clear indication of
 - to whom is the recommendation directed (MFA, partner institutions, consultant providing support services, etc.)
 - who is responsible for implementing the recommendation, and
 - when the recommendation should be implemented..

NOTE: Findings, conclusions and recommendations are summarized in a table in the Executive Summary of the evaluation report.

LESSONS LEARNED

- Are there any general conclusions that are likely to have the potential for wider application and use?

ANNEXES

- the ToR
- description of the evaluation methodology used
- limitations of the study
- lists of information sources e.g. people interviewed, documents reviewed, etc.
- quality assurance statement produced by the quality assurance mechanism used
- 1-2 page evaluation brief for communicating the evaluation results, including
 - the key message of the evaluation,
 - who has benefitted and what are the most important positive results,
 - any unexpected impacts,
 - key recommendations and lessons learned.

Annex 3: Evaluation report quality checklist (OECD/DAC and EU standards)

Executive summary

- contains a clear and representative executive summary of the report
- summarises the main findings, conclusions, recommendations in a summary table
- presents overall lessons learned

NOTE: The executive summary is the part of the evaluation report that will be read most often. That is why its high quality is very important!

Context

- describes the context of the development programme
- assesses the influence of the context on programme performance

Intervention logic

- describes and assesses the intervention logic (e.g. in the form of a logical framework) or theory
- describes and assesses the underlying assumptions and factors affecting the success of the programme
- takes into account the evolution of the programme

Sources of information

- describes the sources of information (documents, interviews, other) used so that the adequacy of the information can be assessed,
- explains the selection of case studies or any samples,
- cross-validates the information sources
- critically assesses the validity and reliability of the data

Methodology

- annexed to the report explains and justifies the evaluation methodology and its application, including techniques used for data collection and analysis
- explains limitations and shortcomings, risks and potential biases associated with the evaluation method

Analysis

- presents clear analysis covering findings, conclusions, recommendations and lessons separately and with a clear logical distinction between them.
- makes explicit the assumptions that underlie the analysis.

Answers to ToR evaluation questions

- answers all the questions detailed in the TOR for the evaluation
- covers the requested period of time, and the target groups and socio-geographical areas linked to the programme
- if not, justifications are given

Limitations

- explains any limitations in process, methodology or data, and discusses validity and reliability
- indicates any obstruction of a free and open evaluation process which may have influenced the findings
- explains any discrepancies between the planned and actual implementation and products of the evaluation

Differences of opinion

- acknowledges unresolved differences of opinion within the evaluation team

Stakeholders' comments

- reflects stakeholders' comments on the report and acknowledges any substantive disagreements



Annex 2

Inception Report

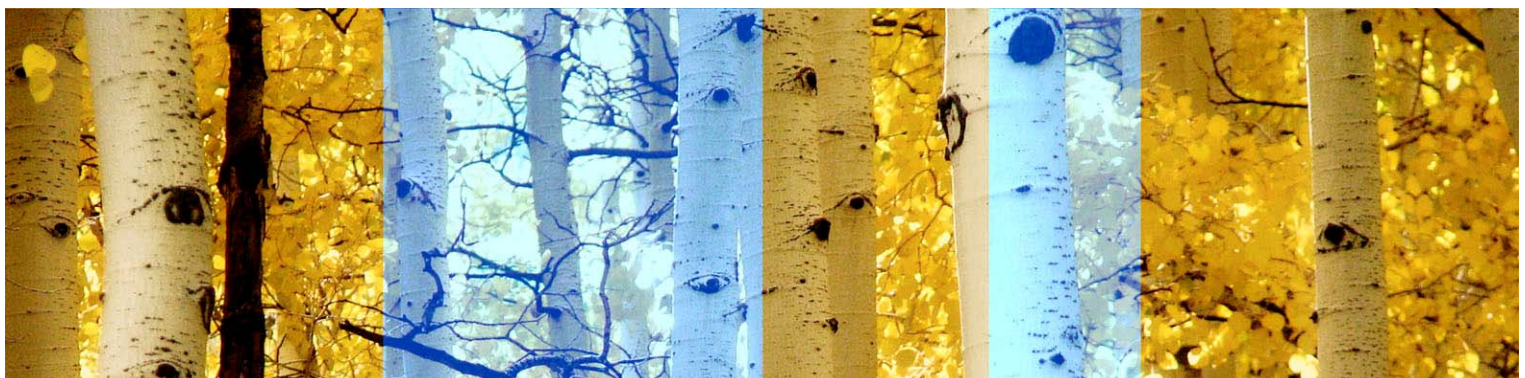
Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland (ASA-10)

Final evaluation of regional forest projects in Mekong, Andean and Central America under the Framework Contract for final evaluations of Finland's regional development cooperation in the Latin America, Caribbean, Mekong and Oceania regions

Inception Report

Helsinki, Finland
June 30, 2017

7928
ID 102304





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DISCLAIMER

Indufor makes its best effort to provide accurate and complete information while executing the assignment. Indufor assumes no liability or responsibility for any outcome of the assignment.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.	INTRODUCTION	1
1.1	Context	1
1.2	Objectives and Scope of the Evaluation	1
2.	INITIAL FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS OF THE DESK STUDY	2
2.1	FINNFOR (Central America)	2
2.2	MFS (Andes)	7
2.3	ForInfo (Mekong)	12
3.	METHODOLOGY	15
3.1	Evaluation Questions	15
3.2	Country Selection	18
3.3	Data Collection and Analysis	18
4.	WORK PLAN AND TASK DIVISION	21
4.1	Main Activities and Phasing	21
4.2	Team Composition and Labour Division	22
5.	MANAGEMENT OF THE CONTRACT	23
5.1	Inputs by Team Members	23
5.2	Reporting	23
5.3	Quality Control	24

LIST OF ANNEXES

Annex 1	Terms of Reference of the Evaluation
Annex 2	Draft Work Plan
Annex 3	Evaluation matrix
Annex 4	Meeting notes MFA – evaluation team
Annex 5	Draft outline Final Report
Annex 6	Overview of the MFS projects

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2.1	Reconstructed results chain for Finnfor-II	4
Figure 2.2	Simplified results chain for the MFS programme	8
Figure 2.3	Itinerary of the MFS programme field mission	11
Figure 2.4	Simplified results chain for ForInfo	12
Figure 2.5	Impacts of improved information (status at project completion)	13

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Context

This inception report aims to define the main evaluation questions for the final evaluation of Finland's regional development cooperation in the Latin America, Caribbean, Mekong and Oceania regions and to describe in detail what methodology will be used to answer these. It is based on the initial evaluation questions – as described in the Terms of Reference (ToR) in Annex 1, and on the approach and methodology originally presented in the Technical Proposal submitted in November 2016, which was further refined in a proposal submitted on 22 May 2017 and updated on 8 June 2017.

Both evaluation questions and methodology have been further elaborated and refined based on feedback received during the kick-off meeting and information received and collected during the short inception phase.

During the inception phase, in line with the ToR, the team has undertaken the following activities:

- Attended a kick off meeting for the evaluation with the Steering Committee key notes of the meeting are presented in Annex 4
- Created a central repository of documents and a shared calendar
- Identified and started reviewing an initial set of key documents
- Refined the main evaluation questions, based on the TOR and feedback received, including comments on the issues to be studied
- Developed a detailed Evaluation Framework (Annex 3), prepared a list of countries to be visited and key issues by country, and identified stakeholder groups to be consulted (chapter 2) and decided on main data gathering and analytical tools
- Prepared a detailed work plan, including allocation of days and division of labour between team members; made changes in team composition following feedback received from MFA and concluded contracts with each of the senior, emerging and national experts
- Drafted an inception report submitted for presentation to MFA - during the Inception meeting - and approval ahead of the field phase.

1.2 Objectives and Scope of the Evaluation

The purpose of this final evaluation (in fact, an ex-post evaluation) of three regional forest projects is to provide guidance to the MFA in planning and implementing regional forest projects. In the Mekong Region where Finland's development cooperation programme is phasing out even though cooperation with Myanmar is increasing. In Latin America, by contrast, Finland's grant-based bilateral development assistance has ended.

For this reason, focus is on what can be learned from the experience with the regional forestry projects that can be of use for future forest sector cooperation (in Myanmar, Africa or elsewhere) and for planning eventual other regional programmes in the future. The three projects have a participatory approach, support to small producers and development of value chains in common. Priority objectives of this evaluation are to assess:

- what was the added value of the regional approach compared to a country-based approach
- how the programmes succeeded in promoting sustainable forestry based livelihoods and increasing income of small producers
- what lessons can be learned from developing value chains and retribution mechanisms for ecosystem services.

The evaluation covers countries in the Andean, Mekong and Central American regions. The fieldwork will take place in selected countries that include different cases illustrating the aspects of the key evaluation issues outlined above. The projects and time spans covered are (1) ForInfo (Mekong, 2011–2015), (2) Finnfor II (Central America, 2012–2016) and (3) MFS (South America, 2011–2016).

2. INITIAL FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS OF THE DESK STUDY

The MFA evaluation manual foresees a chapter (2) for 'Initial findings and conclusions of the desk study', organised by evaluation criteria. In practice, the inception phase has been too short – and availability of documentation too late – to allow for a full desk review. Furthermore, the desk review and global analysis will continue during the field phase (refer work plan, Annex 2).

Instead, during the inception phase, the team prepared an initial analysis of each of the projects. For each of them, we present a project synopsis – including intervention logics - and preliminary findings, including strengths and weaknesses, and main issues to be looked into during the field phase. Based on the issues identified, the most relevant stakeholder groups to be interviewed or visited during the field visit were identified. This has allowed for initial mission planning, and most tentative travel itineraries have been defined

The initial analysis has helped structuring the analytical framework for the evaluation and allows focusing further data collection and analysis. An important initial finding is the wide variety in approaches to project design, ranging from loosely-defined 'action lines' to more developed theories of change. An attempt was made to present the intervention logics in similar formats, notably in the form of results chains, in line with the current use in Finland's development cooperation of the results chain concept and strengthening of results monitoring and reporting.

2.1 FINNFOR (Central America)

2.1.1 Project Synopsis

The Integrated Environmental and Forest Management Cooperation Project in Central America (Finnfor-II) ran from 1 October 2012 until 31 March 2016 and was implemented by the Tropical Agricultural Research and Higher Education Centre (CATIE) with a budget of 3.8 million EUR.

Its general objective was that "forest sector producers, organizations and institutions identify, analyse and eliminate the barriers that affect the production of forest goods and services [...] in order to improve the livelihoods of the local population in the project's selected territories" (see logframe). These livelihood improvements should be achieved by developing and strengthening small and medium forest enterprises, producer groups and service providers through improved wood product value chains (overall project purpose), especially in El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua. In addition, efforts and resources should be leveraged to strengthen the forest sector in the same countries as well as in Belize, Costa Rica and Panama, through cooperative networks within and outside the region.

According to the baseline context analysis for Finnfor-II, Central America has high potential for profitable and sustainable forest management given its favourable natural factors such as climate, soil, topography, resilience of forests to natural disasters, and good logistic access to international markets. However, these opportunities have been underexploited due to institutional and technical barriers. Government policies traditionally stimulate agricultural production rather than management and conservation of forests (although stakeholders now tentatively diversify their land use from livestock activities towards timber and firewood). The main forest use in Central America is fuelwood – consuming more than ten times as much volume as round or sawn wood. Due to outdated wood processing technologies, as well as lack of technical, managerial and financial capacities, the existing wood market is heavily focused on primary manufacturing but is not well prepared to serve upstream segments such as furniture and construction wood. High transaction costs associated with excessive legal formalities, inadequate financial conditions for firms, and the weakness of internal and external market strategies constitute major barriers to profitability.

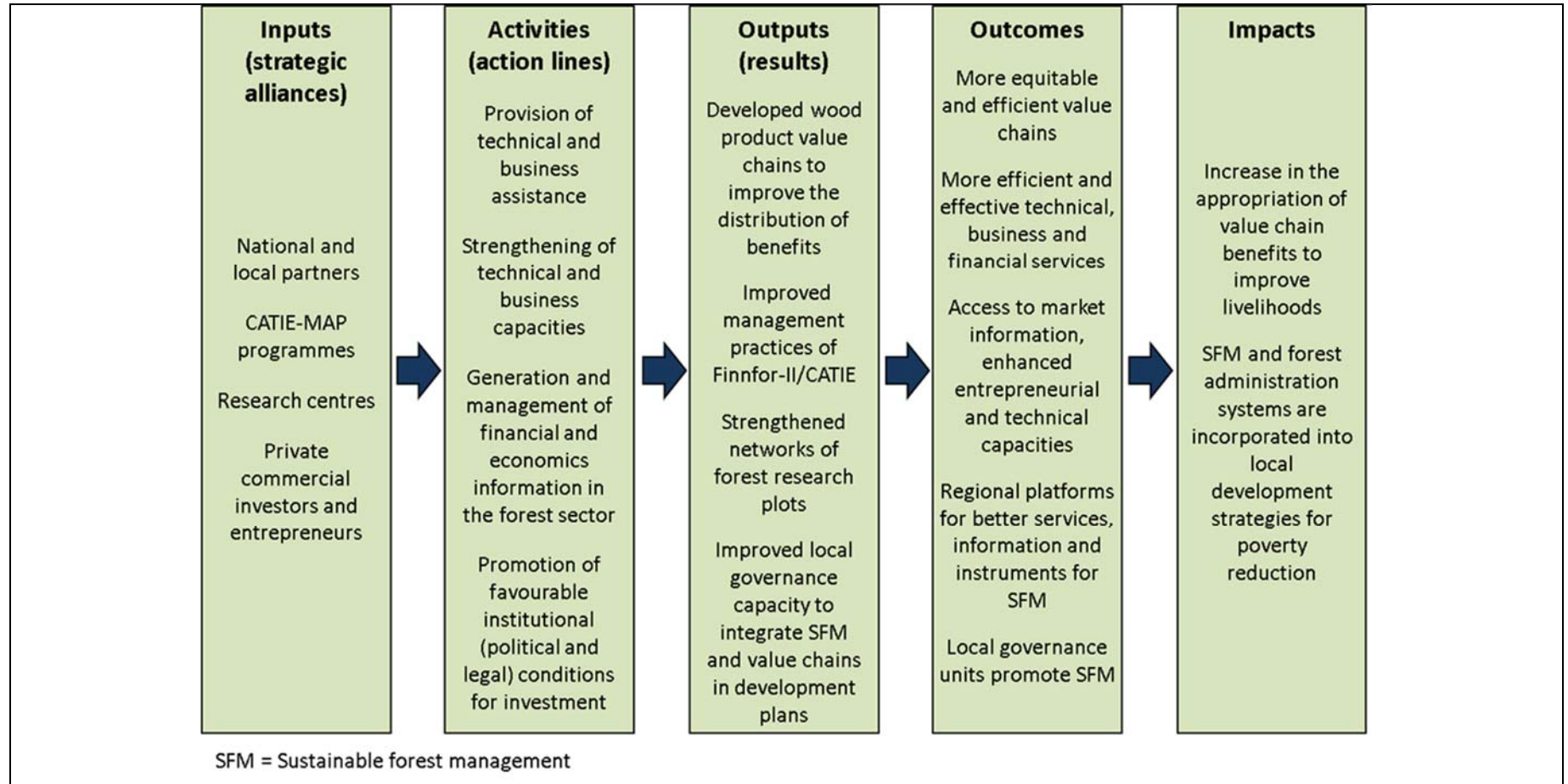
The final logical framework lists four key results: (1) developed wood product value chains to improve the distribution of benefits from forest production; (2) improved capacity of local governance bodies to integrate sustainable forest management and value chains in development plans; (3) strengthened networks of forest research plots to promote innovation

and training for forest governance and management; (4) improved management practices of Finnfor-II and CATIE.

The results should be achieved through a set of four action lines, which include: (1) generating information and knowledge management processes related to forest sector development; (2) business and technical assistance; (3) strengthening of forest management capacities through training; (4) enabling institutional conditions in the political-legal and regulatory frameworks and investment environment.

Figure 2.1 on the next page presents a first version of the reconstructed intervention logic, which will be refined in the further desk review. The logical chain starts with alliances being formed between the stakeholders listed in the first box of Figure 2.1. Finnfor-II then implements support activities within these alliances along the four action lines. These lead to the previously indicated direct results (or outputs): forest product value chains, research networks, local governance capacity, and internal management practices. The outputs, in turn, pave the way for broader outcomes associated with the general project objective of reducing barriers in forest product markets (such as improved market transparency, financial services, business and planning capacities of entrepreneurs and local governments respectively). Ultimately, this should reduce poverty through the livelihood impacts of more equitably distributed benefits of value chains and the inclusion of sustainable forest management in local development plans.

Figure 2.1 Reconstructed results chain for Finnfor-II



Source: Indufor-Particip analysis based on presentation at the Finnfor-II annual meeting 2012

2.1.2 Initial Findings

The available project documents identify some of the success factors, especially of the first phase of Finnfor, as well as achievements and external challenges for Finnfor-II. The 2011 mid-term evaluation of the first phase of Finnfor highlights several elements that had driven project success:

- Participatory work with partners who have different interests but are committed to local and national development
- Joint planning (and multi-party execution) with partners, including the design of implementation and communication strategies
- Commitment to long-term research and development by Finnfor and CATI
- Updating of forest information systems at both local/national and regional level
- Training at different levels to meet local needs.

For Finnfor-II, no mid-term evaluation is available, but activities and result achievements are well documented in the progress reports¹. By 2015, Result 1 (development of forest product value chains) had accrued to a direct beneficiary pool ranging from several dozen to several hundreds of producer families per country. This was achieved by a wide array of activities, including technical assistance and training, financial solutions, strategic business alliances, facilitation of market information and regulatory improvements. Result 2 (capacity building among local stakeholders) advanced through the production of analytical studies, workshops and partnerships with public stakeholders. Regarding Result 3 (long-term forest research plot networks), participation in the networks was somewhat uneven across countries; but support to individual students clearly contributed to Finnfor's value chain agenda. An internal audit that looked at Result 4 (CATIE/Finnfor project management practices) concluded that institutional initiatives had helped CATIE to strengthen its position in the Central American forestry sector, and that planning and monitoring instruments were effective.

The progress reports also highlight some external challenges faced by Finnfor-II (although they do not comment on potential internal weaknesses of the project), including:

- Governance requirements related to informality and illegality of forest products
- SMEs used to donor-driven (rather than free) market environments
- Difficulties of turning the value chain approach from supply-side to demand-side orientation
- Resistance in the forest sector to participation of women.

2.1.3 Focus of Field Work

The field missions will collect evidence to answer the evaluation questions along the different evaluation criteria in the specific context of Finnfor-II. Topics that will receive particular attention in the field work include the following.

- *Relevance*: Assess whether the wood product value chains selected for Finnfor-II had the potential for improving livelihoods, market opportunities and forest management practices; whether the activities of Finnfor-II were well designed to improve these value chains; and whether the regional approach (e.g. support to cross-boundary market access and research co-operation) was adequate.

¹ Overall, implementation of the activity plan was satisfactory – the implementation report from 2013 shows that usually more than 75% of foreseen the activities per project site had been (or were being) implemented in time, and that less than 15% per site of the activities were cancelled or had a delay of more than 3 months.

- *Effectiveness:* Verify whether (and how) Finnfor-II led to more efficient and inclusive wood product value chains, technology upgrades, higher market transparency and enhanced availability of producer finance.
- *Impact:* Identify examples of observed livelihood impacts on producer families; assess their participation in wood market benefits as well as high-level business impacts (e.g. capacity improvements, changes in market strategies) on small- and medium-size forest enterprises.
- *Sustainability:* Analyse to which extent entrepreneurs have changed their forest management and business practices and technologies in a sustainable manner, and whether the project has contributed to changes in national/local policies and development plans.

The evidence will be collected through individual and group interviews from a number of stakeholders (CATIE offices, national forestry institutes, producer organisations and individual producers, service organisations/firms and extension agencies, government and other public stakeholders at national and local levels). A preliminary field mission plan for Nicaragua and Costa Rica is given below.

Tentative field mission plan for Nicaragua and Costa Rica

1) MANAGUA (NICARAGUA)

- Meet former project manager at CATIE national office, meet INAFOR and MEM

TRAVEL: overland to Chinandega

2) CHINANDEGA (NICARAGUA)

- Field visits to plantations and charcoal production plants.
- Meet individual timber and charcoal producers, producer organisations, AFOCNIC, Maderas de Occidente S.A and local communities

TRAVEL: overland to León

3) LEON (NICARAGUA)

- Field visits (see Chinandega)
- Meet Regional Authorities (Dep of León) Municipio Quezalguaque, León, local communities (Cristo Rey, Urroces)

TRAVEL: cross border into Costa Rica

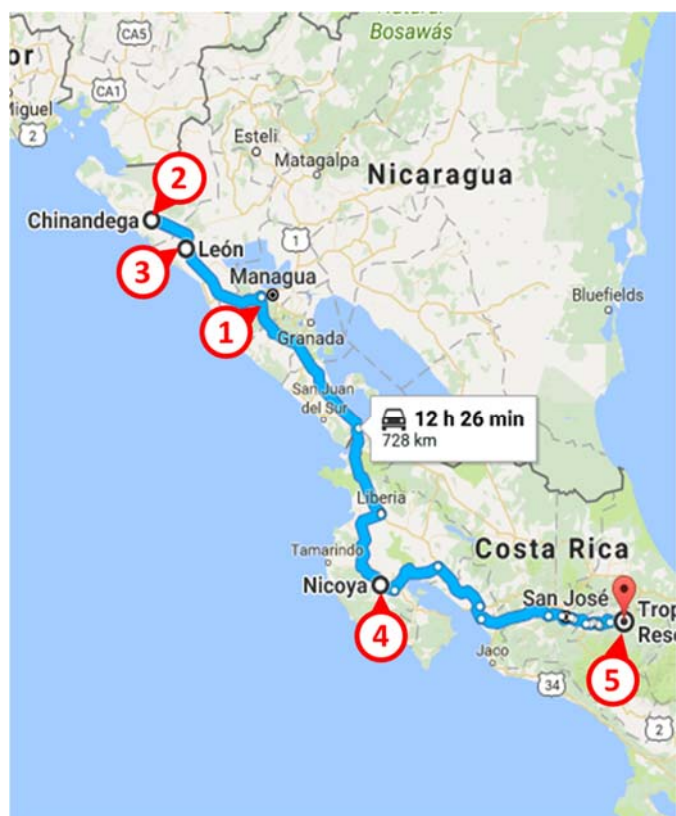
4) NICOYA (COSTA RICA)

- Field visit to production facilities (Cantons of Hojancha, Nicoya, Nadayhure)
- Interviews and exchanges with CACH, Proteca and individual teak producers

TRAVEL: overland to Turrialba (CATIE HQ)

5) SAN JOSE – TURRIALBA/CATIE (COSTA RICA)

- Meet with UNAFOR and UICN (S.José/S.Pedro).
- Meet CATIE management and fill data gaps
- Debriefing: present findings and initial conclusions at CATIE HQ



As regards the field mission to Guatemala, the identification of main stakeholders and mission planning are ongoing. Interviews and field work will be undertaken by an international consultant based in Guatemala.

2.2 MFS (Andes)

2.2.1 Project Synopsis

The Sustainable Forest Management (MFS) Programme is the result of a Cooperation Agreement between MFA Finland and the Inter-American Institute for Agriculture (IICA), in February 2011. The Objective of the Programme was to achieve a greater contribution of forest resources to sustainable development in the Andean Region. Its purpose was to support the introduction and adoption of innovations and the elimination of bottlenecks that impede the development of the forestry sector, through public and private actors of the participating countries in order to contribute to the sustainability of the management of forest resources and the expansion of forest plantations.

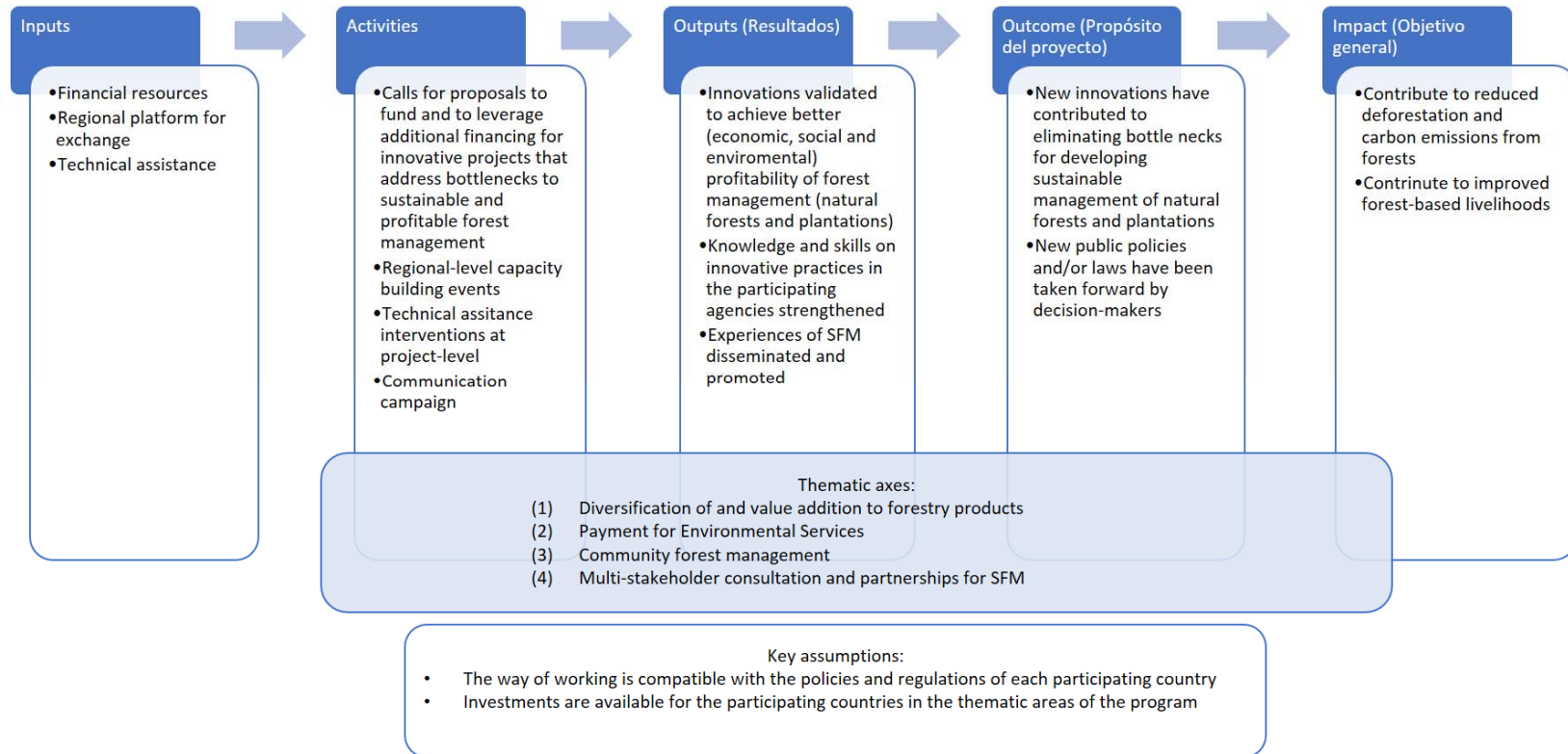
To achieve its purpose, it implemented activities in four axes: Diversification of - and value addition to - forest products, Payment for environmental services, Community forest management, and Multi-Stakeholder consultation and partnerships for SFM. The program logic was structured around a logframe that was revised in the end of 2014. The activities are structured in three components with a corresponding result (“*resultado*” corresponding to the output-level in the simplified results chain, see Figure 2.2) for each component, and a fourth Programme management component, as follows:

- Result/Component 1: “(Natural) Forest management”. Innovations to achieve greater economic, social and environmental efficiency of forest management in the participating countries validated
- Result/Component 2 “Forest plantations”. Innovations to achieve greater economic, social and environmental impacts of plantations in the participating countries validated
- Result/Component 3 “Coordination and exchange of experience”. Knowledge and skills of innovative practices in the participating agencies strengthened and experiences in SFM promoted
- Result/Component 4 “Programme management”.

The Programme presented a logical model based on logframe approach for the main processes that it supported. Even though there is no explicit Theory of Change, it is implicit in elements found in the available documentation and which have been used for outlining a simplified results chain, in accordance with the Programme rationale. The results chain aims to demonstrate how the logic of the program was to reduce deforestation and to improve local livelihoods by means of forest-based interventions (impact or “*Objetivo general*”). The impact would be achieved due to changes in the behaviour, relationships, actions, activities, policies, or practices of an individual, group, community, organization or institution (outcome-level in the results chain, “*propósito*” in the logframe). In the context of the MFS programme, these changes mean eliminating bottlenecks to sustainable and profitable practices in forest management and changes in relevant laws and policies. The outcome would be achieved by producing the three above-mentioned results (outputs or “*resultados*”) related to sustainable management of natural forests, improving forest plantations and knowledge sharing. The concrete activities included launching of calls for proposals, establishing an online platform for knowledge sharing and provision of technical assistance.

Given the regional and multi-stakeholder focus of the Programme, assumptions made in the results chain were that (i) the approach is compatible with the policies and regulations of each participating country, and (ii) investments, public policies and public-private partnerships in the Andean Region are available.

Figure 2.2 Simplified results chain for the MFS programme



2.2.2 Initial Findings

Strengths

A key strength of MFS was in designing how to operationalize support to projects that reconcile the environmental, economic and social dimensions in the proposals submitted for funding. The focus on innovations that achieve greater economic, social and environmental efficiency of forest management in the participating countries created a high potential of impact at regional level. In addition, the focus on facilitating the exchange of SFM experiences from innovative practices by the participating agencies strengthened the potential for impact. In 2013, for example, 150 actors in the forestry sector participated in exchanges of experience through regional workshops in the four countries.

This strength is further enhanced by the approaches applied by the Programme to the projects that were submitted for funding. These approaches include:

- Relationships between production sectors that compete for land and scarce resources
- Good governance of the forest sector and natural resources
- Rights of land ownership and use
- Environmental services offered by forests and their links to other production sectors.

Regarding the support provided by the Programme, initial analysis of available MFS documentation shows good achievements on planned outputs in different components. The factors that may explain these achievements include a proper identification of relevant stakeholders, adequate implementation arrangements - including the composition of the Steering Committee - and timely implementation of feasibility studies, the diagnostic study on forest sector constraints, and pilot projects on innovations. In 2012, the Programme supported 24 projects for a total budget of € 4.2 million.

Another important strength of the Programme lies in providing an opportunity for involvement of a diversity of stakeholders, from the public sector, private sector and civil society. This stakeholder involvement was catalysed namely by interaction through workshops and Virtual Learning Communities, which allowed for the participation of a diversity of actors (public organizations, NGOs, academic institutions, etc.) in the process of exchange of experience.

Weaknesses

Weaknesses in the design have been mentioned above (section project synopsis). It may be added that the design of MFS may not have been the most appropriate for forest sector policy innovations and change, for not having presented a Theory of Change (ToC) that identifies an explicit pathway for change. The evaluation team acknowledges that the revised logframe (revised in August 2014) has a certain logic, i.e. that combining innovations in natural and plantation forest management with improved stakeholder capacity and knowledge sharing, bottlenecks to sustainable forestry can be eliminated. This leads to improved environmental conditions and poverty reduction.

However, several weaknesses can be observed. First, the lack of reflection on benchmarks to measure success in terms of 'regionality' of the results, both at regional and country levels. The following criteria could be considered to assess regionality:

- (i) Dissemination and sharing of knowledge and innovation
- (ii) Adopting issues-based approaches to inter-country cooperation for promoting SFM
- (iii) Converting individual actors knowledge/experience into a region/country-wide asset that is readily accessible to potential users
- (iv) Securing national government ownership as a precondition for sustainable policy changes

- (v) Conducting systematic impact studies at country level and identifying how the Programme added value to country level processes
- (vi) Supporting regional initiatives that have cross-border implications.

Available information suggests that the project performance is good regarding points (i), (ii) and (iii), and probably (iv), and less so on points (v) and (vi).

Second, several indicators are overly ambitious considering the scope and available budget of the programme (for example, “by 2021, deforestation has reduced by 20% in the Andean Region). Third, some assumptions refer to challenges that can take several decades to solve, such as securing land tenure (“*La tenencia de tierra es saneada*”).

While overall good results (outputs) were achieved (see strengths) within the Programme’s sphere of control, i.e. with the “*Entidades desarrolladoras*” and partner organizations, there is little information on changes that took place at the level of stakeholders, such as public institutions, communities and private sector, where impacts are expected to materialise. The project descriptions (two/three-pagers that provide basic information on the projects and their innovations) explain the project achievements in two sections, results (outputs) and sustainability but information is focused mainly at input and output levels, less on outcomes back up by evidence. These documents will be explored more systematically in the in-depth desk review phase.

2.2.3 Focus of Field Work

During the MFS field work, the following issues will be looked into in particular:

- **Relevance:** Assess the relevance of the program design (the intervention logic to achieve reduced deforestation and improved livelihoods; the general institutional set-up of a regional programme). Assess the extent to which the design takes crosscutting issues (Gender, equity, climate change) into account.
- **Effectiveness:** Evaluate how, and to what extent, the programme Outputs and Outcomes been achieved (by components/thematic axes/crosscutting themes). In relation to stakeholders’ exchanges: special attention to effectiveness in supporting public sector, private sector and civil society actors to contribute effectively to forest sector debates and policy development, bearing in mind innovation and regionality. Assess whether the approaches used are adequate for amplifying the voice and capacity of the weaker actors.
- **Efficiency:** While the attention of the evaluation is less on efficiency, the team will look at the effectiveness and efficiency of partnership arrangements for projects implementation.
- **Degree to which impacts have materialised and assumptions held true.**
- **Sustainability of project achievements.**

Interviews during the field mission will target a diverse array of stakeholders, including MFS staff and Steering committee members, project beneficiary actors, central government representatives, relevant institutions (civil society organizations, academia, private sector, local government and national agency officials).

The field mission will cover two countries; Peru and Colombia (Figure 2.3). These two countries were chosen given the larger number of projects implemented in them. In addition, Peru and Colombia include clusters of several projects (Antioquia region in Colombia and Ucayali region in Peru) allowing reaching out to more stakeholders during one field visit, as compared to the more geographically disperse and distant projects located in Bolivia and Ecuador.

As regards itinerary for the field mission, the proposal for the visits in Peru has been prepared, as follows. The field mission will start in Lima, Peru. The first round of interviews will be carried out in Lima focusing on the following stakeholder groups:

- Representatives of MFS-funded project implementing organisations at their headquarters in Lima

- Relevant and available key informants (such as relevant IICA/MFS staff and Steering Committee members)
- Members of Amazon indigenous organizations; the Interethnic Association for the Development of the Peruvian Rainforest (AIDSEP) and the Confederation of Amazonian Nationalities of Peru (CONAP).

Close partner organizations (mainly regional indigenous organizations and relevant government offices) will be visited in Pucallpa town. During village-level visits in the surrounding provinces and districts, project beneficiaries will be interviewed and expected/unexpected outputs and outcomes identified. The evaluation team will select the target villages based on accessibility and availability of local guides who are familiar with the intervention sites.

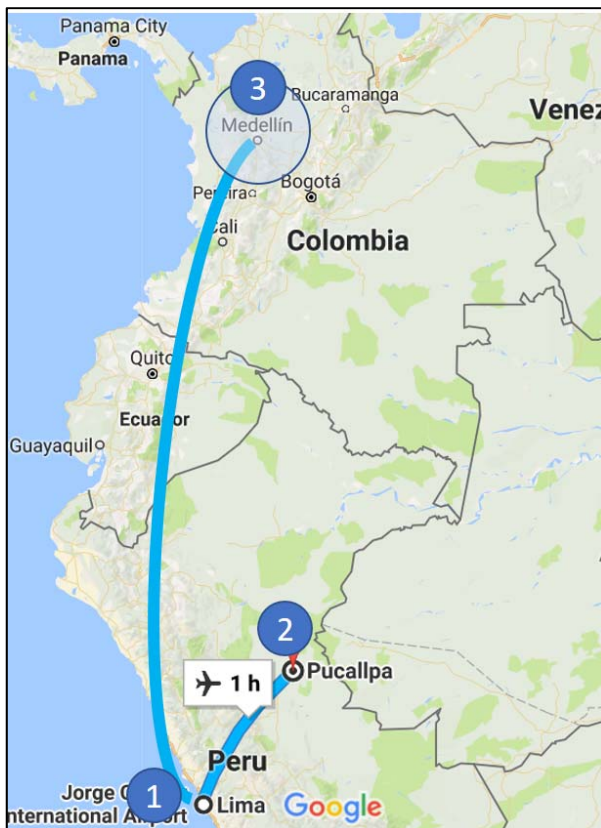
Annex 6 provides an overview of the projects in Peru. The priority projects for closer investigation include:

- Asesorandes
- Derecho, Ambiente y Recursos Naturales (DAR)
- Reforesta.

Reason for selecting these projects is that they included field activities in Ucayali region with easy access from Pucallpa town where also the regional indigenous peoples' organizations and regional government offices are located. For the village-level visits, only one or two projects will be selected due to long travel distances, to be selected from the table in Annex 6. The expected duration of the Peru country mission is approximately 10-14 days (travel days included).

Following the Peru country visit by the two evaluators, the senior evaluator will continue to Colombia. The itinerary in Colombia is yet to be defined with the help of a local evaluator.

Figure 2.3 Itinerary of the MFS programme field mission



2.3 ForInfo (Mekong)

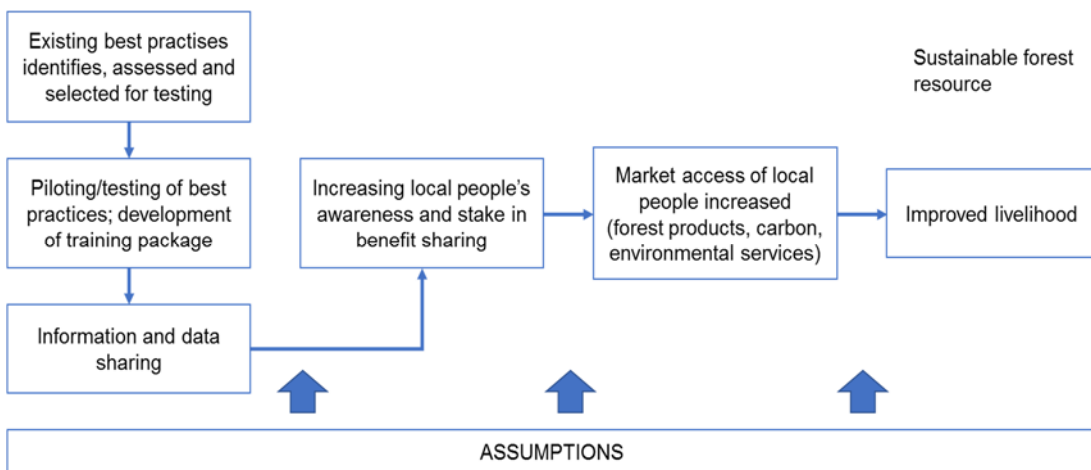
2.3.1 Project Synopsis

The ForInfo project (*Livelihood Improvement through Generation and Ownership of Forest Information by Local People in Products and Services Markets*) aimed at promoting local communities' access to information and forest products and services markets. The project developed field-tested forestry information methodologies. It was implemented from 2011 to 2015, in eight sites in the four countries of the Lower Mekong region: Cambodia, Lao PDR, Thailand, and Vietnam. The project was managed by RECOFTC with 2 M€ funding support from the Government of Finland and it worked together with the ministries of forestry or environment in the project countries.

The project consisted of six outputs (components): Initiation of ForInfo in project countries; Documentation of best practices; Piloting of selected best practices on information generation; Piloting of information and data sharing mechanisms; Assessing the role of information in benefit sharing and dissemination of field-tested methodologies.

The underlying assumption (the project logics) was that improved availability and access to information would generate “*improved forestry-based livelihoods through generation and ownership of Forest Information by local people*”. The project aimed at making information on good practices available and accessible and applicable to stakeholders and improving their understanding and skills in the generation of information. The key stakeholders of the project (as defined in project documentation) were government extension services in charge of Community Forests and private sector. The (final) beneficiaries of the project were community forest user groups and plantation smallholders. A simplified results chain presenting the intervention logic is presented in Figure 2.4.

Figure 2.4 Simplified results chain for ForInfo



A mid-term review (MTR) was commissioned by RECOFTC in February-March 2013, to assess the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, project's impact, sustainability of results and effectiveness of arrangements for monitoring. The review found that, from an international and regional perspective, the project was highly relevant in its attempts to develop methodologies for increasing the effectiveness of community forestry to generate more benefits from the combined production of both products and services in a sustainable manner. The effectiveness of the project was found to vary considerably: in 3 out of the 8 sites the project had been very effective in initiating and guiding the generation of innovative and effective methodologies. Efficiency challenges related to delays in project start-up activities, delays in mobilizing experts

and high transaction costs. No major issues were identified related to impact and sustainability, and the project was commended for the various imaginative ways it addressed these issues, through establishing linkages with other projects and with the RECOFTC country programs.

2.3.2 Initial Findings

The project's Logframe contains performance indicators at all levels as well as for country specific programmes. It is noteworthy that the project purpose is presented in the form of an output statement accompanied by output indicators. The logframe does not present any indicators that would measure change. Also, the inter-dependency between outputs generates a risk for overall project achievements. This was also noted in the MTR.

The project has made a self-assessment against the anticipated impacts - of improved availability of information (e.g. wood biomass inventories, carbon inventories, assessment of environmental services) - on ultimate beneficiaries (see Figure 2.5). Our initial review of this assessment suggests that Lao and Cambodia field-sites provide the most comprehensive picture of project experience, including both positive (green) and negative (red) experience that constitute a good basis for lesson learning. Experiences from certification of CF products (Vietnam projects) can be studied through a desk based review (final report available) and relevant interviews.

The project design incorporates gender and vulnerability issues. For instance, it is indicated that the assessment criteria for good practices will include the issue of gender and marginalised groups - which are among the crosscutting objectives of the development policy. The evaluation will analyse to what extent gender and vulnerability have been addressed and with what results and how lessons have been disseminated.

The programme document contains a risk analysis and a list of assumptions which need to hold for the project to achieve its results.

Figure 2.5 Impacts of improved information (status at project completion)

ForInfo AREAS OF INFORMATION	IMPACT AREA (expected impacts for ultimate beneficiaries)								
	User and access rights	Access to product markets	Improved role in value chain	Increased potential for private investments	Access to micro finance	Share in REDD payments	Share in PES payments	Share in CDM credits	Availability of previous experiences in CF context
Wood biomass (Timber) inventories	LC	LC	LC	L	L	C	C		
NTFP Bamboo inventories	LC	LC	LC	L					
Carbon inventories	C		C	X		C	X	X	
Assessment of environmental services	C		C				C		
Information on management and production process	LC	LC	LC	L	L				
Product information	LC	LC	LC		L			L	
Certification of CF products	X					X	X		
Renewability assessment in energy supply	C		C					C	

Colours indicate achievement toward project goal; green = good achievement; red = no achievement
Letters indicate which countries' projects cover matrix areas; C = Cambodia, L = Lao PDR, X = other
Source: Adapted from the Project Completion Report (dated December 2016)

2.3.3 Focus of Field Work

Based on the document review and Figure 2.5, it is proposed to select Lao PDR and Cambodia as sites for field visits, if feasible with a side visit to the *Ngao Model Forest* (Thailand). Key issues during the field phase include:

- Analysis of the actual project impact in the respective expected impact areas (as defined in the matrix in Figure 2.5 above).
- Analysis of the added value of regional programme? Would it have been possible to achieve the same results through other means? What are the key assumptions for sustainability?
- How was gender/vulnerability actually integrated in project implementation and results?

Key stakeholders include:

- RECOFTC Head Office and country offices
- Relevant government agencies (such as PAFO/DAFO in Bokeo)
- Local communities and ethnic groups
- SNV
- WCS
- GERES
- FSC
- The Tree Bank (Thailand)
- ACLEDA Bank, Lao PDR
- Project collaborators (such as SUFORD-SU).

Initial field mission travel plan

<p>1) BANGKOK (THAILAND)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting at RECOFTC HQ • Other relevant BKK contacts (e.g. former project staff, NGOs, government) <p><i>TRAVEL: Fly to Chiang Rai (cross border to Bokeo)</i></p> <p>2) BOKEO (LAO PDR)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Field visits • Meet with PAFOs/DAFOs, RECOFTCs staff, local communities, ethnic groups, etc • If feasible, visit Ngao Model Forest on Thai side on the way back <p><i>TRAVEL: Return to Bangkok</i></p> <p>1) BANGKOK (THAILAND)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunity for other meetings – as needed <p><i>TRAVEL: Fly to Phnom Penh</i></p> <p>3) CAMBODIA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Field visit (most likely Pursat Province) • Discussions with key stakeholders <p><i>TRAVEL: Return to Bangkok</i></p> <p>1) BANGKOK (THAILAND)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunity for further discussions • Debriefing: presentation of field findings at the RECOFTC HQ (teleconference link to Hanoi?) 	
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3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Evaluation Questions

Elaborating on the tentative evaluation questions (EQ) formulated in the ToR, the following main and detailed evaluation questions are proposed. Following good evaluation practice, the number of main evaluation questions has been limited to (a maximum of) 10 questions, touching upon the different evaluation criteria.

Since the evaluation is in fact 'ex-post', the primary focus of data collection and verification is on relevance, effectiveness, impact and sustainability of the programmes, and on lessons learned; less on efficiency. For the latter criterion, findings will be mostly based on secondary sources, notably programme reports and documentation, to be assessed during the desk phase and beginning of the field phase.

As regards integration of and impact by the programmes on human rights, gender equality, reduction of inequalities and climate sustainability, this question will not be reflected separately but addressed as integral part of the evaluation questions, since these themes are expected to be integrated in each of the project activities and phases.

Since MFA has expressed, during the kick-off meeting, an interest in applying a method allowing to grade (score) results across the evaluation criteria - similar to that applied in EC Result Oriented Monitoring (ROM) - the questions are formulated in such way that a score (very good, good, problems, serious deficiencies) can be applied. The use of the evaluation grid (refer Annex 3) is discussed in more detail in section 3.3.

3.1.1 On Relevance

EQ1: To what extent were the programmes consistent with problems and priorities of stakeholders - including Finland's development cooperation objectives and approaches – and of final beneficiaries?

The question looks at relevance at different levels: first, consistency with policies and strategies of the national and/or regional institutions concerned by the project. To what extent did regional forestry ambitions of Finnish cooperation coincide with policies and priorities of the regional institutions implementing the programmes. In this context, it is fundamental to understand the 'intervention logics' underlying the regional approach being advocated, and the associated assumptions and risks.

Secondly, the question explores responsiveness of the programmes to needs and ambitions of local-level stakeholders, including the final beneficiaries.

As part of the relevance question, it is proposed that the evaluation looks into the design of the programmes as well, notably:

EQ2: Was the project design appropriate and realistic to achieve the set objectives?

Is a regional programme a relevant approach to the identified problems? What is the rationale for launching the regional programme? In this context, the mandates and actual authority of the regional institutions leading project implementation are important questions to be explored.

Are the different project components logically connected, coherent and balanced, and were objectives, activities, budgets and timelines realistic, with well-defined milestones?

Were cross-cutting themes (2007 Policy) properly mainstreamed in the design?

The evaluation team will further analyse the intervention logics and results chains underlying the projects. In case these are not available, an attempt will be made to reconstruct intervention logics – based on available documentation – and verify to what extent these have materialised.

3.1.2 On Effectiveness

It is proposed to split the effectiveness question into two, in order to look at both the forestry-related results and those related to the regional dimension of the projects.

EQ3: To what extent have expected results (outputs, outcomes) of the projects, in particular with regard to (1) promoting sustainable forestry-based livelihoods and increased income of small producers; (2) developing value chains and (3) developing retribution mechanisms for ecosystems, materialised?

The evaluation will provide a brief account of main achievements and challenges for each of the three programmes, and answer the question if the projects have achieved their objectives? What have been the constraining or supportive factors? This will primarily draw on available documentation and can – to a fair extent – be completed during the desk phase.

During field work, considering that only a small fraction of the field sites can be visited, the team will probe initial conclusions in a targeted manner. For each of the countries, a list of specific points of attention for country visits and analysis will be prepared, as presented in chapter 2.

EQ4: What value has the regional approach added, in terms of project effectiveness?

This is a central question in the evaluation, which considers outcomes beyond local and country-level results. It assesses how partner organisations have worked together in each of the programmes, in what the ‘*regionality*’ (the regional dimension) of the projects consists, and what can be learned from the regional cooperation. Sub-questions include:

- *Were there any regional cooperation plans assessing regional actors, issues and objectives?*
- *Was there a distinct sectoral focus?*
- *Did the projects promote regional integration?*
- *Did the projects have a specific regional and cross-boundary approach?*
- *Are there regional-level outcomes and impact and is there regional-level ownership?*
- *What was the added value of the regional (compared to a country-based) approach?*

3.1.3 On Efficiency

EQ5: How well did the various activities transform the available resources into the intended results?

The analysis will consider the effects on businesses in the value chains, including small and medium enterprise, and on actors involved in the Payment for Ecosystem Services schemes in the target countries. Have inputs provided generated significant outputs?

At another level: has the regional approach been cost-effective and commensurate instrument for achieving both local, national and regional-level benefits? To the extent possible, the costs and benefits of the regional projects will be put in a wider perspective, and compared to bilateral cooperation approaches with similar objectives, in the past and present.

The question not only looks at Finnish investments but also looks at investments made by other stakeholders, in particular in the private sector involved in the value chains – as a key beneficiary group, as well as the investments made by the regional institutions involved. Have the projects been able to leverage funding?

Furthermore, this question will assess to what extent project management has been flexible and adapting to changing circumstances, in order to ensure continued relevance and effectiveness of project interventions.

3.1.4 On Impact

EQ6: To what extent have overall project objectives been achieved, and to what extent have the regional projects contributed to the achievements?

First, overall objectives of the projects will be analysed, against which the actual material impact can be assessed. Then, the intended and unintended, short- and long-term, positive and negative impacts of the projects, in particular in relation to livelihoods and income, to value chains and to retribution mechanisms for ecosystems will be documented.

The analysis will identify what actors, factors and mechanisms are affecting project impact and success, and which stakeholders have benefited or have not, and through which mechanisms. Projects often cause important 'emergent' outcomes, both positive and negative, that may be as important as the intended outcomes.

At the level of impact, particular attention will be given to the way in which the programmes have impacted on human rights, gender equality, reduction of inequalities and climate sustainability, as cross-cutting themes.

3.1.5 On Sustainability

EQ7: To what extent have the programmes achieved sustainable results, and how has the regional approach affected sustainability?

How likely are the positive outcomes and impact (as documented under 3.1.4) to be sustained and over what timeframe? Do the results require further external support (from Finnish or other donors) and what are the consequences of stopping the Finnish support?

What are the conditions or factors that are central for sustainability of the results, and what linkages or synergies with other bi-lateral or multilateral action exist that can foster the sustenance of the obtained results? What risks and challenges compromise sustainability of results?

3.1.6 On Aid Effectiveness

EQ8: How and to what extent have the regional programmes promoted commitment and ownership by the relevant stakeholders?

The question focuses on alignment of implementation modalities and arrangements with national and regional systems and priorities.

In the context of coordination and complementarity with other development initiatives, the evaluation will also address the question regarding 'Added Value', notably:

EQ9: What has been the added value of Finland's programmes?

Have the regional projects complemented, duplicated or contradicted other Finnish, EU or other donor interventions or policies, and how have such interferences been handled? To what extent did the Finnish action under the regional projects add value to a scenario without any external interventions (counterfactual) or to what would have resulted from other donor interventions in the same context?

3.1.7 On Coherence

EQ10: How has other cooperation between Finland and the concerned countries been taken into account in implementation, and what have been the synergies of the regional programmes with other initiatives, including private sector and civil society cooperation?

The regional forestry approach appears to have good potential for alignment with Finnish development policies as it promotes actions in support of private sector development and economic development. Through sustainable forest management, it also contributes to climate

action and can potentially strengthen good governance, human rights and gender equality. The extent to which this has materialised will be assessed.

In addition, the projects will be put in perspective of the wider external action portfolios, including trade, of Finnish and EU cooperation in the regions. Has there been any synergy with promotion of sustainable trade or with other action in the sphere of climate, gender and human rights?

3.2 Country Selection

In each of the three regions, the evaluation team will visit the country where the main project offices are located. In addition, one to two countries in each regional program have been selected for field study, based on several criteria explained in chapter 2. The following table summarizes the countries selected for field study and the justification for the selection.

Project	Country	Justification
ForInfo (Mekong)	Thailand	Project Headquarters
	Cambodia	Lao and Cambodia provide the most comprehensive picture of project experience, including both positive and negative experience as a basis for a balanced evaluation and lesson learning
	Laos	
Finnfor (Central America)	Costa Rica	Project Headquarters and field project sites
	Nicaragua	Important field activities; feasible in terms of logistics, no special security concerns.
	Guatemala	Covers all project components, less direct monitoring by the implementing organisation due to distance
MFS (Andes)	Peru - Pucallpa	Project Headquarters and clusters of several projects within reasonable travel time.
	Colombia - Andes	Environmental and social conditions resemble tropical forest areas in other parts of the world.

3.3 Data Collection and Analysis

The team will use a combination of tools and methods, both qualitative and quantitative. They include a desk review of available documentation, consultations with relevant partners, stakeholders and resource persons, and an evaluation matrix with a simple grading system to score project performance. Data will be disaggregated by gender and poverty status, where available and appropriate.

In the analysis phase, initial conclusions by regional teams will be confronted with each other, in order to arrive at 'consolidated' conclusions and recommendations for the overall evaluation, using the various sources available.

Hereafter, the main tools and methods are presented.

3.3.1 Evaluation Matrix

The main evaluation questions (and sub-questions) discussed above (section 3.1) structure the evaluation matrix presented in Annex 3. They define the scope and key elements for analysis and provide guidance to the three sub-teams during their desk review and field work, allowing for a harmonised approach to the evaluation across the teams. The draft version in Annex 3 is 'work in progress' and will be finalised upon agreement on the main evaluation questions proposed in this report.

The answers to the evaluation questions are drafted during the desk phase and in the course of the field phase, taking project documentation, empirical data and interviews with stakeholders into account. The questions are intended to be indicative and not limit the scope of the actual evaluation work, which should be tailored to each of the specific situations in the region.

The matrix is a work tool to ensure a degree of objectivity in answering the evaluation questions. The grades attributed to each evaluation criterion are calculated through a combination of grades attributed - by the evaluators - to the sub-questions. This is expected to constitute the basis for systematic drawing of conclusions for each of the projects reviewed, with regard to each of the evaluation criteria.

The grading system included in the template aims to respond to the specific request from MFA, to provide a quick overview of performance of the projects in the various domains. The grading system draws on that used in the so-called 'background conclusion sheet' (version 2010) that used to be applied in the EC Result Oriented Monitoring system, using four grades: (4/green = very good); (3/yellow = good); (2/orange = problems) and (1/red = serious deficiencies).

It may be noted that, in the meantime, the EC has adopted a three-grade scale, namely good or very good (green); 'with problems' (orange) and 'off track' (red). However, the evaluation team is of the opinion that scores using four grades (two 'above the mark', and two 'below the mark') allow for more nuance and precision in qualifying the actual performance. This view was supported by MFA during the kick-off meeting.

3.3.2 Intervention Logics and Results Chains

The project synopses presented in chapter 2 summarise the context and the issues the projects are intended to address, as well as target groups and beneficiaries in a very short manner. They then focus on a description of the intervention logics and results chains (inputs-activities-outputs-outcomes-impacts) underlying the projects. These intervention logics will be a key element guiding the discussions during field work; building a visual aid helps understand the objectives and logic of actions, their underlying assumptions and determine what worked, what did not work and why.

Experts will verify in how far a project-specific intervention logic has been developed, and – linked to that – a performance framework and indicators, and verify the extent to which it worked. The evaluation also looks at relevance and quality of the indicators, at the existence and use of baselines and targets and at data availability. In case a logframe or intervention theory is not available or is of poor quality, this is pointed out. In such situation, the team will try and reconstruct an intervention theory, based on the available documentation.

3.3.3 Outcome Harvesting

Simplified outcome harvesting is a key tool to be used, in order to harvest both expected and unexpected achievements, positive and negative, and non-achievements. It also aims at identifying the underlying mechanisms, actors and factors contributing to the achievements.

This method uses three sources of information, namely the documentation (mostly before the field phase), multi-stakeholder workshops at the start of country-level evaluations, and targeted interviews (during field phase). For reflection on and verification of the achievements, at the end of the project visits a restitution and reflection workshop will be organised (when feasible) with the implementing institution.

3.3.4 Interviews

After the initial multi-stakeholder workshops, interviews will be held to gather in-depth information on the achievements. During these interviews, the achievements harvested (including those identified in the desk phase) are discussed more in-depth. The purpose is threefold, notably (1) to strengthen evidence and identify the relevant information sources, (2)

to analyse the mechanisms, actors and factors involved and 3) discuss the role and contribution of the project to the result in explicit terms.

3.3.5 Restitution and Verification Workshop

At the end of the field visits, the main achievements will be presented, including those found in documentation and those brought forward by the stakeholders. Discussion will focus on the following:

- What are positive achievements and non-achievements all stakeholders agree upon? (claims)
- What are negative achievements and non-achievements all stakeholders agree upon they need to change? (concerns)
- What are the achievements /non-achievements that provoke differing opinions (issues)?
- What do these achievements mean for future cooperation and further programming?

4. WORK PLAN AND TASK DIVISION

4.1 Main Activities and Phasing

The evaluation will be conducted between June and October 2017, in three phases; (1) Inception and country desk work, (2) Implementation, field work, and global analysis, and (3) Reporting and dissemination. The rationale and sequence of the main activities in each of the three phases is presented hereafter. The planning of the main activities in each of the three phases is presented in the work plan in Annex 2.

4.1.1 Inception and Desk Study

The inception phase started with a kick-off meeting with the MFA on 12th of June 2017. Key points discussed during the meeting are presented in Annex 4. A second meeting between the team and the MFA is foreseen for July 5th, in which the inception report will be presented and discussed, ahead of the start of the field phase. During the inception phase, available documentation was received rather late and the time for desk study was limited to two weeks only. Therefore, initial analysis is limited (refer chapter 2) and desk review work will continue in the field phase.

At the same time, preparations for the field phase have started, including collection of stakeholder contacts for each of the projects, establishment of contacts with the various projects and agreement on tentative mission planning.

4.1.2 Fieldwork Phase

In the field phase, the desk review work will be continued and finalised. The team will split into three sub-teams to carry out field work in each of the three regions, with support from (inter-)national and local evaluators, as need be. Building on the initial analysis presented in chapter 2, the team will prepare 'briefing notes' for each of the projects, which outline the preliminary findings, including strengths and weaknesses, and confirm the specific issues to be looked into in particular during the field phase. The relevant stakeholder groups and resource persons to be interviewed or visited during the field visit are identified.

Ahead of field missions, the team will have a joint 'methodology day' (in Helsinki) aimed at arriving at a common understanding of tools and methods to be used during the field phase, and at exchanging all relevant information within the team.

During field phase, the sub-teams will collect and analyse data using methods and tools described in chapter 3.3. They will be back-stopped by the Team Leader so as to ensure methodological oversight throughout the process. Within one week following the field mission, each sub-team provides a concise written report of the mission in an agreed format, in order to facilitate answering of the key evaluation questions during the reporting phase

In some countries, such as Guatemala, an international consultant based in the country will be hired to help identify key stakeholders in the country and support the team during field work.

4.1.3 Reporting Phase

Upon completion of the field missions and ahead of report drafting, core team members (Egger Topper, Raisa Venäläinen, James Gasana, Petra Mikkolainen and Jussi Viding) will meet in Helsinki for a two days' internal analysis workshop aimed at arriving at main conclusions.

The senior experts will then provide their inputs in the various sections of the report and a draft report will be submitted to MFA by September 15th. Towards the end of this phase, a meeting will be held with MFA – tentatively on 28th September - to discuss the report and any outstanding issues ahead of finalisation of the draft final report.

4.2 Team Composition and Labour Division

The team comprises six core team members, divided into three sub-teams to cover each of the three regions. The team is supported by three evaluators based in the project countries, logistical support services and one person for quality control.

The team leader leads the overall evaluation process and leads evaluation of the Finnfor II project in Central America, supported by an emerging evaluator, Marian Meller. An international emerging evaluator, Maija Peltola, will be recruited to facilitate the evaluation at country level in Guatemala.

James Gasana, Senior Consultant, leads the evaluation of the MFS program in the Andes region, supported by emerging evaluator Petra Mikkolainen. A local evaluator will be recruited to facilitate the evaluation at the country level in Colombia.

Raisa Venäläinen leads the evaluation of the ForInfo project in the Mekong region, with support from emerging evaluator, Jussi Viding and a local evaluator in case of need.

5. MANAGEMENT OF THE CONTRACT

5.1 Inputs by Team Members

The total amount of man-days planned for this assignment is 269 which includes a total of 140 senior-level days (Team Leader, Senior Evaluator and Quality Management). The table below provides details of each expert's estimated level of effort.

Below table indicates the level of effort of each expert during the evaluation.

Name	Staff input (days)
Team Leader - Egger Topper / Central America	56
Emerging Evaluator - Marian Meller / Central America	25.5
Emerging Evaluator – Maija Peltola / Central America (Guatemala)	5
Senior Consultant - James Gasana / Andes	41
Emerging Evaluator - Petra Mikkolainen / Andes	45.5
National Evaluators - South America (Colombia)	7
Senior Consultant - Raisa Venäläinen / Mekong	38
Emerging Evaluator - Jussi Viding / Mekong	33
National Evaluators – Mekong (tbc)	7
Support Services	6
Quality management – Georg Ladj	5
TOTAL SENIOR LEVEL	140
TOTAL CONSULTANT WORK DAYS	269

Annex 2 (work plan) provides details on the level of effort of each expert in the different stages of implementation of the assignment.

5.2 Reporting

Following approval of the Inception Report, the next reporting instances are:

- Presentation on the field findings
- Draft final report
- Final report.

The field findings will be presented in the form of short country mission reports, to be prepared according to a standardised format. This format should allow synthesising main findings by country, as well as initial conclusions and recommendations.

These will constitute the basis for a team workshop, by the end of August, in which the sub-teams gather to share their findings and initial conclusions, so as to arrive at overall conclusions concerning the evaluation. Based on these overall conclusions, recommendations will be formulated.

A draft final report of the evaluation will be submitted to the MFA by mid-September. It will combine findings of the desk study and the field work. The MFA will submit comments to the report within one week.

The final report shall be submitted to the MFA in two weeks after receiving the comments on the draft final report.

A presentation on the evaluation findings will be limited to an MFA-internal audience.

5.3 Quality Control

The internal QA System put in place will ensure that the evaluation of the regional programs as well as the evaluation as a whole are implemented in a timely manner, with rigor and impartiality, respecting MFA's evaluation principles and standards, including ethical standards.

The specific standards and manuals guiding the technical quality of this evaluation include:

- DAC Guidelines and Reference Series Quality Standards for Development Evaluation
- Evaluation report quality checklist (OECD/DAC and EU standards)
- Result Based Management in Finland's development cooperation
- MFA Evaluation Manual.

The OECD evaluation standards are applied in the actual evaluation work but they also provide the framework for quality assurance work either by in-house quality assurance people.

Annex 1

Terms of Reference for the Evaluation

Annex 2

Workplan

Annex 3

Evaluation Matrix

EVALUATION MATRIX - FINNISH REGIONAL FORESTRY EVALUATION - INDUFOR (FIRST DRAFT - WORK IN PROGRESS)

June 2017

1. RELEVANCE AND QUALITY OF PROJECT DESIGN

Project title	FinnFor		
Region	Central America	Country	Costa Rica
Evaluator	Egger TOPPER	Date	18.6.2017

Relevance: The consistency of project objectives with the problems, needs and priorities of the stakeholders including all final beneficiaries (relevance at beneficiary level), to the policy environment (strategic relevance) within which it operated, and with Finland's development policy. The quality of design is also analysed as a key factor contributing to relevance.

The analysis should facilitate comparison between the relevance at the time of formulation and the current (ex-post) relevance.

Prime issues	PERFORMANCE CONCLUSION				Always to be added	
	a=4	b=3	c=2	d=1	Weighting	
1.1 What was the level of relevance of the project to Finnish and partner government policies, during its lifetime and today? <i>Were the project objectives consistent with Partner Government(s) policies? (If applicable, specify if they were focused on policy changes). Would it still be so today?</i> <i>In case of NGO/CSO involvement: was the project coherent with NGO/CSO strategies in the area/sector?</i> <i>Are objectives consistent with Finland's development policy in the concerned field? Would it still be so today?</i>	●	●	●	●	Weighting	30 %
kjkih kj k						
1.2 Did the project (and does it still) respond to needs of key stakeholders, including final beneficiaries? <i>Were key stakeholders involved in the design process and were their concerns properly reflected?</i> <i>Were coordination, management and financing arrangements clearly defined and did they support institutional strengthening and local ownership?</i>	●	●	●	●	Weighting	30 %
2.1 Was the design of the project appropriate and realistic for achievement of the set objectives? <i>Briefly describe the project intervention logics, notably the linkages between levels of intervention (community-country-region) and to the sector institutional and policy level.</i> <i>Did any intervention theory or log-frame exist and was it used? If not, why not?</i> <i>Were the (overall and specific) objectives and results clear and logically connected?</i> <i>Was the objective achievable within the project timeframe and were the planned activities and outcomes appropriate to achieve the objective?</i> <i>Were indicators defined and suitable (were they Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound)?</i> <i>Were the risks and assumptions identified and managed?</i> <i>Was sustainability integrated in the design i.e. was there a phase out/hand over strategy?</i> <i>Were any changes made to the project design? If yes, did they contribute to significant design improvements?</i> <i>Was the proposed institutional set-up appropriate, considering roles and mandates of local, national, regional-and international partners, and were implementing modalities appropriate? (composition steering committee and country-based program staff, role of the government).</i> <i>Was the proposed institutional set-up appropriate, considering roles and mandates of local, national, regional-and</i>	●	●	●	●	Weighting	30 %
2.2 Did the project design sufficiently take cross-cutting objectives into account? <i>Were the relevant cross-cutting issues (promotion and enjoyment of human rights and gender equality, reduction of inequalities and promotion of climate sustainability) integrated into project design?</i>	●	●	●	●	Weighting	10 %
<p>Note: a = (very) good; b = satisfactory; c = problems; d = serious deficiencies.</p> <p>Overall conclusion: 2,20 C</p> <p>For LESSONS LEARNED AND OTHER OBSERVATIONS, use worksheet "Lessons".</p>						

Annex 4

Meeting notes - MFA and evaluation team

Notes – Kick-off meeting

Date: 12 June 2017

Place: Helsinki, Finland

Participants: Annika Kaipola (MFA), Sanna Takala (MFA), Gunilla Kullberg (MFA), Egger Topper (Indufor), Jussi Viding (Indufor), Petra Mikkolainen (Indufor)

Notes endorsed by Minna Hares on 22 June 2017.

- MFA to provide all the available documentation on the projects in the coming days.
- MFA will provide background materials on the policy to implement regional cooperation (if any, in addition to the Finnish development cooperation policies).
- MFA will prepare an introduction letter to the team at its earliest convenience for the experts to start organizing the field missions.
- Next deliverable will be the Inception Report due on Friday 30 June 2017.
- A feedback session on the inception report will be held at the MFA on 5 July at 10 am.
 - Egger will attend in person.
 - Jussi will be out of the country during that week. We propose to invite Raisa Venäläinen to the meeting to have an expert from each sub-team present in the meeting.
 - The revised Inception report to be approved as soon as possible after the meeting.
- The draft final report is due by 15 September 2017.
- After the presentation of the draft final report and after MFA has had time to comment on it, a meeting will be organized in Helsinki with Egger's presence to discuss the report. We propose to hold the meeting on Thursday 28 September.
- There will be no final public presentation, only an internal debriefing between the team and MFA staff.
- Besides the objective to learn lessons on forestry interventions, a key purpose of the evaluation is to learn about the added value of regional approach.
- Evaluation team to apply a simple scoring system to facilitate a meta evaluation at a later stage.

Notes - Inception meeting

Place: MFA

Time: 5th July 2017

Participants: Gunilla Gulberg, Minna Hares, Sanna Takala, Petra Mikkolainen, and Egger Topper.

Notes endorsed by Minna Hares on 6th July 2017.

Practical issues:

- MFA will send the translated TOR to the evaluation team by 27th July
- Petra will translate the introduction letter

Comments on the Inception Report:

- MFA is happy with the quality of the Inception Report including evaluation questions, focus on results chains, and outcome harvesting methodology.
- Intervention logics: Analysis on assumptions to be deepened in particular for Finnfor and ForInfo projects, and make the regional dimension more explicit. This can be undertaken at the beginning of the field phase, and shared between the team members before traveling to the field.
- The evaluation should also look at how well the programs managed to adapt to changing situations and not only evaluate against what was planned (adaptive management considered as a positive quality).
- Weighting in the evaluation matrix to be further refined by the evaluation team.
- As part of EQ9: The MFA confirmed that they are interested in understanding what was the added value of Finland being there compared to no donor intervention. Could these results have been achieved even without external funding?
- The evaluation is expected to produce recommendations not only to the MFA but also to the partner organization to the benefit of future programming.
- The MFA confirmed that they are not in favor of paying beneficiary organizations for facilitating the evaluation.
- Gunilla to provide contacts of MFA staff who have worked as Finnfor desk officer.
- The evaluation team should further develop the ways in which the collected data will be analysed.
- EQ7: Include risks and challenges to sustainability.
- ForInfo: Debriefing discussion could be organized in the embassy in Bangkok. Consider for mission planning and contact Minna first who will liaise with the embassy. Participation of colleagues from Helsinki can be set up through video link or Skype.
- Calendar: Deadline of final outputs can be delayed by maximum two weeks.
- Formal approval of the inception report upon reception of revised version including minutes of the inception meeting.
- Payment will be processed by Minna's replacement in due time.

Annex 5

Draft Outline Final Report

Draft Outline Final Report

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Overview of the report, main findings, conclusions, recommendations and lessons learnt
- Summary table of main findings, conclusions and recommendations and their linkages
 - Relevance: findings – conclusions – recommendations
 - Impact: findings – conclusions – recommendations
 - Effectiveness: findings – conclusions – recommendations
 - Efficiency: findings – conclusions – recommendations
 - Sustainability: findings – conclusions – recommendations
 - Etc.

INTRODUCTION

- Evaluation's rationale, purpose and objectives, scope and main evaluation questions

DESCRIPTION OF THE CONTEXT AND THE EVALUATED PROJECT/PROGRAMME

- Context description and its influence on the performance of the programmes.
- Introduction of the intervention being evaluated: objectives including the cross-cutting objectives, implementation strategies, resources for implementation.
- Introduction of the stakeholders and their roles, including both final beneficiaries and involved institutions

KEY FINDINGS

- Empirical data, facts, evidence relevant to the indicators of the evaluation questions.
- Overall progress in the implementation.
- Findings by evaluation criteria / issue (e.g. Relevance, Impact, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Sustainability)

CONCLUSIONS

- The evaluators' assessment of the performance of the project/programme based on the findings in relation to the set evaluation criteria, performance standards or policy issues (e.g. Relevance, Impact, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Sustainability)

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Proposed improvements, changes, action to remedy problems in performance or to capitalise on strengths. Recommendations are based on the findings and conclusions. There should be a clear indication of
 - to whom is the recommendation directed (MFA, partner institutions, consultant providing support services, etc.)
 - who is responsible for implementing the recommendation, and
 - when the recommendation should be implemented.

LESSONS LEARNED

- Are there any general conclusions that have the potential for wider application and use?

ANNEXES

- the ToR
- description of the evaluation methodology used
- limitations of the study
- lists of information sources e.g. people interviewed, documents reviewed, etc.
- quality assurance statement produced by the quality assurance mechanism used
- 1-2-page evaluation brief for communicating the evaluation results, including
 - the key message of the evaluation,
 - who has benefitted and what are the most important positive results,
 - any unexpected impacts,
 - key recommendations and lessons learned.

Annex 6

Overview of the MFS projects"

Nº	País	ED	Tipo (PP proyecto piloto, EF estudio de factibilidad)	Tema	Componente	Nombre corto de la innovación (Informe Anual 2015)	Título del proyecto en el POA 2014-2015	Ubicación	Contacto	Correo electrónico	Página en el Catálogo de INNOVACIONES, ver Google Drive	URL de la ficha
1	Bolivia	FUNABO	EF	RSE- A/R	1?	Acuerdos Recíprocos Ambientales	Vida sustentable de los bosques de El Choré: un proyecto piloto de mitigación y adaptación al cambio climático para beneficiar al sindicato de Nueva América y un grupo indígena guaraní en El Recreo.	El Choré, Santa Cruz	María Teresa Vargas			http://www.forestalsostenibleandina.net/CMSPages/GetFile.aspx?guid=a700fa88-968e-4d14-90d2-2764b38431b3 http://www.forestalsostenibleandina.net/CMSPages/GetFile.aspx?guid=f1a30454-4f16-48e4-9b97-31f9b84012a
2	Bolivia	FTE	PP	VA	1	Gestora Comercial	Gestora Comercial: Acceso a mercados de productos maderables y no maderables de Bolivia.	Santa Cruz, Beni, Pando y Norte de La Paz	Rene Salomón Vargas			http://www.forestalsostenibleandina.net/CMSPages/GetFile.aspx?guid=8ec68dfb-fa47-44d7-b154-37187935d209 http://www.forestalsostenibleandina.net/CMSPages/GetFile.aspx?guid=7e45b8a-4f01-bc96-280728c4644e
3	Colombia	FN	EF	VA	1	Certificación de pequeñas plantaciones forestales	Fortalecimiento de procesos de sostenibilidad en pequeñas empresas forestales en la región Uraba mediante la implementación de la certificación forestal voluntaria	Urabá, Antioquia	Elsa Matilde Escobar			http://www.forestalsostenibleandina.net/CMSPages/GetFile.aspx?guid=5d37e190-b2fb-4afd-94ce-2f179319f650
4	Colombia	AG	EF	RSE-A/R	1	Mecanismo de retribución por servicios hídricos y mitigación de cambio climático en cuencas	Pago por servicios eco sistémicos (PSE/REDD+) para el manejo forestal sostenible de la cuenca del río Guarino, (Departamentos de Caldas y Tolima) Colombia.	Caldas y Tolima	Doralice Ortiz			http://www.forestalsostenibleandina.net/CMSPages/GetFile.aspx?guid=487a6145-84c1-40bc-977e-997418b0e527
5	Colombia	C&B	EF	RSE-CC	2	Proyecto agrupado de carbono en sistemas agroforestales	Recuperación de áreas degradadas con sistemas agroforestales en Colombia (proyecto agrupado VCS internacional)	Necocli	William Laguado			11 Enlace erroneo
6	Colombia	CM	PP	VA	2	Azul natural de exportación, a partir de la Jagua	Generación alternativas económicas a comunidades indígenas de Chigorodó, Colombia mediante el fortalecimiento de la gobernanza, la diversificación productiva y la certificación forestal voluntaria.	Chigorodó, Antioquia	Gustavo Adolfo Rojas			http://www.forestalsostenibleandina.net/CMSPages/GetFile.aspx?guid=4bbca9df-e60f-4dd3-b57c-f28ca6bd9b21
7	Colombia	CORPOGUAVIO	PP	RSE-CC	1	Aplicativo para el monitoreo participativo de carbono	Diseño e Implementación de un Sistema de Monitoreo, Reporte y Verificación para el Carbono Forestal, dirigido a Proyectos bajo el esquema de REDD.	Ubalá, Gachalá y Medina, Cundinamarca	Marcos Urquijo			18 Enlace erroneo
8	Colombia	CPA	PP	MFC	1	Modelo de restauración y uso turístico	Establecimiento de un centro de cultivo de especies ornamentales nativas para beneficiar familias campesinas en Santa Elena (Antioquia). Proyecto piloto de conservación, restauración y uso.	Antioquia	Martha Elena Llano Serna			http://www.forestalsostenibleandina.net/CMSPages/GetFile.aspx?guid=dbe50b36-1121-4058-afeb-1183d4f8d200
9	Colombia	UT	EF	VA	1	Comercialización participativa indígena	Explotación de otras formas de aprovechamiento de los recursos del bosque que contribuyan al desarrollo sostenible de la región y la gobernabilidad del Consejo Comunitario del Río Cajambre	Cuenca del Río Cajambre, Buenaventura, Valle del Cauca	Hugo Martínez Higuera			http://www.forestalsostenibleandina.net/CMSPages/GetFile.aspx?guid=8425869-a783-487f-a3ba-855410e0f91
10	Colombia	FEDERACAFE	PP	VA	2	Toboganes para aprovechamiento de plantaciones forestales en zonas andinas	Implementación de toboganes long-line de tecnología alemana para el aprovechamiento asociativo en sistemas agroforestales con café en altas pendientes del departamento de Risaralda	Risaralda	Norberto Rincón			http://www.forestalsostenibleandina.net/CMSPages/GetFile.aspx?guid=6b6d72e0-aa01-480e-853b-c3b0e8d564fd
11	Ecuador	RUNA	PP	VA	2	Guayusa: de la tradición a la exportación sostenible	Eliminación de cuellos de botellas para el fortalecimiento de la cadena forestal de guayusa	Tena, Napo	Elliot Logan-Hines			http://www.forestalsostenibleandina.net/CMSPages/GetFile.aspx?guid=2a5293fe-db89-4c9e-b691-831495af11c6 http://www.forestalsostenibleandina.net/CMSPages/GetFile.aspx?guid=2a5293fe-db89-4c9e-b691-831495af11c6
12	Ecuador/region andina?	WWF	PP	RSE-A/R	1	Incentivos para restauración de bosques	Restauración de áreas degradadas como estrategia de manejo forestal sustentable para mejorar la conectividad en el Corredor Ecológico Llanganates - Sangay (CELS)-Ecuador. Innovación del manejo forestal a través de la valoración de prácticas y saberes tradicionales y la generación de instrumentos para la implementación de proyectos forestales a nivel de municipios	Cantones Baños, Mera y Pastaza; Provincias de Tungurahua y Pastaza	Rafael Yunda			http://www.forestalsostenibleandina.net/CMSPages/GetFile.aspx?guid=3f1a5775-b5b3-45b0-9620-0adc2e757ba7 http://www.forestalsostenibleandina.net/CMSPages/GetFile.aspx?guid=48288c31-8b19-49b8-a835-b0b57b8921d
13	Ecuador/Perú	ECOPAR	EF	MFC	1	Revalorización saberes ancestrales	Innovaciones financieras sostenibles para mejorar la rentabilidad en el uso de bienes y servicios de los bosques de comunidades indígenas en la Reserva Comunal El Sira - Perú	Sucumbios y Morona Santiago, Ancash (Perú)	Didier Sánchez			57 Enlace erroneo
14	Perú	ASESORANDES	EF	VA	1	Fideicomiso de productos y servicios forestales	Innovaciones financieras sostenibles para mejorar la rentabilidad en el uso de bienes y servicios de los bosques de comunidades indígenas en la Reserva Comunal El Sira - Perú	Reserva Comunal El Sira, Pasco y Huánuco	Roberto Persival Neofol Atanasio	• Neofol Atanasio, coordinador de proyecto neoven@gmail.com		17 Enlace erroneo
15	Perú	CEDISA	EF	RSE-A/R	1	Mecanismo de servicios ambientales para agua potable y riego	Pago por servicios ambientales hídricos para la conservación de bosque y alivio a la pobreza, Región San Martín	San Martín	Martha del Castillo			http://www.forestalsostenibleandina.net/CMSPages/GetFile.aspx?guid=2e2d4883-0419-46f6-bc1c-2f5f5ac85f3
16	Perú	DAR	EF	MFC	1	Planes de Manejo Forestal diversificado	Mejorando los procesos de los PGMF y POAs e incorporando REDD y No Maderable incrementamos la rentabilidad forestal	Pucallpa, Ucayali	Isabel Gonzales	dar@dar.org.pe Sigue en DAR igonzales@dar.org.pe		http://www.forestalsostenibleandina.net/CMSPages/GetFile.aspx?guid=5c307c7b-92c8-4e18-8557-3cf813793c30
17	Perú	PATS	PP	VA	1	Biojoyería con comunidades nativas	Biojoyería para el Palcazu, una alternativa de uso de productos maderables y no maderables para agregar mayor valor al bosque y generar empleo en CCNN.	Palcazu y Oxapampa, Pasco	William Romani			http://www.forestalsostenibleandina.net/CMSPages/GetFile.aspx?guid=4d91362c-6b16-481e-af8f-0c76ecd6857d http://www.forestalsostenibleandina.net/CMSPages/GetFile.aspx?guid=8ea2b58f-b3ee-4a2e-b445-39aed963d463
18	Perú	NCI	EF	RSE-A/R	1	Fondo de agua para agricultura, conservando bosques andinos y páramos	Asegurando la provisión de agua en las cabeceras de cuenca de la región Piura: establecimiento de un fondo ambiental para la gestión participativa de ecosistemas andinos.	Pacaipampa y Ayabaca, Piura	Paul I Viñas			http://www.forestalsostenibleandina.net/CMSPages/GetFile.aspx?guid=1ba88441-d041-43be-a927-37b485faf785 http://www.forestalsostenibleandina.net/CMSPages/GetFile.aspx?guid=3a1d1096-0cc1-4d7b-b13a-0c819c762e31
19	Perú/región andina?	PN	EF	RSE-CC	2	Proyecto agrupado de carbono en sistemas agroforestales	Plantando para el futuro: sistemas agroforestales financieramente sostenibles y pago por servicios ambientales	Maynas, Loreto	Lady Cotrina			http://www.forestalsostenibleandina.net/CMSPages/GetFile.aspx?guid=58a00197-26c3-4db8-9e3c-1505368ce105
20	Perú	AIDER	EF	RSE-A/R	2	Mecanismo de restauración de bosques con ecoturismo	Modelo Sostenible para la restauración de áreas degradadas en la comunidad nativa Ese Eja Infierno en la Región Madre de Dios	Comunidad de Infierno, Madre de Dios	Jaime Navarte			http://www.forestalsostenibleandina.net/CMSPages/GetFile.aspx?guid=1a71c1cc-0f83-4296-a0f1-5e80139e071a
21	Perú	AIDER	EF	RSE-CC	1	REDD+ en Bosques Secos	Mejorando capacidades locales para elaborar proyectos REDD en ecosistemas de bosque seco	Piura y Lambayeque	Marioldy Sánchez			http://www.forestalsostenibleandina.net/CMSPages/GetFile.aspx?guid=9b7cfb4a-1a21-45cd-b3a3-c0738ed62f7d
22	Perú	Reforesta	PP	VA	2	Tecnología de plantaciones forestales	Innovación tecnológica, servicios ambientales y capacitación en plantaciones forestales en tierras degradadas en la Amazonia Peruana	Coronel Portillo, Ucayali	Enrique Toledo	etoledo@reforestaperu.com.pe		http://www.forestalsostenibleandina.net/CMSPages/GetFile.aspx?guid=2d1a94d3-7bce-4fe7-b946-522d9a1a8917
23	Perú	SP	EF	VA	2	Certificación de sostenibilidad climática para café	Viabilidad de alternativas de certificación de carbono en sistema agroforestales a pequeña escala para mercados voluntarios	Lamas y Moyobamba, San Martín	Jorge Elliot	vera@snvworld.org Ahora en Microsol https://www.linkedin.com/in/rodrigo-vera-ram%C3%ADrez-79a33047/?ppe=1		21 Enlace erroneo
24	Perú	SNV	EF	VA	1	Sistemas financieros para el sector forestal	Generando oportunidades de inversión para el sector forestal sostenible	Loreto, Ucayali, Madre de Dios y Lima	Rodrigo Vera			http://www.forestalsostenibleandina.net/CMSPages/GetFile.aspx?guid=55e867c5-e6d6-45b1-8b2c-0aca19abb868

Indufor Oy

Esterinportti 2
FI-00240 Helsinki
FINLAND
Tel. +358 50 331 8217
Fax +358 9 135 2552
indufor@indufor.fi
www.indufor.fi

Indufor Asia Pacific Ltd

7th Floor, 55
Shortland St
PO Box 105 039
Auckland City 1143
NEW ZEALAND
Tel. +64 9 281 4750
Fax +64 9 281 4789
www.indufor-ap.com

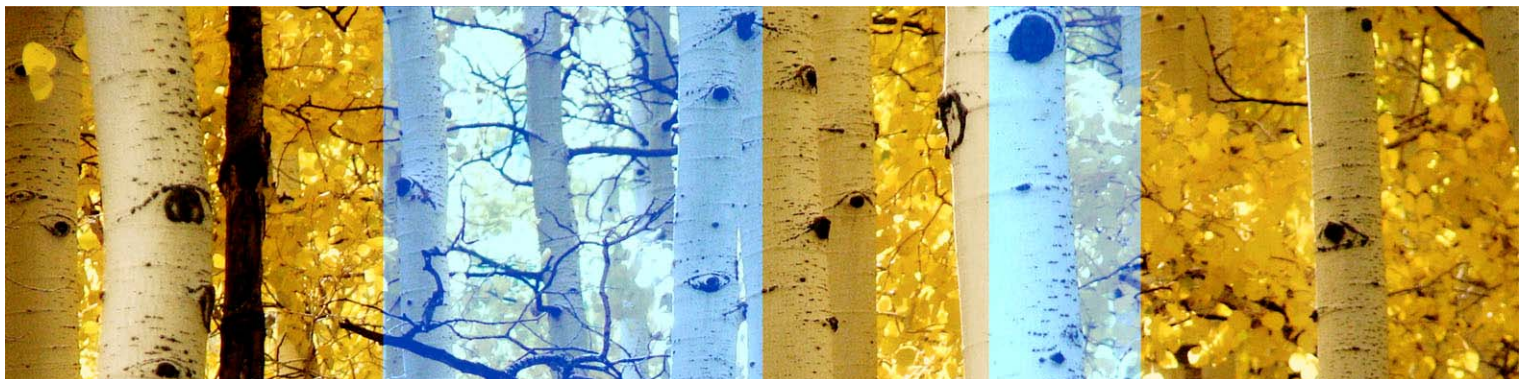
Indufor Asia Pacific (Australia) Pty Ltd

PO Box 425
Flinders Lane, Melbourne VIC 8009
AUSTRALIA
Tel. + 61 3 9639 1472

www.indufor-ap.com

Indufor North America LLC

1875 Connecticut Avenue, NW
10th floor
Washington, DC 20009 USA
www.indufor-na.com





Annex 3

Detailed methodology

1. Introduction.....	2
2. On results chains and logical frameworks.....	2
3. On the regional dimension ('regionality')	4
4. On sustainable forestry-based livelihoods	5
5. On forestry value chains.....	7
6. On Payment for environmental services (PES).....	9
7. On cross-cutting themes	10

1. Introduction

This annex describes in detail the methodological tools that were applied during the evaluation.

2. On results chains and logical frameworks

As part of the evaluation, evaluators will analyse the intervention logics (results chains) and logical framework matrices (logframes) as and when available, as a basis for analysis and recommendations. When they do not exist, or are of poor quality, we point this out and try to reconstruct them.

The logframe provides a synthetic overview, but it should not lead to concealing the complexity of the project; evaluators should review the overall project or programme, and not be limited by a logframe.

The table below contains a typical logframe template, as included in many project documents (in this case, of the EC). The table shows both (part of) the results chain (in the left column) and the indicators, baselines and targets that apply to the different levels of results (outputs-outcomes-impact).

Table 1. Logical Framework template

	Intervention logic	Indicators	Baselines	Targets	Sources and means of verification	Assumptions
Overall objective: Impact	The broader, long-term change which will stem from a number of interventions by the partner government and development partners, which the donor-funded action will (indirectly) influence	Measures the long-term change at country or sector level. For example, literacy rate disaggregated by sex. However, it is normally not appropriate for the project itself to try and collect this information	Ideally drawn from the partner's strategy	Ideally drawn from the partner's strategy	To be drawn from the partner's strategy.	
Specific objective: Outcome	The medium-term effects of the action which tend to focus on the changes in behaviour resulting from project/ programme outputs. The donor-funded action will contribute to these changes	Measures the change in factors determining the outcome. For example, number of children enrolled/completing school disaggregated by sex	Starting point or current value of the indicator	The intended value of the indicator	Sources of information and methods used to collect and report (including who and when/how frequently)	Factors outside project management's control that may impact on the outcome-impact linkage

Outputs	The direct/tangible outputs (infrastructure, goods and services) delivered by the action. These can be controlled directly and as such can be linked to the donor-funded assistance	Measures the degree of delivery of the outputs. For example, number of schools built, and teachers trained disaggregated by sex	Idem as above for the corresponding indicator	Idem as above for the corresponding indicator	Idem as above for the corresponding indicator	Factors outside project management's control that may impact on the output-outcome linkage
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The evaluators will analyse the quality and relevance of the results chain, on the one hand, and of the indicators, the baselines and monitoring systems in place, on the other.

It may happen that a different format from the one presented above, or a different terminology is used. In such case, evaluators ensure that the key elements of the above table are well identified and taken into account for conclusions to be drawn from the evaluation.

3. On the regional dimension ('regionality')

With regard to the forestry sector, the Finnish development policy guidelines for forest sector (2008) stipulate that *'the forest sector development cooperation is targeted regionally according to the needs and demand at the country or regional level. More attention will be paid to the implementation of international forest related policy processes at the country level. In this work, regional thematic cooperation will play an even more significant role'*.

The experts will assess the nature and added value of the regional dimension in the three projects covered by the assignment by reflecting on the following aspects of multi-country operations.

Regional programmes have gained increasing support among donors, multi-lateral organizations and banks in the past few decades given the increased challenges that extend beyond national borders, such as environmental disasters (e.g. OVE 2011; IEG 2007). In addition to providing cross-boundary solutions through regional integration, multi-country programmes are expected to increase efficiency and overall aid effectiveness of the operations.

Key questions are:

- Did the project offer **additional benefits** to a country from coordinated approach with other countries?¹
- What were those benefits? For example, did the project intend to undertake one or more **development objectives in three or more countries** involving **cooperation** or **integration** among the participating countries?
- If the main objective of the regional cooperation was **knowledge sharing**, how was learning measured (e.g. new contacts or knowledge obtained, application of new knowledge at work, or through other indicators)?

The World Bank publication *The Development Potential of Regional Programs – An Evaluation of World Bank Support of Multicountry Operations (2007)* defines a regional program as an “**undertaking intended to accomplish one or more development objectives in three or more countries** in the same Bank Region or contiguous Regions, and that **involves cooperation or integration among the participating countries**. The Bank supports two broad types of programs: regional projects, which are of **fixed duration** and financed by loans, credits, or grants, and regional partnerships, which tend to be **open-ended** and are entirely grant-financed”.

Furthermore, the IEG (2007) evaluation outlines five key design features that are key for successful implementation of regional interventions.

1. **Strong country commitment to regional cooperation requires attention to the political economy of relations among countries to gain their acceptance of the obligations involved in acting cooperatively.** Building strong country commitment has been impeded in many programs by inadequate assessment of program costs and benefits for individual countries and by lack of a regional platform for resolving intercountry conflicts of interests.
2. **The scope of objectives has to match national and regional capacities for regional programs to deal effectively** with the complex coordination challenges in the implementation of their activities.
3. **Clear delineation and coordination of the roles of national and regional institutions** has proved crucial to the implementation of program activities and the sustainability of outcomes. What has generally worked best is reliance on national institutions for execution and implementation of program interventions at the country level, and on regional institutions for supportive services that cannot be performed efficiently by national agencies, such as

¹ Office of Evaluation and Oversight (OVE) of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) (2011) has used the term “transnational project” in its Evaluation of Regional Programs: “a project is transnational if there are additional benefits to a country from having a coordinated approach with other countries. For instance, a single housing project or a housing project replicated in a few countries would not be transnational, as the nature of the problem is such that it can be efficiently tackled at a national level. By contrast, the protection of biodiversity in a multi-country area (e.g. Central America) would in principle be transnational, as no individual country could reap the same benefits acting alone”.

coordination, data gathering, technical assistance, dispute resolution, and monitoring and evaluation.

4. **Accountable governance arrangements** take time to establish but are essential to gaining country ownership.
5. **Planning for sustainability of program outcomes** after external support ends has not been done consistently across regional programs. In a number of cases, countries have absorbed the cost of national-level activities, but they have shown little interest in paying for continued regional level activities.

References:

Independent Evaluation Group (IEG) (2007) The Development Potential of Regional Programs – An Evaluation of World Bank Support of Multicountry Operations. The World Bank Group. Retrieved from: http://siteresources.worldbank.org/EXTREGPROPAR/Resources/reg_pgms_full.pdf

Office of Evaluation and Oversight OVE (2011) APPROACH PAPER: EVALUATION OF REGIONAL PROGRAMS AT THE IDB Office of Evaluation and Oversight, OVE Inter-American Development Bank. Retrieved from: https://publications.iadb.org/bitstream/handle/11319/5525/Approach_paper_Evaluation_of_Regional_Programs_at_the_IDB%5b1%5d.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

4. On sustainable forestry-based livelihoods

The Finnish development policy guidelines for forest sector (2008) describe the principles of the Finnish forest sector development policy and cooperation at the time when the three projects under review were formulated. These guidelines - which support the operationalisation of the Development Policy Programme, as stipulated in Government Resolution 2007 – specify that the main objective of the Finnish forest sector development policy was *to strengthen the conditions for sustainable forest management and thus achieve fair economic growth, reduce poverty and prevent environmental hazards*. This objective is in line with the current Development Policy Programme of 2012 which recognises the role of forests as an important factor in enhancing development and wellbeing through green economy and sustainable use of natural resources.

Fair economic growth and reduced poverty are therefore key elements in the overall objective of forestry sector cooperation. Nevertheless, demonstrating real progress in poverty reduction has been found to be problematic in the Finnish forest sector development cooperation. According to the MFA-commissioned *'Background study on poverty indicators in forest sector development cooperation interventions'* (Indufor, June 2012) sustainable forest management (SFM) rarely improves the livelihoods of the poor instantly or as a single approach, especially in terms of improving the economic status. Instead, SFM often aims at outcomes that are protective, indirect or postponed in their nature. Therefore, SFM should be complemented with capacity building in sustainable forestry, or other income generation activities, if people are to rise out from poverty.

The study proposes adoption of a Sustainable livelihoods approach (SLA) which takes into account the multidimensional nature of poverty and the wide range of actors and factors that cause or contribute to it. The SLA comprises an analysis of various capital assets that are a key to human well-being, including natural, human, social, physical and financial assets (Figure 1); to which political assets (claim-making power) are sometimes added as well. These assets determine livelihood strategies and outcomes, and are at the same time an outcome of these strategies.

The capital assets are also determined by policies and institutions. This is where (donor-funded) project interventions typically come into play, as they impact upon policies and institutions, both in the public and private sector. Application of this analytical framework allows us to visualise and analyse how the Finnish forestry project interventions contribute to changes in policies and institutions, and thereby impact upon the capital assets of families and communities and, ultimately, upon livelihood strategies and outcomes.

In line with the conclusions from this study, the evaluation will look at the following questions in particular:

1. Did the project contribute to producing positive livelihood outcomes? If so, which type of outcomes (sustainable use of natural resources, income, well-being; reduced vulnerability, food security)?
2. Which capital assets have been strengthened?
3. What are the policies and institutions that made a direct contribution to these changes?
4. Did the projects apply safeguards (such as clear, recognised and enforceable rights of access to resources) to ensure benefits from forestry are not captured by elites?
5. Did the projects identify and use any indicators to measure poverty impacts, both at grass roots and overall project level?

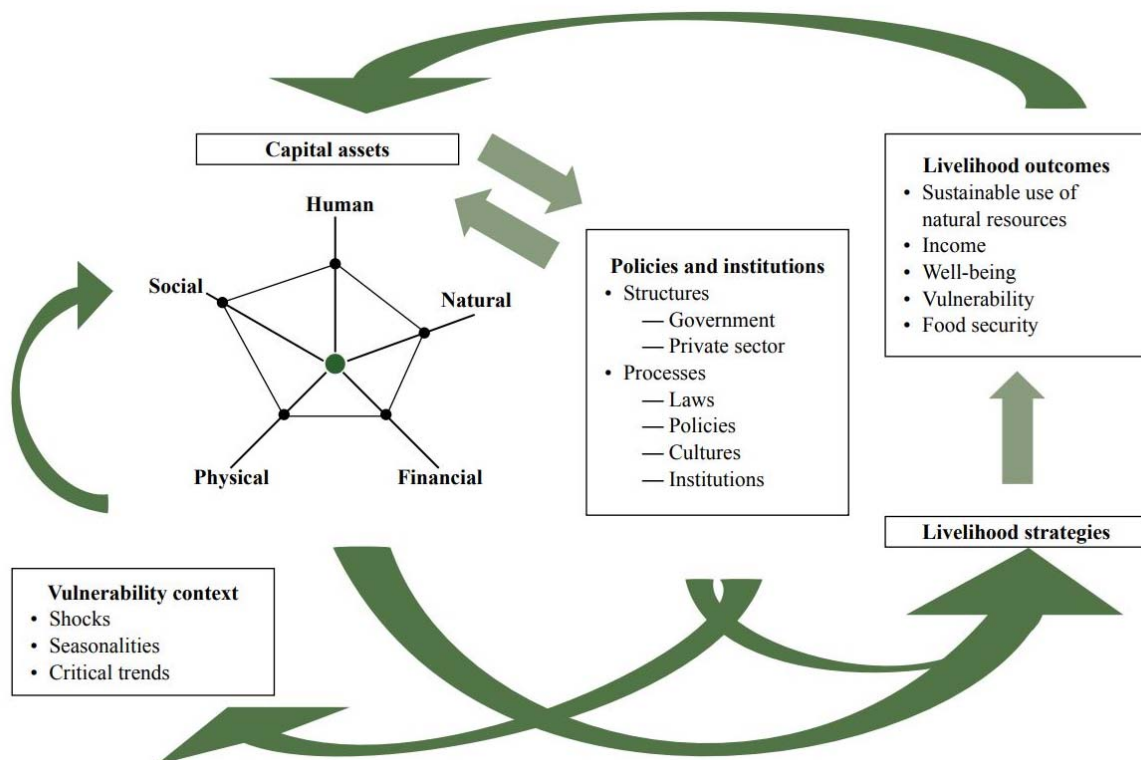


Figure 1 The Sustainable livelihoods framework (Source: Department for International Development of the United Kingdom).

5. On forestry value chains

VALUE CHAIN DEVELOPMENT (VCD) IN FINLAND'S REGIONAL FORESTRY DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

The overall question the Evaluation will address when evaluating VCD interventions is whether a causal relationship exists between VCD and both poverty reduction and sustainability of forest management. For this relationship to happen, it is important for upstream participants in forest-based value chains to be empowered to assume important positions within value chains on the basis of specific competitive advantages. This is the basis for the elaboration of this note. In this respect, it is important to clarify what would be the Outcome resulting from the support provided by a regional project to value chain initiatives, which could be as follows:

“Forest-based high potential value chains upgrading is achieved in the areas of action of the regional project through support to innovations and to governments’ action to fill policy gaps”

HOW VALUE CHAIN DEVELOPMENT FOR POVERTY REDUCTION IS GENERALLY IMPLEMENTED

Interventions that follow a Value Chain Development (VCD) approach aim to support processes of upgrading among the actors in value chains, without themselves becoming a part of the chains (in order to ensure sustainability). The end goal of this approach is to facilitate changes that increase the competitiveness of the chains and generate wealth for all participating actors, thereby contributing to sector economic growth, with poverty reduction and environmental and social sustainability.

A VCD cooperation intervention is justified when incentives or resources do not exist within a given value chain, or are inadequate to relieve a constraint or drive the upgrading needed for increased competitiveness of the chain. Interventions are therefore designed to:

- demonstrate the potential of upgrading initiative;
- reduce the risk of enterprises investing in upgrading; or
- accelerate the scaling up of an upgrading initiative.

Generally, four forms of value chain upgrading are discussed in VCD literature, and initiatives supported by the regional projects would fall under one or more of these categories:

- **Process upgrading:** introducing superior technology to increase efficiency.
- **Functional upgrading:** changing the mix of functions performed; for example, timber producers adding a processing function.
- **Product upgrading:** introducing good practices for higher-value, more sophisticated goods (included here would be, for example, building the capacity of the enterprises to comply with FSC requirements or UNCTAD’s Bio-Trade Principles and Criteria).
- **Inter-sectoral upgrading:** The possibility of using secondary products of a main chain for developing different chains.

THE FOLLOWING ASSUMPTIONS COULD BE CONSIDERED AS UNDERLYING THE SUPPORT FOR VCD:

- (i) Innovation and value chain upgrading will improve management practices and strengthen linkages with value chain actors, which will in turn increase the profitability of the forest sector and stimulate employment in associated value chains;
- (ii) Systemic improvements in the selected high potential forest-based value chains will increase productivity and profitability;
- (iii) Building capacity of value chain actors for improved technology, management, organization, etc. will strengthen forest product market systems, will increase income at community level and contribute to sustainable forest resource use.
- (iv) Support for policy reform in the selected value chains to improve local capacities and strengthen market systems for forest products will provide an enabling environment for sustainable forest management.

WITH RESPECT TO THE INTERVENTIONS TO SUPPORT VCD, THE EVALUATION WILL AIM TO:

- Identify whether and how the supported value chains were identified as high potential;
- Validate the aforementioned assumptions.

The following table identifies points that may be considered and assessed in the framework of the Evaluation, organised by the different Evaluation criteria.

Criteria	Points proposed to consider in the Evaluation
Relevance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Validate the above assumptions; - Identify whether and how the supported value chains were identified as high potential; - Identify whether the regional projects identified an intervention logic (or Theory of Change – ToC) showing changes expected from support to value chains and pathways to those changes and to overall Project’s objectives. - Alignment with countries’ innovation strategies.
Effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Was the VCD implementation model of regional projects effective in delivering upgrading results in selected high potential value chains (It will be important to assess the achievements of regional projects-supported initiatives, and the effectiveness of the different pathways in achieving the expected results, particularly in creating systemic change within the targeted value chains). - Effectiveness of the regional projects in: (i) supporting formation of regional stakeholders’ coalitions for promotion of investment in value chain development innovations; (ii) Implementing models for engaging community stakeholders to participate in national, regional and global forest-based value chains; - How dissemination of evidence from VCD initiatives led to further investment in high potential chains in the region and governments to fill policy gaps? - Was the regional project effective in building the capacity of forest-based value chains actors to adopt and abide to practices that take into account standards, guidelines, principles and criteria aimed at avoiding degradation of resources and of social conditions, and promote viable and equitable trade (ex. FSC; UNCTAD’s BioTrade principles and Criteria; etc.).
Efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What has been the change in net income per enterprise supported by the regional project -supported VCD initiative?
Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How many direct and indirect beneficiaries have benefited from the initiative) - To what extent has the regional project-supported VCD initiatives improved beneficiaries’ livelihoods assets (i.e. the five types of capital: Human, Social, Physical, Natural, Financial, refer Note on livelihoods in this Annex). - Any unexpected (negative or positive) but important benefits or impacts of the regional project-supported VCD initiatives)
Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To what extent are the results of the VCD interventions likely to be continued at national and regional levels beyond the duration of the project? - What are the major factors having influenced the achievement or non-achievement of sustainability of the project’s VCD initiatives results? (This assessment will require exploring the sustainability of individual regional project-supported VCD initiatives, knowing the intentions of collaborating partners, and looking at the evidence of demonstration effects).
Gender equality and Equity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How have the VCD initiatives supported by the regional project promoted women’s entrepreneurship in the forest sector? - How has such a support influenced and changed gender dynamics in the forest sector (i.e. decision-making, male/female employment distribution etc.)

6. On Payment for environmental services (PES)

Key questions to be considered:

1. **Case:** Is there a case for developing or strengthening PES? If so, what type of services are provided (CO2 sink, water catchment protection/regulation, harbour biodiversity, climate regulation, or other)
2. **Studies:** Has the project contributed to better understanding, quantification and/or valuation of the environmental services provided by tropical forests through studies, with the aim of increasing the effectiveness of PES schemes;
3. **Awareness:** has the project helped raise awareness of the importance of environmental services, the role of tropical forests in providing such services, and the necessity of paying for such services?
4. **Enabling environment:** has the project helped create enabling conditions - at different levels - to increase demand and develop markets for PES?
5. **Exchange of experience:** Did the project increase collaboration and exchange on PES experience and options, through south–south and triangular cooperation or otherwise?
6. **Scaling up:** In case of existing schemes, did the project support the scaling up of PES, from a few to a wider group of forest owners and managers?
7. **Impact:** Did the PES scheme generate benefits for local communities and contribute to rural poverty alleviation, or help reduce deforestation, stimulate rehabilitation of degraded forest land (i.e. help achieve overall objectives of Finnish cooperation)?

7. On cross-cutting themes

Cross-cutting themes (CCTs): In this study, when reviewing the past of the Finnish development cooperation, the CCTs refer mainly to the ones laid out in the Development Policy Programme of 2007. These are:

- Promotion of the rights and the status of women and girls, and promotion of gender and social equality;
- Promotion of the rights of groups that are easily excluded and discriminated, particularly children, persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and ethnic minorities, and the promotion of equal opportunities for participation;
- Combating HIV/AIDS; HIV/AIDS as a health problem and as a social problem.

However, any suggestions of future actions in terms of CCTs (or cross-cutting objectives (CCOs), as they were later on defined) should be understood in the context of the Development Policy Programme of 2012. In this policy, the CCOs include: promotion of gender equality, reduction of inequalities, and climate resilience.



Annex 4

Evaluation matrix

EVALUATION MATRIX - FINNISH REGIONAL FORESTRY EVALUATION - INDUFOR

June 2017

1. RELEVANCE (including quality of project design)

Project title			
Region		Country	
Evaluator		Date	

Relevance: The consistency of project objectives with the problems, needs and priorities of the stakeholders including all final beneficiaries (relevance at beneficiary level), to the policy environment (strategic relevance) within which it operated, and with Finland's development policy. Retrospectively, the question of relevance often becomes a question of whether the objectives or intervention logic of an action are still appropriate given changed circumstances. In this perspective, The quality of design is also analysed as a key factor.

The analysis also compares the relevance at the time of formulation and the current (ex-post) relevance.

Prime issues	PERFORMANCE CONCLUSION				Always to be added	
	a=4	b=3	c=2	d=1	Weighting	
<p>1.1 What was the level of relevance of the project to Finnish and partner government policies, during its lifetime and today?</p> <p><i>Were the project objectives consistent with Partner Government(s) policies? (If applicable, specify if they were focused on policy changes). Would it still be so today?</i> <i>In case of NGO/CSO involvement: was the project coherent with NGO/CSO strategies in the area/sector?</i></p> <p><i>Are objectives consistent with Finland's development policy in the concerned field? (refer, for example, the Development Policy Guidelines for Forest Sector, 2008).</i> <i>Would it still be so today?</i></p>	●	●	●	●	Weighting	30%
<p>1.2 Did the project (and does it still) respond to needs of key stakeholders, including final beneficiaries?</p> <p><i>Were key stakeholders involved in the design process and were their concerns and ambitions properly reflected?</i> <i>Do all key stakeholders still demonstrate effective commitment (ownership)?</i></p>	●	●	●	●	Weighting	30%
<p>2.1 Was the design of the project appropriate and realistic for achievement of the set objectives?</p> <p><i>Did any intervention theory or log-frame exist and was it used? If not, why not? Were the (overall and specific) objectives and results clear and logically connected?</i> <i>Was the objective achievable within the project timeframe and were the planned activities and outcomes appropriate to achieve the objective? Are the indicators to measure results well defined and relevant to measure the achievement of the objectives? Are all related data (baselines, targets, achievements) available?</i> <i>Were the risks and assumptions identified and managed?</i> <i>Was sustainability integrated in the design i.e. was there a phase out/hand over strategy?</i></p> <p><i>Is a regional programme a relevant approach to the identified problems? What is the rationale for launching the regional programme? Was the proposed institutional set-up appropriate, considering roles and mandates of local, national, regional and international partners, and were implementing modalities appropriate? (composition steering committee and country-based program staff, role of the government).</i></p> <p><i>Were any changes made to the project design? If so, did they contribute to significant design improvements?</i></p>	●	●	●	●	Weighting	30%
<p>2.2 Did the project design sufficiently take cross-cutting objectives into account?</p> <p><i>Were the relevant cross-cutting themes (gender, easily excluded groups, HIV/AIDS) integrated into project design?</i> <i>How is the 2002 MFA PCM guidebook guidance reflected in the project design in terms of cross-cutting issues?</i></p>	●	●	●	●	Weighting	10%
<p>Note: a = very good; b = satisfactory-good; c = substantial problems; d = serious deficiencies.</p>				Overall conclusion:	2.80	b
For LESSONS LEARNED AND OTHER OBSERVATIONS, use worksheet "Lessons".						

EVALUATION MATRIX - FINNISH REGIONAL FORESTRY EVALUATION - INDUFOR

2. EFFECTIVENESS

Project title			
Region		Country	
Evaluator		Date	

Effectiveness is the extent to which the development intervention's objectives (project purpose) were achieved, or are expected to be achieved, taking into account their relative importance.

As part of this question, the effectiveness of the regional approach (compared to a bilateral approach) is also assessed.

The analysis focuses on the situation at the end-of-project.

Prime Issues	PERFORMANCE CONCLUSION				Weighting	Always to be added
	a=4	b=3	c=2	d=1		
<p>3.1 How well did the project achieve its planned results (in terms of outputs and outcomes)?</p> <p><i>Did the outputs (including capacity development) lead to the expected outcomes? What were the main challenges encountered?</i></p> <p><i>Were the planned results achieved (in particular in relation to (1) sustainable forestry-based livelihoods and increased income of small producers; (2) development of value chains, and (3) developing payment for ecosystems)? Do they meet internationally accepted quality standard?</i></p> <p><i>Do (did) target groups and final beneficiaries access or use project results? If not, what factors which prevent or help target groups use the results or services?</i></p>	●	●	●	●	30%	
<p>3.2 Was the project purpose achieved?</p> <p><i>To what extent was the project purpose achieved? Summarise the results of the outcome harvesting exercise, including expected and unexpected, positive and negative achievements and non-achievements. Also discuss the underlying mechanisms, and actors and factors contributing to the achievement.</i></p> <p><i>To what extent did unplanned positive effects contribute to results produced / services provided?</i></p> <p><i>If any unplanned negative effects on target groups occurred, to what extent did the project management take appropriate measures?</i></p>	●	●	●	●	30%	
<p>4.1 To what extent was the regional approach effective, compared to bilateral projects?</p> <p><i>Were there any regional cooperation plans assessing regional actors, issues and objectives? Was there a distinct sectoral focus? ('requirements' for Finnish regional cooperation projects)</i></p> <p><i>Did the project support regional integration process, or have a specific regional and cross-boundary approach? Are there regional-level outcomes and ownership?</i></p> <p><i>What was the added value of the regional (compared to a country-based) approach?</i></p>	●	●	●	●	40%	
<p>Note: a = very good; b = satisfactory-good; c = substantial problems; d = serious deficiencies.</p>				Overall conclusion:	3.00	b
KEY LESSONS LEARNED AND OTHER OBSERVATIONS (IF ANY). Please, use section "lessons learned".						

EVALUATION MATRIX - FINNISH REGIONAL FORESTRY EVALUATION - INDUFOR

3. EFFICIENCY OF IMPLEMENTATION

Project title	0		
Region	0	Country	
Evaluator	0	Date	

How well were resources/inputs (funds, expertise, time) and activities converted into outputs (meeting quality standards)? Did the project deliver value for money?

In the context of this ex-post evaluation, Efficiency is primarily analysed as a factor contributing to project impact and sustainability. The analysis also looks at deviations from the plan by the end of project and possible consequences.

Prime Issues	PERFORMANCE CONCLUSION				Always to be added	
	a=4	b=3	c=2	d=1	Weighting	
<p>5.1 How well were available resources and inputs managed?</p> <p><i>Did the resources funded by the action and actually made available correspond to the needs of the action?</i></p> <p><i>Has the project been able to leverage funding (i.e. investments made by stakeholders - in particular in the private sector involved in the value chains) from the regional institutions involved or from other donors or stakeholders?</i></p> <p><i>Were all contractual procedures clearly understood and did they facilitate the implementation of the project?</i></p>	●	●	●	●	Weighting	20%
<p>5.2 How well was project implementation managed?</p> <p><i>Were activities planned and implemented as scheduled? If not, comment on reasons for deviation.</i></p> <p><i>Were project resources managed and reported in a transparent and accountable manner? Consider using TI framework for assessment, distinguishing transparency, accountability and integrity. Has a final audit been carried out? If so, what were the conclusions?</i></p> <p><i>If an exit strategy was defined, how well was it implemented?</i></p> <p><i>If applicable, how flexible was the project in adapting to changing needs, in order to ensure continued relevance and effectiveness of project interventions?</i></p>	●	●	●	●	Weighting	20%
<p>5.3 How well were outputs achieved?</p> <p><i>Have all planned outputs been delivered?</i></p> <p><i>Is the quality of outputs satisfactory, and have they been produced/ delivered in a cost-efficient manner?</i></p> <p><i>If there were delays, how important were they and what are the consequences?</i></p> <p><i>Did the project use any internal output and/or results-based monitoring system?</i></p>	●	●	●	●	Weighting	35%
<p>5.4 Were the chosen implementation mechanisms (choice of implementation modalities, entities and contractual arrangements) conducive for achieving the results?</p> <p><i>Did the inter-institutional structures, e.g. steering committees and supervisory boards, adequately monitor progress and allow for efficient project implementation?</i></p> <p><i>Was the communication between the implementing organisation and partner institutions satisfactory?</i></p> <p><i>Did Finnish cooperation procedures affect the implementation positively or adversely?</i></p> <p><i>Has the regional approach been cost-effective for achieving local, national and regional-level benefits? (put costs and benefits of the regional approach in a wider perspective, comparing with other approaches with similar objectives)</i></p>	●	●	●	●	Weighting	25%
<p>Note: a = very good; b = satisfactory-good; c = substantial problems; d = serious deficiencies.</p>		<p>Overall Conclusion:</p>		2.35	C	
KEY LESSONS LEARNED AND OTHER OBSERVATIONS (IF ANY). Please, use section "lessons learned".						

EVALUATION MATRIX - FINNISH REGIONAL FORESTRY EVALUATION - INDUFOR

4. IMPACT TO DATE

Project title			
Region		Country	
Evaluator		Date	

The effect of the project on its wider environment, and its contribution to the wider (sector) objectives summarised in the project's overall objective. The analysis should focus on the achievement of the project's overall objective at the time when the ex-post monitoring is carried out.

Prime issues	PERFORMANCE CONCLUSION				Weighting	Always to be added
	a=4	b=3	c=2	d=1		
<p>6.1 What is the intended impact of the project at the level of the overall objective(s)?</p> <p><i>Has the project contributed to any impact, be it positive or negative, in line with its overall objective(s)? (Think, in particular, of the effects on livelihoods of beneficiaries, on businesses - in particular small and medium enterprise - in the value chains, and on actors involved in the Payment for Ecosystem Services schemes).</i></p> <p><i>To what extent have the impact indicators and targets been achieved?</i></p> <p><i>Have any (f)actors contributed positively to the project's direct impact, or jeopardised the project's direct impact? If so, specify the mechanisms</i></p>	●	●	●	●	60%	
<p>6.2 To what extent does /will the project have any emergent positive and/or negative impacts?</p> <p><i>Have there been/ will there be any unplanned positive impacts on the planned target groups or other non-targeted communities or the environment arising from the project? (Think, in particular of human rights, gender equality, reduction of inequalities and climate sustainability). How has this affected the achievement of the Project Purpose?</i></p> <p><i>Did the project take timely measures for mitigating the unplanned negative impacts? What was the result? Are target groups and stakeholders in the position to mitigate unplanned negative impacts?</i></p> <p><i>Did/do donor complementarity and coordination exist and have they had (do they have) any indirect impact on the project?</i></p>	●	●	●	●	40%	
<p>Key: a = very good; b = satisfactory-good; c = substantial problems; d = serious deficiency</p>				Overall conclusion:	2.00	C
<p>KEY LESSONS LEARNED AND OTHER OBSERVATIONS (IF ANY). Please, use section "lessons learned".</p>						

EVALUATION MATRIX - FINNISH REGIONAL FORESTRY EVALUATION - INDUFOR

5. SUSTAINABILITY TO DATE

Project title			
Region		Country	
Evaluator		Date	

Sustainability is the continuation of benefits from a development intervention after major development assistance has been completed, the probability of continued long-term benefits, and the resilience to risk of net benefit flows over time.

The analysis should focus on the current situation, considering the processes between end of project and the time at which the (ex-post) evaluation is carried out.

Prime Issues	PERFORMANCE CONCLUSION				Weighting	Always to be added
	a=4	b=3	c=2	d=1		
7.1 Financial / economic viability <i>Have the relevant authorities taken the financial measures to ensure the continuation of services after the end of the action?</i> <i>Has the private sector been involved to ensure the sustainability of the action?</i> <i>Is access to the benefits affordable for target groups on the long term?</i> <i>Have the benefits continued even when economic factors have changed (e.g. commodity prices, exchange rates)?</i> <i>Was there a financial/economic phase-out and/or exit strategy; if so, did its implementation hold true?</i>	●	●	●	●	30%	
7.2 What is the level of ownership of the project by target groups today? <i>How well is the project embedded in permanent institutional structures (that exist beyond the life of the project)?</i> <i>How much ownership there has been at the country level?</i> <i>Did the target groups plan for continued delivery of project benefits? Do they continue to make decisions on project results or services?</i> <i>Are target groups or beneficiaries making use of relevant results?</i>	●	●	●	●	30%	
7.3 What was/is the level of policy support received and the degree of interaction between project and policy level? <i>What support has been/is being provided from relevant (national or regional) sectoral and budgetary policies?</i> <i>Have changes in policies and priorities affected the project? If (further) changes are likely, how will the project adapt in terms of long-term needs for support?</i> <i>Was any other public policy and/or private sector support provided to enable the continuation of project benefits?</i>	●	●	●	●	20%	
7.4 How well has the project contributed to institutional and management capacity? <i>Have key stakeholders, including the regional implementing organisation and national governments, acquired the necessary institutional and human capacities to ensure the continued flow of services and benefits?</i>	●	●	●	●	20%	
e: a = very good; b = satisfactory-good; c = substantial problems; d = serious deficiency				Overall conclusion:	4.00	a
KEY LESSONS LEARNED AND OTHER OBSERVATIONS (IF ANY). Please, use section "lessons learned".						

EVALUATION MATRIX - FINNISH REGIONAL FORESTRY EVALUATION - INDUFOR

6. AID EFFECTIVENESS

Project title			
Region		Country	
Evaluator		Date	

Did concerned governments put in place a conducive environment to maximise the impact of development co-operation and enable contributions from non-governmental actors (i.e. civil society and the private sector); and how effectively did development partners deliver their support?
 The analysis should focus on the situation at project's end.

Prime Issues	PERFORMANCE CONCLUSION				Weighting	Always to be added
	a=4	b=3	c=2	d=1		
<p>8.1 To what extent did governments create a conducive environment to maximise the impact of development co-operation and enable contributions from non-governmental actors (civil society, private sector)?</p> <p><i>Were there national and regional level sector strategies and results frameworks in place and used, to allow for strategic planning, target setting and a focus on results, and maximise impact at country and regional levels?</i></p> <p><i>Is there an effective government led system of sector coordination at national or regional level (including Capacity Development) involving the relevant local stakeholders and donors?</i></p> <p><i>Did country and regional policies encourage 'inclusiveness', i.e. engaging with civil society and fostering public-private partnerships (PPPs), with common public-private agendas? Did the countries and regional institutions encourage inclusive policy processes?</i></p>	●	○	○	○	30%	
<p>8.2 How effectively did the project deliver its support?</p> <p><i>To what extent were implementation modalities and arrangements aligned with national/regional systems and priorities? Were government sources and systems used to track results?</i></p> <p><i>To what extent did the project contribute to transparent information on the development cooperation action and to mutual accountability (through joint reviews or otherwise)? Was aid untied?</i></p> <p><i>If appropriate; how did the project co-ordinate with other similar interventions to encourage synergy and avoid overlaps?</i></p>	●	○	○	○	30%	
<p>9.1 To what extent has the Finnish cooperation project added value to existing policies and programmes?</p> <p><i>To what extent did the Finnish action under the regional projects add value to a scenario without any external interventions (counterfactual) or to what would have resulted from other donor interventions in the same context?</i></p> <p><i>Have the regional projects complemented, duplicated or contradicted other Finnish, EU or other donor interventions or policies, and how have such interferences been handled?</i></p>	●	○	○	○	40%	
<p>te: a = very good; b = satisfactory-good; c = substantial problems; d = serious deficiency</p>				Overall conclusion:	4.00	a
<p>KEY LESSONS LEARNED AND OTHER OBSERVATIONS (IF ANY). Please, use section "lessons learned".</p>						

EVALUATION MATRIX - FINNISH REGIONAL FORESTRY EVALUATION - INDUFOR

7. Coherence

Project title			
Region		Country	
Evaluator		Date	

Policy coherence means different policy communities working together in ways that result in more powerful tools and products for all concerned. It means looking for synergies and complementarities and filling gaps among different policy areas so as to meet common and shared objectives.

Prime Issues	PERFORMANCE CONCLUSION				Weighting	Always to be added
	a=4	b=3	c=2	d=1		
<p>10.1 How has other cooperation between Finland and the concerned countries been taken into account in implementation?</p> <p><i>Was the project and the regional approach well aligned with Finnish Cooperation policies, including the cross-cutting themes?</i></p> <p><i>Were there any internal contradictions within the project, for example between the economic growth and environmental objectives? If so, how were they handled?</i></p> <p><i>Did the project reinforce other Finnish foreign policies, or did other Finnish (or EU policies), for example on trade, reinforce the actions under the project. Did they work at cross purposes?</i></p>	●	●	●	●	50%	
<p>10.2 What were the synergies of the project with other initiatives, including private sector and civil society cooperation?</p> <p><i>Has there been any synergy with promotion of sustainable trade or with other action in the sphere of climate, gender and human rights? (Note: focus on Finnish cooperation)</i></p>	●	●	●	●	50%	
<p>te: a = very good; b = satisfactory-good; c = substantial problems; d = serious deficiency</p>				Overall conclusion:	3.00	b
KEY LESSONS LEARNED AND OTHER OBSERVATIONS (IF ANY). Please, use section "lessons learned".						



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Annex 5

Detailed scoring sheet of evaluation questions

Evaluation Question (EQ) Sub-EQs (scale: 4 = very good; 3 = satisfactory-good; 2 = substantial problems; 1 = serious deficiencies)		Weight	Finnfor	ForInfo	MFS	Overall
TOTAL			3.21	2.65	2.38	2.75
RELEVANCE			3.52	2.82	2.58	2.97
EQ1: To what extent were the programmes consistent with problems and priorities of stakeholders - including Finland's development cooperation objectives and approaches – and of final beneficiaries?	60%	4.00	3.50	3.50		3.67
1.1 What was the level of relevance of the project to Finnish and partner government policies, during its lifetime and today?	50%	4	4	4		4.00
1.2 Did the project (and does it still) respond to needs of key stakeholders, including final beneficiaries?	50%	4	3	3		3.33
EQ2: Was the project design appropriate and realistic to achieve the set objectives?	40%	2.80	1.80	1.20		1.93
2.1 Was the design of the project appropriate and realistic for achievement of the set objectives?	80%	3	2	1		2.00
2.2 Did the project design sufficiently take cross-cutting objectives into account?	20%	2	1	2		1.67
EFFECTIVENESS			3.05	2.35	2.05	2.48
EQ3: To what extent have expected results (outputs, outcomes) of the projects, in particular with regard to (1) promoting sustainable forestry-based livelihoods and increased income of small producers; (2) developing value chains and (3) developing retribution mechanisms for ecosystems, materialised?	70%	3.50	2.50	2.50		2.83
3.1 How well did the project achieve its planned results (in terms of outputs and outcomes)?	50%	3	2	3		2.67
3.2 Was the project purpose achieved?	50%	4	3	2		3.00
EQ4: What value has the regional approach added, in terms of project effectiveness?	30%	2.00	2.00	1.00		1.67
4.1 To what extent was the regional approach effective, compared to bilateral projects?	100%	2	2	1		1.67
EFFICIENCY			3.40	3.00	3.15	3.18
EQ5: How well did the various activities transform the available resources into the intended results?	100%	3.40	3.00	3.15		3.18
5.1 How well were available resources and inputs managed?	20%	4	3	3		3.33
5.2 How well was project implementation managed?	20%	4	3	2		3.00
5.3 How well were outputs achieved?	35%	3	3	4		3.33
5.4 Were the chosen implementation mechanisms (choice of implementation modalities, entities and contractual arrangements) conducive for achieving the results?	25%	3	3	3		3.00
IMPACT			3.40	2.40	1.60	2.47
EQ6: To what extent have overall project objectives been achieved, and to what extent have the regional projects contributed to the achievements?	100%	3.40	2.40	1.60		2.47
6.1 What is the intended impact of the project at the level of the overall objective(s)?	60%	3	2	2		2.33
6.2 To what extent does /will the project have any emergent positive and/or negative impacts?	40%	4	3	1		2.67
SUSTAINABILITY			3.30	3.10	1.80	2.73
EQ7: To what extent have the programmes achieved sustainable results, and how has the regional approach affected sustainability?	100%	3.30	3.10	1.80		2.73
7.1 Financial / economic viability	30%	3	3	2		2.67
7.2 What is the level of ownership of the project by target groups today?	30%	4	4	2		3.33
7.3 What was/is the level of policy support received and the degree of interaction between project and policy level?	20%	3	2	1		2.00
7.4 How well has the project contributed to institutional and management capacity?	20%	3	3	2		2.67
AID EFFECTIVENESS			2.80	2.40	2.00	2.40
EQ8: How and to what extent have the regional programmes promoted commitment and ownership by the relevant stakeholders?	80%	3.00	2.50	2.00		2.50
8.1 To what extent did governments create a conducive environment to maximise the impact of development co-operation and enable contributions from non-governmental actors (civil society, private sector)?	50%	3	2	1		2.00
8.2 How effectively did the project deliver its support?	50%	3	3	3		3.00
EQ9: What has been the added value of Finland's programmes?	20%	2.00	2.00	2.00		2.00
9.1 To what extent has the Finnish cooperation project added value to existing policies and programmes?	100%	2	2	2		2.00
COHERENCE			3.00	2.50	3.50	3.00
EQ10: How has other cooperation between Finland and the concerned countries been taken into account in implementation, and what have been the synergies of the regional programmes with other initiatives, including private sector and civil society cooperation?	100%	3.00	2.50	3.50		3.00
10.1 How has other cooperation between Finland and the concerned countries been taken into account in implementation?	50%	3	3	4		3.33
10.2 What were the synergies of the project with other initiatives, including private sector and civil society cooperation?	50%	3	2	3		2.67



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Annex 6

Mission reports (available on request)



Annex 7

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Note: MFA refers to Ministry of Foreign Affairs Finland.



Annex 8

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Documents Consulted

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Annex 9

People consulted

People Consulted

GENERAL

Country	Location	Organisation	Last name(s)	First name	Position
Finland	Helsinki	MFA of Finland	Gullberg	Gunilla	Adviser, Unit for Latin America and Caribbean, Department for Americas and Asia
Finland	Helsinki	MFA of Finland	Kaarakka	Vesa	Senior Forestry Adviser
Finland	Helsinki	Indufor Oy	Salmi	Jyrki	CEO Indufor Oy
Finland	Helsinki	MFA of Finland	Takala	Sanna	Senior development policy adviser Asia, Department for the Americas and Asia
France	Paris	OECD	Puustinen	Pekka	Ambassador of Finland to the OECD
Spain	Barcelona	FLEGT and REDD Unit	Viitanen	Jussi	Head of FLEGT and REDD Unit

FINNFOR-II

Country	Location	Organisation	Last name(s)	First name	Position
Costa Rica	Interviewed online	IICA	Ammour	Tania	CTA
Costa Rica	San Pedro	CATIE, now UICN	Ammour	Tania	Regional programme coordinator IUCN Mexico, Central America & Caribbean
Costa Rica	Nicoya/Hojancha	CACH (Centro Agrícola Cantonal de Hojancha)	Cordero	Olman	Coordinator
Costa Rica	Cartago, Turrialba	CATIE HQ	Finegan	Bryan	Head of the Production and Conservation Programme, academic coordinator of Master's in Management and Conservation of forests and biodiversity
Costa Rica	Nicoya/Hojancha	CACH (Centro Agrícola Cantonal de Hojancha)	Molina	Ademar	Technical advisor
Costa Rica	Cartago, Turrialba	CATIE HQ	Navarro	Guillermo	Director Latin American Chair of Forest Policy and Economics /Forest Production and Conservation Program
Costa Rica	Cartago, Turrialba	CATIE HQ	Piedra	Mario	Subdirector general, CATIE
Costa Rica	Nicoya/Hojancha	SINAC	Rodriguez	Emel	Coordinator Forest Development Programme, Hojancha;
Costa Rica	Nicoya/Hojancha	PROTECA	Rodriguez	Adrian	PROTECA Secretary, cattle and teak producer
Costa Rica	Nicoya/Hojancha	UNAFOR (National Forestry Union)	Sibaja	Fulvio	Advisor
Guatemala		Consejo Nacional de Áreas Protegidas (CONAP), Petén	Baldizón	Fernando	Director of Forest Management
Guatemala		Staff CATIE- Finnfor II (Currently Fundación Defensores de la Naturaleza)	Bautista	Rudy	Forest Coordinator
Guatemala		Red Forestando Chachaklum S.A	Cambranes	Carlos	President and Legal representative
Guatemala		FORESCOM	Escalante	Julio	General manager

Country	Location	Organisation	Last name(s)	First name	Position
Guatemala		Individual consultant CATIE-Finnfor II	Pinelo	Gustavo	Independent Consultant
Guatemala		ACOFOP	Rivas	Mario	Técnico de Apoyo
Nicaragua	León (city)	CATIE Nicaragua	Arbizú	Indiana	Project officer Finnfor-II
Nicaragua	Managua	INAFOR	Avalos	Alfonso	Planning director
Nicaragua	Posoltega municipality, Chinandega department	n/a	Espinoza	Santos	Charcoal producer
Nicaragua	Rural community of Cristo Rey in Quezalguaque municipality, León department	Maderas de Occidente S.A.	García	Pedro	President, charcoal producer and eucalyptus plantation owner
Nicaragua	Posoltega municipality, Chinandega department (meeting in Cristo Rey)	Maderas de Occidente S.A.	Muñoz	Trinidad	Vice-president, charcoal producer
Nicaragua	Rural community of Santa Lucía in Nagarote municipality, León department	n/a	Ojeda	Mirna	Charcoal producer, community advocate
Nicaragua	Managua	CATIE Nicaragua	Sepúlveda	Norvin	Representative CATIE office Nicaragua
Nicaragua	León (city)	INAFOR	Toruño	Martha	Delegate of INAFOR for Nagarote
Nicaragua	Members from various communities of Nagarote (meeting in Santa Lucía)	n/a	Various beneficiaries		Charcoal producers
Nicaragua	Members from various rural communities of Posoltega & Quezalguaque (meeting in Cristo Rey)	n/a	Various beneficiaries		Charcoal producers
Nicaragua	Managua	INAFOR	Zúñiga	Zaida	National representative for Environmental Protection

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Country	Location	Organisation	Last name(s)	First name	Position
Cambodia	Phnom Penh	RECOFTC	Da	Heng	Deputy Country Program Coordinator
Cambodia	Phnom Penh	RECOFTC	Kalyan	Hou	Country Program Coordinator
Cambodia	Phnom Penh	RECOFTC	Kirivuth	Chhneang	Community Forestry Partnership Coordinator
Cambodia	Phnom Penh		Kong	Sim	Former RECOFTC SFM project staff (market development)
Cambodia	Phnom Penh		Mesa	Hing	Former RECOFTC Community-based Production Forestry Specialist

Country	Location	Organisation	Last name(s)	First name	Position
Cambodia	Phnom Penh		Narin	Bun	Former RECOFTC SFM project staff
Cambodia	Pursat Province	Leach Forestry Administration		Mr. Peak Momau	Chief
Cambodia	Pursat Province	Prongel FA Triage		Mr. Sek Sophal	Officer
Cambodia	Pursat Province	O Bak Tra CF		21 men, 3 women	Final beneficiaries (community forestry members)
Finland	Helsinki	MFA of Finland	Hares	Minna	Programme Officer DrSc (Agric. & For.) Unit for Eastern Asia and Oceania
Finland			Inkinen	Antti	Former Head of Development Cooperation, Embassy of Finland to Thailand
Germany			Noeske	Fabian	Former ForInfo Technical Adviser, RECOFTC
Lao PDR		SUFORD-SU	Payan	Edwin	Village Forestry Advisor (Former RECOFTC Cambodia Country Director)
Lao PDR	Houayxai, Bokeo	RECOFTC	Senkhammoungkhoun	Chay	Officer - Bokeo
Lao PDR	Houayxai, Bokeo	PAFO		Mr. Khamphaeng	Head of PAFO
Lao PDR	Houayxai, Bokeo	PAFO		Mr. Khammoun	PAFO Officer
Lao PDR	Houayxai, Bokeo	PAFO		Mr. Inthanon	Deputy Head of PAFO
Lao PDR	Houayxai district	Ban Lokloun village		Mr Somdee	Final beneficiaries (Teak smallholders)
Lao PDR	Same as above	Same as above		Mr Xienglon	Same as above
Lao PDR	Same as above	Same as above		Mr Vanh Thong	Same as above
Lao PDR	Same as above	Same as above		Mr Amhai	Same as above
Lao PDR	Same as above	Same as above		Mr Saly	Same as above
Lao PDR	Same as above	Same as above		Mr Same Phon	Same as above
Lao PDR	Same as above	Same as above		Mr Chanput	Same as above
Lao PDR	Same as above	Same as above		Mr ChangChang	Same as above
Lao PDR	Same as above	Same as above		Mrs Chandee	Same as above
Lao PDR	Same as above	Same as above		Ms Bonavanh	Same as above
Lao PDR	Same as above	Same as above		Mr TuitKham	Same as above
Mongolia			Mohns	Bernhard	Former ForInfo Senior Program Officer, RECOFTC
Thailand	RECOFTC HQ	RECOFTC	Atkinson	Julian	Program Coordination Officer
Thailand	RECOFTC HQ	RECOFTC	Greijmans	Martin	Senior Program Officer, Livelihoods & Markets
Thailand	RECOFTC HQ	RECOFTC	Silori	Chandra	Manager, Program Coordination and Operations
Thailand			Veer	Cor	Consultant, ForInfo MTR
United Kingdom			Bianci	Simone	Former ForInfo Technical Adviser, RECOFTC
Vietnam	Hanoi	Embassy of Finland	Kaipola	Annika	Counsellor

ForInfo questionnaire (11/50 replies)

Organisation	Last name	First name
ACLEDA Bank	Vongsenephanh	Viengxong
BPS3 Yunnan	Wei	Jin
Cambodia	Manau	Peak
Cambodia	Sareth	Khorn
EEP	Arana	Cosme
ForestFinance Viet Nam	van Meegen	Olaf
ForInfo MTR	Veer	Cor
FSC/SNV project	Henschel	Chris
GERES	Bunthoeun	Sim
GIZ BEST strategy Nepal	Diederich	Hauke
GIZ Micro finance support project	Fuchs	Thorsten
Green power, SBANG	Sanyapong	Kidhiran
IFC & WB	Brady	Michael A.
IKI project	Kapp	Gerald
INBAR	Frith	Oliver
INBAR	Yanxia	Li
Independent consultant	Silfverberg	Paul
Kasetsart University's Dept. of Forest Engineering	Manavakun	Nopparat
KfW SMNRP/LM-RED	Braeutigam	Dietmar
KfW VF management project (upcoming)	Schubeck	Adrian
Lao PDR		Dr. Oupakone
MFA	Hares	Minna
MFA	Inkinen	Antti
MFA	Kaarakka	Vesa
MFA	Kaipola	Annika
MFA	Pulkkinen	Sanna
Ngao Model Forest	Maiman	Sumai
RECOFTC	Atkinson	Julian
RECOFTC	Bampton	James
RECOFTC	Bianchi	Simone
RECOFTC	Chhneang	Kirivuth
RECOFTC	Gritten	David
RECOFTC	Kalyan	Hou
RECOFTC	Kong	Sim
RECOFTC	Maningo	Edward
RECOFTC	Mohns	Bernhard
RECOFTC	Noeske	Fabian
RECOFTC	Phouangmala	Bounyadeth
RECOFTC	Sangkhammoungkhoun	Chay
RECOFTC	Silori	Chandra
RECOFTC	Soontornwong	Somying
RECOFTC	Tan	Nguyen Quang
RECOFTC	Yasmi	Yurdi
RECOFTC (former FAO Forest connect initiative)	Greijmans	Martin
SUFORD-SU	Payuan	Edwin
TFT	Massias	Katia
Thailand	Dhamrongthai	Pralong
The Tree Bank	Choonam	Pongsa
UNDP/GEF-SFM	Sovann	Nhem
WCS	Mesa	Hing

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Country	Location	Organisation	Last name(s)	First name	Position
Colombia	Medellin	Corporación parque arví	Amaya	Diana Milena	Coordinadora proyecto
Colombia	Medellin	Corporación parque arví	Amaya	Tayara Milena	Supervisora ambiental
Colombia	Medellin	Ecoflora cares	Arango Arcila	Sergio	Gerente cadenas de suministro
Colombia	Medellin	Jardín botánico de medellin	Benavides	Ana Maria	Dirección científica.
Colombia	Medellin	Cabildo indígena chigorodo	Borja Domicó	Samuel	Representante legal del cabildo
Colombia	Medellin	Resguardo indpigena cuna	Garcia	Briciliano	Representante legal del cabildo
Colombia	Medellin	Ecoflora cares	Giraldo	Adrian	Presidente
Colombia	Medellin	Corporación parque arví	Hernandez	Diego Armando	Viverista
Colombia	Medellin	Corporación parque arví	Llano	Martha	Contratista proyecto
Colombia	Bogotá	Corporación autónoma regional del guabio.	Montenegro	Eliana	Funcionaria pública
Colombia	Bogotá	Parques nacionales naturales de colombia	Pasquis	Richard	Asesor técnico principal
Colombia	Bogotá	Fundación natura	Peñalosa	Leiber	Jefe del proyecto de certificación en pequeñas plantaciones.
Colombia	Medellin	Corporación parque arví	Tobón	Martha Patricia	Contratista proyecto
Peru	Atalaya	URPIA	Atanoei Venturo	Neofol	Asistente técnico
Peru	Atalaya	CONAP	Balmaceda Navarro	Juan	Asesor legal
Peru	Lima	SERFOR	Calderón Acosta	Leoncio José	Director Oficina de Cooperación Internacional
Peru	Lima	DAR	Che Piu Eeza	Hugo	Miembro del Consejo Consultivo
Peru	Atalaya	FECONADIS	Chineni Pinedo	Eusebio	Presidente FECONADIS
Peru	Atalaya	FECONAPA	Cushimariano Gutierrez	Carlos	Jefe CC. NN Chicosa
Peru	Lima	REFORESTA PERÚ SAC	Díaz	María Pía	Coordinadora de Proyectos
Peru	Lima	SOLUCIONES PRÁCTICAS	Elliot Blas	Jorge	Ing. Forestal
Peru	Lima	IICA	Febres	Maria	Representante
Peru	Atalaya	URPIA	Gómez Caañe	Brandy	Asistente URPIA
Peru	Lima	SERFOR	Guzmán Carlín	Juan Carlos	Director General Dirección General de Política y Competitividad Forestal y de Fauna Silvestre
Peru	Lima	SERFOR	Leigh Vetter	John	Director Ejecutivo
Peru	Pucallpa	Gobierno Regional de Ucayali	Martín Cordova	Juan	Director Dirección de Gestión Forestal y Fauna Silvestre ARAU-GRRNGMA
Peru	Lima	IICA	Mavila	Manuel	Regional Technical Coordinator
Peru	Lima	PNUD/GEF	Mavila Loli	Manuel	Coordinador Nacional Programa de Pequeñas Donaciones Fondo para el Medio Ambiente Mundial
Peru	Lima	SERFOR	Morizaki Taura	Antonio	Asesor de temas ambientales
Peru	Atalaya	URPIA	Ñaco Rosas	Guillermo	Apoyo social URPIA
Peru	Atalaya	FECONAPA	Onta Avenchari	Marcelo	Asistente FECONAPA

Country	Location	Organisation	Last name(s)	First name	Position
Peru	Lima	SNV	Palacios	Brunella	Especialista forestal
Peru	Lima	AIDER	Ramírez Nelson	Paul	Coordinador
Peru	Atalaya	FABU	Salazar Barolte	Reiner Moises	Presidente FABU
Peru	Atalaya	FECONAPA	Sebastiano Romano	Linder	Presidente FECONAPA
Peru	Atalaya	OIDIT	Shuñaqui Gregorio	Juana	Secretaria
Peru	Atalaya	FABU	Silva Loayza	Bernardo	Jefe
Peru	Pucallpa	REFORESTA PERÚ SAC	Toledo G.P.	Enrique	Director Gerente
Peru	Atalaya	OIDIT	Vargas Flores	Abednego	Jefe CC. NN Nuevo Paraíso
Peru	Atalaya	FECONAPA	Vásquez Vásquez	Carlos	FECONAPA
Peru	Lima	IICA	Villavicencio Callo	Nadya	Responsable de Monitoreo y Evaluación, Objetivos Transversales
Peru	Lima	NCI	Viñas Olaya	Paul	Coordinador
Peru	Lima	SERFOR	Yalle Paredes	Sara	Directora Dirección de Gestión Sostenible del Patrimonio Forestal
Peru	Atalaya	URPIA	Zegarra Salazar	Mirian	Secretaria URPIA
Peru	Lima	DAR	Zúñiga Carrillo	Claudia	Especialista forestal



Indufor ...forest intelligence

Annex 10

Evaluation Brief



Final Evaluation of Regional Forest Projects in Mekong, Andean and Central America

Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland

3.11.2017

Evaluation brief

The report presents the results of an independent final evaluation of regional forestry projects in Mekong, Andean and Central America, funded by the by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs (MFA) of Finland. The projects included (1) Finnfor-II, the Integrated Environmental and Forest Management Co-operation Project in Central America (2012–2016); (2) ForInfo, the Livelihood Improvement through Generation and Ownership of Forest Information by Local People in Products and Services Markets (Mekong, 2011–2015); and (3) MFS, the Sustainable Forest Management Programme in the Andean region (2011–2016).

The purpose of the evaluation is to guide the MFA in planning and implementing regional forestry projects. Specific objectives of the evaluation are to (1) assess the added value of the regional approach compared to a country-based approach; (2) assess the success of the programmes in promoting sustainable forestry based livelihoods and increasing income of small producers, and (3) identify the lessons learned from developing value chains and payment for ecosystem services. The evaluation was implemented between June and October 2017 by a team of seven experts mobilised by a consortium of Indufor Oy (Finland) and Particip GmbH (Germany) under a framework agreement for final evaluations of Finland's regional development co-operation in the Latin America, Caribbean and Mekong and Oceanian regions

The Evaluation Report comprises two parts: the main report and a series of annexes. The main report first describes the context and the evaluated projects and then presents the evaluation methodology, structured around the five OECD/DAC evaluation criteria (relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, sustainability) and two additional criteria that apply to Finnish cooperation policies, namely aid effectiveness and coherence. It then describes key findings, answers the ten key evaluation questions and presents conclusions, recommendations and lessons learned.

The annexes contain all supporting documentation, in particular the Terms of Reference of the evaluation (annex 1), the inception report and details of the methodology applied (annexes 2, 3), including the evaluation matrix and a detailed scoring sheet of evaluation questions (annexes 4, 5). The basic information on which findings and conclusions in the main report are based is contained in the mission reports for the three projects, which are presented in annex 6. Annex 7, 8 and 9 contain the references, documents consulted, and people consulted. Finally, an Evaluation Brief is included in Annex 10.

The key message of the evaluation is that, by applying a forestry value chain development approach, the regional forestry projects have been overall successful in improving livelihoods and income of small producers and in promoting models of sustainable forestry. However, the regional dimension did not add much value as there was little connection and interaction with regional policy processes and little cross-boundary cooperation. The objectives and modalities of the regional dimension were often not explicitly formulated and were, by consequence, limited to efficient delivery of Finnish assistance through the regional organisations and to exchanges of successful experience.

The most important positive result is that forest-based livelihoods and households' incomes were effectively improved, in the pilot projects, through the forestry value chain development work.

Achievement of larger scale and more substantial improvement in livelihoods, however, would require a more comprehensive approach - based on an analysis of all bottlenecks including institutional and technical aspects - and more sustained support. The increase in production or value added in the forestry value chains has contributed to sustainable management of community forests and plantations locally, and effective partnerships with the private sector and flexible financial mechanisms for project beneficiaries or implementing organisations were key success factors.

The limited scale and duration of the field projects and weak linkages with policy processes did not allow for making any significant impact on integration of sustainable forest management into planning or adjustment of strategies or regulations promoting competitiveness of the forest sector in the concerned regions. Regional and global impact would also have benefited from more active dissemination of the methods developed and experiences produced and better visibility of good practices on the internet. Lastly, there would have been room for a stronger involvement of the Finnish private sector through promotion of investment or matchmaking activities.

The main recommendations and lessons learned are:

1. MFA should provide more guidance for the planning of future regional projects and programmes, including analysis of regional and national policies, and ensure they are based on proper identification of joint regional problems and themes, stakeholders and partners.
2. MFA and implementing partners should ensure that regional projects have gender as a crosscutting objective, with adequate budgets supporting the effective implementation of gender equality principles and promoting gender mainstreaming.
3. MFA and its implementing partners should ensure that regional initiatives supporting innovation have robust and systematic M&E and knowledge management systems that allow for learning across projects and feeding documented experience into the policy dialogue.
4. MFA should pursue its support to value chain development initiatives in its regional and country-level forest sector development projects, at an appropriate scale, implemented over a long enough period to reach their purpose.
5. MFA and project partners should facilitate access to follow-up funding opportunities, as and where required.
6. MFA and partner country governments should ensure that contributions to regional projects by governmental, NGO and private sector partners are clearly defined and formalised, with particular attention to linkages with (sub-)national and regional policies and actors.
7. Forestry value chain projects should realise the good potential for Finnish added value by facilitating access to Finnish investors, markets, technology or expertise, and MFA should more actively explore opportunities to create synergies between its forestry projects and the private-sector support instruments of Finland's development co-operation.



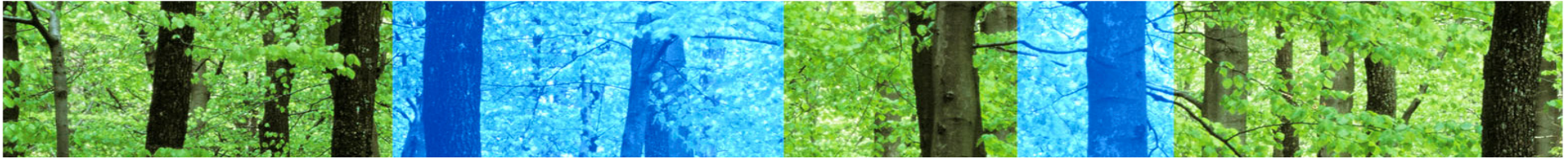
Annex 11

Presentation on draft final report

Indufor Presentation



Name of Presenter: Egger TOPPER
Date and Time: 11 October 2017
Venue: MFA-Finland



Outline

- Objectives
- Context
- Methodology
- Conclusions-Recommendations
- Other lessons

...final evaluation
of regional
forest projects in
Mekong,
Andean and
Central America



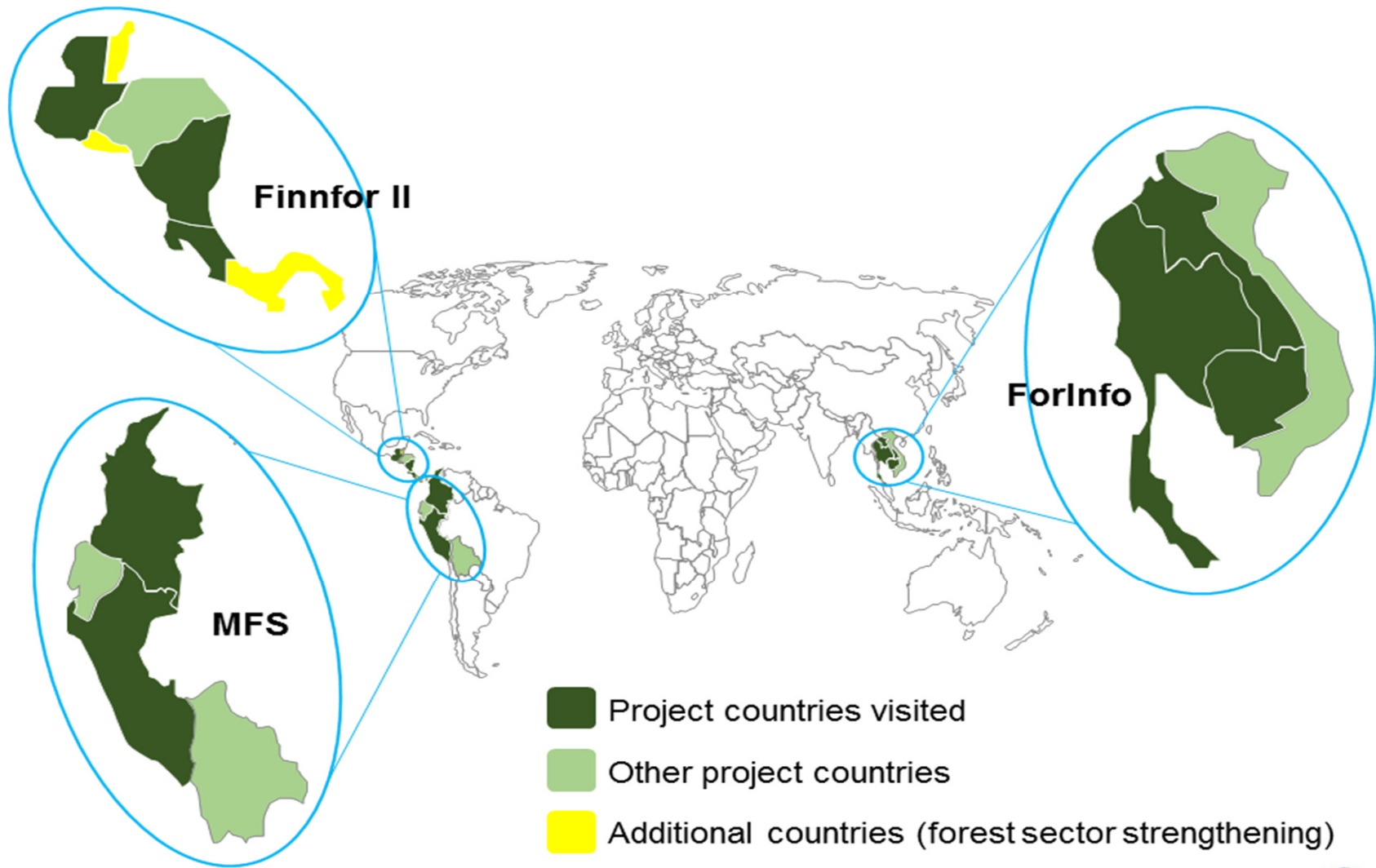
Objectives

Provide guidance for planning and implementation of regional forestry projects

- Forestry specific elements (livelihoods, VCD, PES)
- Regional programmes (added value)
- Based on evaluation of three regional projects



... Learn from projects for forestry and regional projects





Context

Origins

- Push towards regional cooperation: improve effectiveness by organising cooperation into larger entities focusing on specific countries, *regions* and themes
- Forest sector guidance: produce Finnish added value (SFM, fair economic growth, reduce poverty, prevent environmental hazards)
- Build on long-standing cooperation in regions, including peace building objectives
- CATIE a strategic international partner (2009)



... Increasing
regional
cooperation



Methodology

Challenge: bring differing realities together...

- Reasonably good coverage (ex-post)
- Standardised data collection and interpretation: (evaluation matrix, methodology day)
- Combining junior and senior experts
- Invested in common reference framework on key issues (livelihoods, PES, VCD, etc)
- Joint data analysis and discussion (3 days)



... From local to
national to
regional to
global-level
learning

Evaluation Question (EQ)	Weight	Finnfor -II	ForInfo	MFS	Overall
Relevance	1	3.52	2.82	2.58	2.97
EQ1: To what extent were the programmes consistent with problems and priorities of stakeholders – including Finland's development co-operation objectives and approaches – and of final beneficiaries?	0.6	4.00	3.50	3.50	3.67
EQ2: Was the project design appropriate and realistic to achieve the set objectives?	0.4	2.80	1.80	1.20	1.93
Effectiveness	1	3.05	2.35	2.05	2.48
EQ3: To what extent have expected results (outputs, outcomes) of the projects, in particular with regard to (1) promoting sustainable forestry-based livelihoods and increased income of small producers; (2) developing value chains and (3) developing retribution mechanisms for ecosystems, materialised?	0.7	3.50	2.50	2.50	2.83
EQ4: What value has the regional approach added, in terms of project effectiveness?	0.3	2.00	2.00	1.00	1.67
Efficiency	1	3.40	3.00	3.15	3.18
EQ5: How well did the various activities transform the available resources into the intended results?	1	3.40	3.00	3.15	3.18
Impact	1	3.40	2.40	1.60	2.47
EQ6: To what extent have overall project objectives been achieved, and to what extent have the regional projects contributed to the achievements?	1	3.40	2.40	1.60	2.47
Sustainability	1	3.30	3.10	1.80	2.73
EQ7: To what extent have the programmes achieved sustainable results, and how has the regional approach affected sustainability?	1	3.30	3.10	1.80	2.73
Aid effectiveness	1	2.80	2.40	2.00	2.40
EQ8: How and to what extent have the regional programmes promoted commitment and ownership by the relevant stakeholders?	0.8	3.00	2.50	2.00	2.50
EQ9: What has been the added value of Finland's programmes?	0.2	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00
Coherence	1	3.00	2.50	3.50	3.00
EQ10: How has other co-operation between Finland and the concerned countries been taken into account in implementation, and what have been the synergies of the regional programmes with other initiatives, including private sector and civil society co-operation?	1	3.00	2.50	3.50	3.00
Overall average	7	3.21	2.65	2.38	2.75



... Systematic scoring on detailed evaluation questions..



Relevance

- Projects well aligned with Finnish policies
- And responding to stakeholders and final beneficiaries needs
- But lacking a clear regional rationale (limited guidance and analysis) – and what regional policies or strategies to link up to..?

REC1: MFA to provide guidance for planning of regional projects, based on identification of joint regional problems and themes



... Locally relevant, limited national and regional-level relevance



Relevance - design

- Limited regional results beyond knowledge sharing
- High ambitions in relation to timeframe
- Weak integration of gender objectives

REC2: MFA to ensure gender is properly integrated (across interventions, with budgets)



... Project design would have deserved more attention..



Effectiveness

- Forestry related objectives well achieved, or likely to materialise, including livelihood improvement and VCD

Regional added value

- But regional dimension did not add much value : little interaction with regional policy processes and little cross-boundary cooperation.

REC4: MFA to pursue support for VCD initiatives in country and regional level projects, at an appropriate geographic and time-scale



...effective
benefits at field
level; but limited
added value
from regional
dimension..



Efficiency

- Efficient implementation of all projects, thanks to embedding into existing networks and collaborative programmes
- Country-level presence of coordinators and/or offices and flexibility are success factors
- M&E and knowledge management systems not always appropriate for generating the expected lessons and feeding into policies

REC3: MFA to ensure that innovation projects have proper M&E and KM systems in place to generate lessons and feed policy processes



...efficient
delivery
mechanisms
thanks to
implementing
organisations



Impact

- Livelihoods and SFM can be improved through forestry VCD work – but substantial impact requires more sustained support
- Integration of SFM into local-level planning and adjustment of policies and strategies was less successful
- Dissemination of experience not sufficiently pursued



...good potential impact but longer-term and larger-scale support required for impact



Sustainability

- Overall satisfactory, thanks to
 - embedment in national programmes and institutions (follow-up support and funding)
 - strong ownership among beneficiaries
 - development of local capacities
- Weak anchorage in national policies and institutions of MFS
- Still: relatively abrupt withdrawal..

REC5: MFA to facilitate access to follow-up support, in particular in the case of Forinfo.



...embedding in
local processes
fosters
sustenance of
results and
benefits



Aid effectiveness

- Effective delivery of aid, in terms of ownership, alignment and harmonisation
- Involvement civil society and private sector
- But contributions by partner governments at national and regional level not well defined, reducing scope for upscaling

REC6: MFA and partner governments to ensure that contributions by all partners (GO, NGO, PS) are clearly defined and adhered to



... Well aligned and harmonised interventions; partner contributions remain unclear



Finnish added value

- Was limited to value chain and private sector focus; some opportunities for Finnish signature and business linkages missed

REC7: Forestry value chain projects should realise their potential for Finnish added value (link to Finnish expertise, technology, investors)



... Some opportunities to add Finnish value were missed



Coherence

- Good coherence with Finnish cooperation objectives and other initiatives,
- Some opportunities for synergy were missed, notably in terms of promotion of Finnish technology or expertise, matchmaking, etc.

REC8: MFA to explore opportunities for synergy between forestry projects and private sector support instruments of Finnish cooperation



...scope for better linkage of forestry projects and private sector support



Other lessons

- Regional projects require clear regional policies or strategies to which objectives can be linked; preferably in combination with a strong implementing organisation
- Theories of change linking local projects to regional level outcomes are essential
- Partnerships with the private sector are key to making SFM and tree planting attractive to small producers
- (Forestry) VCD projects should include flexible financial mechanisms for beneficiaries

...



Contact Us

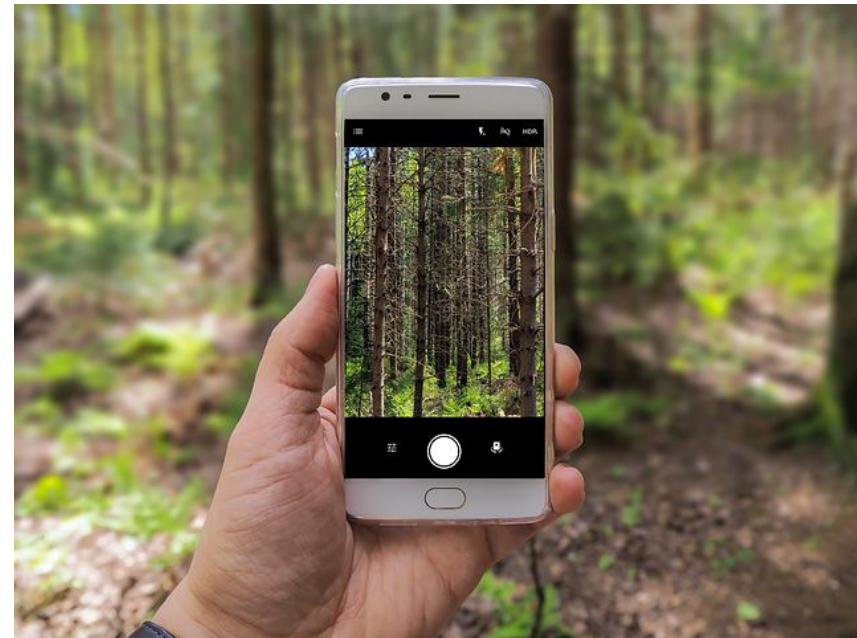
Petra Mikkolainen
Indufor Evaluation Services

Indufor Oy
Esterinportti 2
00240 Helsinki
Finland

Tel. +358 50 412 99 98

Email petra.mikkolainen@indufor.fi

Web www.indufor.fi





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Indufor Oy

Esterinportti 2
FI-00240 Helsinki
FINLAND
Tel. +358 50 331 8217
Fax +358 9 135 2552
indufor@indufor.fi
www.indufor.fi

Indufor Asia Pacific Ltd

7th Floor, 55 Shortland St
PO Box 105 039
Auckland City 1143
NEW ZEALAND
Tel. +64 9 281 4750
Fax +64 9 281 4789
www.indufor-ap.com

Indufor Asia Pacific (Australia) Pty Ltd

Flinders Lane
PO Box 425
Melbourne VIC 8009
AUSTRALIA
Tel. + 61 3 9639 1472
www.indufor-ap.com

Indufor North America LLC

10th Floor
1875 Connecticut Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20009
USA
www.indufor-na.com

