A nudge in the right direction

External Review of the IUCN project
Strengthening Voices for Better Choices

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Utrecht - Brussels, September 2009

A personal note

For us the external review has been a very interesting and challenging task. Omissions and misinterpretations in the report, as well as its conclusions and recommendations remain the responsibility of the two external evaluators. Yet, we have benefited from the support of different sources.

The frank and informative briefings by IUCN and the European Commission did provide us with a wider view on the project and put us on the right track. In most of the project countries we visited, IUCN had arranged valuable support for the evaluation in terms of logistics and meetings with project stakeholders and experts on the national forestry situation. During our debriefings at the IUCN offices we noticed a keen interest in our findings and conclusions. Feedback from these offices always meant an enrichment of the evaluation and strengthened the basis of our recommendations.

We felt very welcome when visiting beneficiaries and stakeholders that were involved in the project. They made us feel at home and participated with frankness in dialogues about experiences and opportunities derived from the project. We have used time and ideas of many people in many organizations. Not in the last place of outsiders, not directly involved in the project – such as other development organisations, third country's Embassies, local consultants, journalists and business people. We acknowledge the importance of the contributions to the evaluation of all our informants. We sincerely thank them for their openness and support.

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Abbreviations and acronyms

AFLEG	Africa Forest Law Enforcement and Governance
COMIFAC	Commission des Forêts de l'Afrique Centrale (Central African Forest Commission)
DfID	Department for International Development
DG	Directorate General
DGF	General Department of Forest Management
DGIS	Directorate General fro Development Cooperation (The Netherlands)
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
EC	European Commission
EAFLEG	East-African FLEG
ETPA	Equity, Transparency, Participation and Action
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FGLG	Forest Governance Learning Groups
FLEG	Forest Law Enforcement and Governance
FLEGT	Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade
FWG	Forest Working Group
GFTN	Global Forest Trade Network
GTZ	German Agency for Technical Cooperation
IIED	International Institute for Environment and Development
ITB	Industrie de Transformation du Bois (Wood Processing Industry)
ITTO	International Tropical Timber Organisation
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
IUCN ARO	IUCN Asian Regional Office
IUCN ESARO	IUCN Eastern and Southern African Regional Office
IUCN SUR	IUCN Regional Office for South America
M&E	Monitoring & Evaluation
MSD	Multi-stakeholder Dialogue
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
NPC	National Project Coordinator
NREG	Natural Resources and Environmental Governance (Ghana)
OVI	Objectively Verifiable Indicator
PCM	Project Cycle Management
PFS	Private Forest Sector
RCO	Regional or Country Office
RECOFTC	Regional Community Forestry Training Centre
REDD	Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation
SVBC	Strengthening Voices for Better Choices project
TNA	Training Needs Assessment
ToRs	Terms of Reference
VPA	Voluntary Partnership Agreement
WWF	World Wide Fund for Nature

Cover photo: Jean-Paul Ledant

Executive Summary

Daily and all over the world decisions in forest governance are taken, that have unintended adverse effects. Choices are often made based on wrong assumptions. Unfortunately we pay for these mistakes by loss of forests, loss of income, loss of biodiversity etc. In the project Strengthening Voices for Better Choices IUCN aims to give a nudge in the right direction to forestry departments, forest companies, forest communities and other forest stakeholders. It specifically does so by facilitating dialogue, offering platforms for interest groups to find common ground and work on better choices with respect for the freedom, position and interests of each group.

The project basically is about improved arrangements for decision making in forest governance. Legality might be the entry point; sustainable development is the horizon IUCN offers. The project is financed by the European Commission in the framework of the Forest Law Enforcement Governance and Trade (FLEGT) Action Plan and has been implemented by IUCN in Brazil, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ghana, Sri Lanka, Tanzania and Viet Nam from 2005 – 2009. The external review – carried out from Mid June to the End of July 2009 – also aims to give a nudge in the right direction: what can we learn from 4 years work in 6 different countries? The evaluations lead to the following conclusions.

The purpose of the project to support forest governance reform makes sense in all countries, although not all expected results have in each country the same relevance. The project collaborates in all countries with relevant actors and adds value to a range of ongoing other initiatives.

The project has realized many positive achievements in the various countries. Not in each country the project had the same effectiveness. Assessments were prepared too late to be used in the pilots; not all training contributed to the project purpose; lessons learned are not yet sufficiently captured and disseminated. There was not enough attention for communication which impacted negatively on the appreciation for the project by external stakeholders.

Strictly speaking the project has functioned more as a program within the wider IUCN Forest Conservation Program than as a project per se. Management has been adaptive and responsive to changing contexts. There was turnover of personnel in five of the six countries, there was no functioning monitoring and evaluation system, there was not enough attention for knowledge management and the multi-country aspect added no or only little value.

Many of the results of the project are sustainable, e.g. mutual understanding, new relationships, less conflicts etc. Positive multi-stakeholder dialogues produce irreversible benefits. However they do take time and continued support is usually needed, e.g. an external facilitator, support for meetings of communities and civil society, a focal point for multi-stakeholder dialogues, further awareness raising and capacities development beyond the forest sector.

The project has resulted in all countries in a significant impact more positive than could be expected on the basis of the mid term review. Awareness, reduced conflicts, better understanding, more dialogues, new arrangements, reduction of damaging practices, increased income of local communities, a wealth of (implicit) learning on multi-stakeholder dialogues applicable in other countries. Still there is need for further strengthening of the voices of communities; there are also some unintended side effects in perceptions caused by lack of attention to communication in the first years. The impact may vary from country to country but overall is very positive. Impact is the most important criterion for an evaluation. Therefore notwithstanding a number of critical comments in this evaluation, the final assessment is very positive.

The evaluation team makes specific recommendations - based on interaction with internal and external stakeholders:

Recommendations to IUCN and local partners for next steps at national level
1. Continue facilitating on-going multi-stakeholder processes
2. Strengthen multi-stakeholder platforms and their sustainability
3. Address specific local needs and priorities

4. Monitor and assess impact of VPA and other arrangements
5. Continue or develop new awareness raising and communication actions

Recommendations for next steps at global IUCN level
6. Organize a discussion on learning lessons from the SVBC project
7. Capture practical learning on multi-stakeholder dialogue
8. Codify the process of forest governance

Recommendations to IUCN for future project design
9. Develop project ideas in advance
10. Base multi-country projects on country-specific needs
11. Invest more time in project design: feasibility, inception phase, kick off meeting
12. Include knowledge management and communication strategy in project design
13. Involve partners in project design
14. Involve adequate expertise for designing innovative multi-stakeholder dialogue projects
15. Involve adequate methodological expertise for problem analysis
16. Involve adequate methodological expertise for Log frame preparation
17. Prepare a feasible monitoring framework even in the case of intangible and unpredictable outputs

Recommendations to IUCN for future project implementation
18. Focus on the purpose and the log frame
19. Improve human resources and project management
20. Clarify the role of global coordinator (in case of multi-country project)
21. Invest in knowledge management
22. Organize communication

Recommendations to IUCN for carrying out an (external) review
23. Select midterm evaluators that have not been part of the design team
24. Invest in the preparation of an evaluation

Recommendations to EC or other donors
25. Integrate the specific added value of participatory processes in the appraisal of projects
26. Explore the possibility of capturing and disseminating lessons learned in multi-stakeholder dialogues to improve forest governance

The annexes contain insight in the perceptions of stakeholders on issues such as the role of IUCN in multi-stakeholder dialogues, lessons learnt, etc. They also provide – from the perspective of learning, knowledge management and communication - some examples and illustrations from the wealth of implicit knowledge generated, that not yet has been fully made explicit in project documents.

1. Introduction

Daily and all over the world decisions in forest governance are taken, that have unintended adverse effects. Choices are often made based on wrong assumptions. Unfortunately we pay for these mistakes by loss of forests, loss of income, loss of biodiversity and ecosystem services. In our understanding the project Strengthening Voices for Better Choices (SVBC) aims to give a nudge in the right direction to forestry departments, forest companies, forest communities and other forest stakeholders. It specifically does so by facilitating dialogue, offering platforms for interest groups to find common ground and work on better choices with respect for the freedom, position and interests of each group.

The project is mainly funded by the European Commission and is carried out by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) with the specific objective of promoting “policy, legal, institutional and economic arrangements that contribute to improved forest governance” in six key tropical forest countries (Brazil, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ghana, Sri Lanka, Tanzania and Viet Nam).

The project started in February 2005 and was completed by the end of July 2009. An internal mid term review was carried out in 2007. In June 2009 IUCN commissioned this final external evaluation of the project, as foreseen in the project document. The draft report was ready early September 2009. After two rounds of comments the final version was realized in November 2009.

This evaluation report starts with a description of the methods used by the evaluation and a project fact sheet, summarizing the main facts and figures about the project. It then analyzes context, preparation, design, synergies, strategies, organization, monitoring and evaluation, budget, external constraints, activities and results, outcomes and impacts, crosscutting issues and sustainability factors. This analysis explains and comments the different steps and components of the project in order to support the assessment, which wraps up positive and negative aspects on each evaluation criterion: relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact.

The last chapter focuses on conclusions, recommendations and learning for the future.

In the technical annexes the evaluators provide – especially from the perspective of learning, knowledge management and communication - some examples and illustrations from the potential wealth of implicit knowledge generated in the project, that not yet has been fully made explicit in lessons learned documents and activities. The examples and illustrations are based on the interviews and are developed in interaction with some of the project stakeholders during the country visits. They are meant as suggestions to consider for future design, implementation and management of similar projects and by no means as didactic evaluation observations or the ultimate truth of ‘best sailors staying on shore’.

2. Methods and limitations of the evaluation

The purpose of this evaluation is to assess relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and impact of the project and to learn for future similar projects and activities. The complete Terms of Reference for this review are presented in Annex 1.

2.1. The evaluation method and process

The review was conducted by the authors of this report during the period mid June to mid August 2009. The overall evaluation approach follows both the IUCN[1] and the EC[2] evaluation methods. It is also based on the principles of the logical framework approach proposed by the EuropeAid "Project Cycle Management Guidelines" (2004)[3].

Two external senior review experts made up the team together with an IUCN young professional, who was assigned to the team to learn. The complementarities of knowledge of the two senior evaluators proved to be very useful. Despite the presence of an IUCN staff member the senior consultants guarantee that the evaluation is external and independent.

A face to face briefing was conducted by the global project coordinator on 16-17 June where the evaluators made methodological comments to the ToR which could adequately be taken into account. With the global project coordinator and the head of the IUCN monitoring and evaluation unit the team formulated an evaluation matrix (See Annex 2). The team then prepared an inception note and interview protocols, which were approved by IUCN on 23 June 2009 (see Annex 2).

The evaluators reviewed key documents (see Annex 3); conducted formal and informal telephone and face-to-face interviews with IUCN staff, external advisers and key informants, and representatives of the project's various internal and external stakeholder groups (see Annex 4).

The team attended on 23-24 June 2009 a Chatham House conference in London, where the project was presented. They also used the opportunity to interview key stakeholders. On 30 June the team had a meeting with key representatives of the European Commission to be further briefed on the context of the project, the links with the activities of the Commission in the field of Forest Legislation Enforcement Governance and Trade (FLEGT), Voluntary Partnership Agreements (VPAs), and the expectations the Commission experts had of the evaluation. One team member attended a project workshop in Nairobi (6-8 July 2009), where lessons learnt on multi-stakeholder dialogues were shared and more face to face interviews could be conducted. The team then visited together the project in Ghana (9-14 July). In the last two weeks of July individual team members visited the project office in Bangkok, the project in Viet Nam, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Brazil.

For the evaluation it was extremely useful to observe and experience the project in action during the presentation in Chatham House, the Nairobi write-up workshop and a Tripartite Stakeholder meeting in Brazil. The field visits that were organized in Ghana, Brazil and DRC were also a very good means to provide insight in the reality of the project on the ground. Finally it was useful to meet with some members of the mid term review face to face. Not all countries could be visited and the time was too

[1] IUCN (2004) Managing Evaluations: A Guide for IUCN Programme and Project Managers, IUCN, Gland, Switzerland and Cambridge, UK. 40 pp.
[2] http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/evaluation/methodology/index_en.htm and EC (2006) Evaluation methods for the European Union external assistance. Guidelines for project and programme evaluation. European Communities, 44 pp.
[3] http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/multimedia/publications/publications/manuals-tools/t101_en.htm

short to evaluate the country projects individually. The short missions to the four countries only could serve as information contributing to the evaluation of the overall project.

On 28 July a team debriefing meeting was held in Brussels with the global project coordinator on the various missions and first conclusions were drawn from the country visits. Subsequently telephone interviews were held to collect additional information. The report was written in August and a first draft was presented to IUCN in mid August. IUCN comments and corrections are integrated in this final report.

In total, 112 formal interviews were conducted, of which 30 were with people from within IUCN and the project and 82 were with people external to IUCN. For a list of respondents see Annex 4. Interviews were used both to learn about the perception of stakeholders about different aspects of the project and to collect data that were crosschecked and used for the assessment.

Stake-holders	Global & regional	Brazil	DR Congo	Ghana	Sri Lanka	Tanzania	Viet Nam	total
internal	12	6	1	2	3	1	5	30
external	11	12	27	17	0	2	13	82
Total	23	18	28	19	3	3	18	112

The logistical aspects of the evaluation in general – although often last minute work - were well arranged by IUCN. It was also highly appreciated by the evaluators to have been able to adapt the program prepared by the local IUCN office, for example in Brazil in order to make field visits to communities.

2.2. Constraints and limitations

Although the evaluation had been in preparation since the project coordination team meeting of February 2009, it had to be carried out in an extremely short period of time. The short timeframe had the following consequences:

- Most telephone interviews had to be carried out after the missions and only towards the end of the evaluation the financial information was available.
- An approach of two evaluators visiting a country was not possible; only one country could be visited by the whole team, three countries were visited by individual team members and it was impossible to visit all countries.
- The time for logistical preparation and briefing of stakeholders to be available for interviews was sometimes only a few days; not all countries had time enough to prepare for the mission; have all the information ready and have all arrangements in place for the interviews.
- It was not possible to analyze as many project documents, to interview as many – especially external - stakeholders and to spend as much time in the field as the review team may have wished to get a detailed picture of the country projects.
- Therefore all information could not be cross-checked, sometimes subjective perception by stakeholders may influence the conclusions and country-level information is only used as examples and never for an overall evaluation of the country component itself.

Additional constraints for collecting adequate information were the following:

- Information about the project had to be found in a huge amount of reports and other documents, both in Brussels and in the various countries. Not in all cases these documents contained information about dates, authors etc. Each country had its own filing system, with different items and headings. Often copies were only electronically available and were difficult to immediately trace.
- Although the evaluators had provided a three page guideline for the invitation for the interviews (through email and telephone), this was not followed. In most cases the guidelines for the IUCN office(s) were just mailed to the respondents (and in some cases even translated into the local language). In a few cases this has led to some confusion.
- The evaluation may formally have been a part of the overall monitoring and evaluation system, it was not by all project staff perceived as a moment of individual, team and organizational learning. At the global and regional level the willingness and need felt to learn from the

evaluation was more present than at the country level. In some cases the evaluation seemed to be seen as an uninvited add on to the daily workload.

- For many external stakeholders the “borders” of the project and the distinction between the project and IUCN were not clear at all.

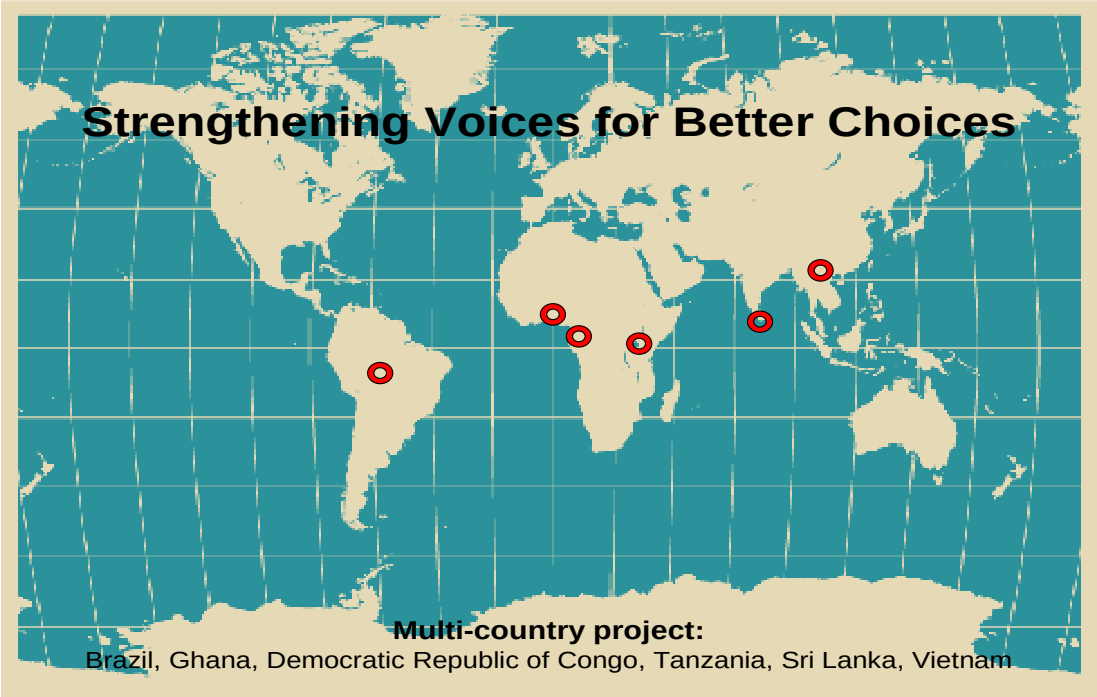
Regarding the evaluation itself a major constraint was the lack of adequate and monitored indicators referring to a single and clear logical framework. As explained below the project used several logical frameworks and had also implicit objectives. The evaluators decided to refer to the overall logical framework (part of the project document) but they could not ignore the existence of others and this overall logical framework reflects complicated logical links between results. Moreover the indicators were both discussable and unmonitored. Therefore the evaluation could not clearly focus on adequate benchmarks especially for assessing effectiveness and efficiency.

A project has a formal structure laid down in the project document and the log frame. A project has also an informal structure that is reflected in the reality of the work on the ground. Project evaluations are carried out against the formal structure of the project. That may not always do enough credit to the many positive results and impacts of the project and the enthusiasm and hard work of the project staff. This is especially the case with ‘high risk’ and complex innovative projects that deal with issues that have still to be defined by key stakeholders, that have intangible outcomes, and are based on changes in culture, organization or the social environment. Strengthening Voices for Better Choices is such a project. As far as possible the evaluators have tried to have an open eye for these aspects of the project.

Strictly speaking the project has functioned more as a program within the wider IUCN Forest Conservation Program than as a project per se. The tension between project and program approach (for differences between project and program see Annex 8) may have partly to do with the complex nature of addressing governance issues and processes in a project, partly with the way IUCN operates. The evaluators have made a number of comments on this issue, e.g. it is difficult for external stakeholders to make a distinction between the project, the Forest Conservation Program and IUCN. All these comments have to be seen in the light of evaluating the project against the standard OECD DAC and EC evaluation criteria. The comments on this issue throughout the report and its annexes are meant as positive feedback and learning about the challenge of translating IUCN’s value proposition into projects that can be funded by donors.

Even with these limitations, the review team was able to make informed assessments on the basis of the visits, interviews and documentation. However because of these limitations, the evaluators cannot provide valid assessments at the level of each country specific component.

3. Project Factsheet



Purpose (specific objective)

Policy, legal, institutional and economic arrangements that contribute to improved forest governance are identified and promoted in six key tropical forest countries, and enjoy the active support of government, civil society and the private sector.

Expected Results

1. Policy, legal, institutional and economic obstacles to sustainable and equitable forest management identified in six priority countries.
2. New and innovative approaches to overcoming the obstacles to good forest governance pilot tested and assessed.
3. Selected representatives from government, civil society and the private sector have enhanced skills and knowledge which enable them to participate more effectively in the development and implementation of forest governance reforms.
4. Awareness of, and commitment to, FLEG processes and action increased and sustained.
5. The lessons learned from the project's experiences are effectively captured, analysed and disseminated at the local, national, regional and global levels.

Budget & Duration

€ 4,264,365
February 2005 – July 2009 (initially until January 2009).

Implementing agency

IUCN – International Union for Conservation of Nature

Main donors

European Commission - EuropeAid Cooperation Office (77,68%), UK Department for International Development, Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs - Directorate-General for International Cooperation.

4. Project analysis

4.1. Context

The project takes place in the broad context of global concerns regarding the rapid depletion of forest resources in developing countries with its adverse social, economic and environmental impacts. Poor forest governance is deemed to be a major driving force of those trends in addition to its role in diverting resources from development. When the project was designed responses to those concerns included the regional FLEG initiatives (supported by the FLEG multi-donor partnership), the EC FLEGT Action Plan launched in 2003, the European Commission (EC) "Program on tropical and other forests in developing countries" (now replaced by the Thematic Programme For Environment and Sustainable Management of Natural Resources including Energy) and the IUCN Forest Conservation Program.

The project is part of the IUCN Forest Conservation Programme and was submitted in 2004 to the European Commission call for proposals under the "Program on tropical and other forests in developing countries" as a contribution to the objectives of regional FLEG initiatives and the new EU FLEGT action plan. In 2001 an East Asia Ministerial Conference on FLEG had taken place in September 2001 in Bali, Indonesia (resulting in the Bali declaration) and an Africa Forest Law Enforcement and Governance (AFLEG) Ministerial Conference had taken place in October 2003, in Yaoundé, Cameroon (resulting in an EAFLG declaration and action plan). There was no FLEG initiative in South America and two countries selected for the project (Sri Lanka and Brazil) had not been involved in FLEG initiatives. But they do have similar serious problems with illegal logging and forest governance.

Specific context features in the 6 countries targeted by the project are summarized in the table below as they were when the project started. However the project is not primarily a response to those situations, as the countries were selected during (and not before) the drafting process.

Country	Key aspects
Brazil	Important share of the globally important Amazonian forest (plus Mata Atlántico). History of forest related conflicts and socio-environmental movement in Acre (where SVBV is implemented), with recent political changes towards better governance and more sustainability. Not involved in FLEG initiative.
Ghana	Highly deforested country (part of the Guinean rainforest of West Africa). Dual forest economy consisting of a more-or-less modern export timber oriented sector and an informal domestic timber sector; high rate of illegal harvesting and high pressures on the forest. Country involved in African FLEG ministerial conference, Yaoundé, 2003.
R.D. Congo	Important share of the globally important Central African equatorial forest. Recent civil war (still on-going in the east). Several institutional reforms, including new Forest Code in 2002. Big gap and distance between national institutional framework and field situation. Involved in African FLEG ministerial conference, Yaoundé, 2003.
Tanzania	Overall a dry forest country (miombo woodland). Forest resources are mainly used in the domestic market. The is a niche market for black ivory wood (musical instruments) and some export to Asia. A new policy and legal framework (Forest Act, 2002) encourages participatory forest management. Not involved in African FLEG ministerial conference, Yaoundé, 2003, but engaged afterwards in EAFLEG, the East African FLEG,.
Sri Lanka	Natural forests important for environmental services, biodiversity (a hotspot), community livelihood but not much for timber. Not involved in FLEG (not part of East Asia FLEG ministerial conference, Bali, 2001). In the site selected for pilot

	activities (Knuckle) a newly established Protected Area was depriving local communities from access to natural resources.
Viet Nam	Forests are important biodiversity hotspots and play key roles in the water regime and in livelihoods of minority groups, but after having worked on Community Forest Management SVBC mainly addressed wood industry based on imported raw material. Important reforms are on-going. Public participation and civil society have in Vietnam a different connotation than in the other project countries. Viet Nam participated to the East Asia FLEG ministerial conference (Bali, 2001).

Since the beginning of the project this overall context has been changing quite rapidly. At the level of the European Union, the EU FLEGT Action Plan was followed by the FLEGT regulation adopted by the Council in December 2005. This allowed for control of the timber import from countries entering into bilateral FLEGT Voluntary Partnership Agreements (VPA) with the European Union. Afterwards the European Commission and Ghana have been negotiating a VPA. Since 2008 the European Commission and Viet Nam are examining options for cooperation with regards to FLEGT. This is not envisaged in Sri Lanka and Brazil. At the national level many other (political) changes happened in the countries, notably in DRC where elections were organized in 2006 and a committee on natural resources was established in the parliament. Other external developments include the establishment of the AFLEG/FLEGT task force under the auspices of COMIFAC in Central Africa, the First East Africa Consultative Forum on Forests (2006) and the new challenges for forest governance resulting from the suggestion (Bali, 2007) to include Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation (REDD) in the Clean Development Mechanisms for climate change mitigation.

4.2. Preparation process

A small group of senior staff of the IUCN Forest Conservation Program in the Asia Regional Office and in the IUCN Headquarters – all with an impressive record and extensive experience – took the initiative to formulate the project as a response to a call for proposals by the European Commission in 2003 for its Program on Tropical Forests and other Forests in Developing Countries. This program aims to stimulate actions in the field of Good governance in forests, Climate change and forests in developing countries and Value of forests in developing countries.

At the time of the design of the project the current FLEGT and VPA approaches of the European Commission were not at all as crystallized as they are today. One of the members of the design team remembers that they saw the call for proposal as a unique opportunity to further elaborate on their broad ideas about forest governance as a logical next step in the IUCN work on forest conservation, non timber forest products, poverty alleviation and livelihoods, landscape restoration and sustainable development. The ideas centred on forest governance as an essential element for sustainable development and legality issues as an entry point for a broader approach to good governance.

Due to a number of reasons the project had to be developed in the very short time frame of less than three weeks. The group worked on the design in dialogue with the Head of the IUCN Global Forest Conservation Program. Only in a relative late stage other regional offices were consulted and given a say in the selection of countries. There was no time for a thorough situation analysis in each country, including a check for the demand among key stakeholders for the project's 'services' towards forest governance or a problem analysis as recommended in the logical framework approach. There was also no time for participation of country offices or country experts to help develop the proposal in a demand oriented and bottom-up way or to tailor the project to the specific country context and needs. This may explain why the proposal was designed in a rather generic way.

External stakeholders also commented on the preparation process:

> *"The project seems to be based on too many assumptions. Was there in the design phase enough time to understand the political and policy arena of forest governance they were entering?"*

> *"Due to the rush in preparing the project proposal enough attention to reach agreements with partners on roles and responsibilities has been neglected."*

As a result of the supply-driven approach in the project preparation the overall project logical framework was applied equally in all target countries regardless their particularities. This has led to the need for subsequently adapting the project and for spending time on building local ownership, which may have reduced the overall efficiency. Country specific log frames were therefore prepared during project implementation (thus late) and were based on problem trees, which helped making them relevant to the context. Some methodological comments should however be made on those problem trees (see Annex 6).

4.3. Project design and logical framework

4.3.1. Multi-country structure

IUCN is a knowledge-based organization. It provides credible, trusted knowledge. IUCN convenes and builds partnerships for action. It has a global-to-local and local-to-global reach and aims to influence standards, policies and practices. Based on this value proposition the project is designed to work in 6 countries and at different levels (from local to global). This provides a good basis for developing a valuable experience and learning lessons of broad applicability. Indeed opportunities to exchange lessons learnt were perceived as the main added-value of the multi-country aspect (see Annex 5) by project coordinators:

> *"In the four international meetings we could see what was happening in other countries, you could see where you were lagging behind, where you could go faster. In cases of staff turnover the new coordinator could learn from his peers."*

Most project stakeholders did not see the added value of the multi-country aspect of the project and many local stakeholders were not even aware of this dimension. A few internal and external stakeholders saw some added value, but mostly phrased in a theoretical way, without a concrete example from the project itself. External stakeholders tend to be less positive than IUCN staff on this aspect, as reflected by the following quote:

> *"The added-value of the multi-country dimension is for IUCN only."*

Due to the logical framework, the project consistency suffers from the multi-country dimension in a sense that the project does not focus on one single overarching objective. The purpose (specific objective) tended indeed to be pursued in parallel in each country (despite exchange of lessons learnt under result 5) and is therefore 6-fold. The situation would not have been very different if six similar projects were run in parallel in 6 different countries and had exchanged information. The exchanges on FLEGT issues with Liberia and Cameroon demonstrate that interesting exchanges are possible outside the project and also suggest that another group of countries could have been more adequate (for example from a FLEGT perspective exchanges between DRC and Cameroon could be more useful than exchanges between DRC and Sri Lanka; the same is true for Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia).

4.3.2. Logical frameworks

The project structure is reflected in the main log frame. A log frame is the overall pattern of logical links between activities, results and objectives. In this case the log frame is rather complex. The formal hierarchy established between expected results, specific objective and overall objective in the main log frame does not exactly reflect causality links. There are several causality links between expected results as explained in annex 7 (see the figure). This means that it is difficult to track how each specific activity contributes to each particular result and to the purpose. It also implies a risk of having tasks decided or carried out without clear understanding of their justification (for example how does a course on grasscutter breeding contribute to arrangements on forest governance?). This is a constraint for project implementation and for the evaluation of the project:

- Project staff and consultants cannot easily select or fine tune their activities in order to optimise their contribution to the project specific objective.
- Evaluators cannot identify which action or means contribute to one particular result and therefore cannot assess the cost-effectiveness of the results.

The overall log frame does not indicate clearly to what extent each result is valid for each country. In SVBC there was a clear tendency to pursue all results in all countries. However as mentioned above there was also a need to tailor the project to the context of the six countries. For this purpose country problem trees and log frames were developed. These logical frameworks had a simpler structure (with "parallel" results) but (except in Sri Lanka, the only country where a selection was made in the expected results of the main log frame) they had no explicit link with the overall project log frame. In Sri Lanka there has also been a special log frame for the pilot site area. The result is a project based on different logical frameworks.

The purpose in the main log frame covers in fact 6 objectives (one per country), there are several other log frames with their own purpose and moreover additional goals (not reflected in the log frames) were pursued in parallel (for example to learn lessons of broad applicability or to strengthen voices as suggested by the title). The project therefore had many objectives (both explicit in the log frame and implicit) without clear hierarchy between them. This implies a high risk of competing efforts. Annex 7 provides more detailed comments on the logical framework approach.

4.3.3. Programme structure, fuzzy borders and multi-facetted reality

Because of its different objectives pursued in different locations the project is not as centripetal (focused on one single and unique purpose) as recommended by the log frame approach. On the contrary it has in fact a centrifugal structure, as it channels resources through one single institution (IUCN) for several scattered achievements. This centrifugal structure (corresponding more to a program than to a project approach) entails constraints for result-based management and efficiency because of the risk of competing efforts. It also makes monitoring and evaluation (including this evaluation) more difficult.

A consequence of this structure is that stakeholders face difficulties in identifying the boundaries of the project and distinguishing it from IUCN or other IUCN activities (in particular from the project Livelihoods and Landscapes). This tends to reduce ownership of the project by external stakeholders and contributes to the difficulty in this evaluation to identify the specific outcomes of this project.

The fuzzy borders of the project and its multi-facetted aspect, linked with its multiple objectives and actions, is notably reflected by the diverse perceptions of the stakeholders on the essence of the project. Answers to the question "How stakeholders perceive the core/essence of the project?" include the following (see annex 5 for more details).

"Forest governance through multi-stakeholder dialogue and community involvement."
"Bringing people together to discuss and create shared understanding of forest issues, causes, solutions and how to implement solutions."
"Empowering civil society to participate in institutional forest governance processes to improve their livelihoods."
"Illegal logging."
"Enabling communities to have their voice heard in forest management."
"Impacting local and national processes to improve forest governance at village level".
"Policy advocacy project."
"Make stakeholders recognise their rights, role and responsibilities."
"FLEGT awareness raising."
"VPA process."
"Platform for dialogue among regulators, private sector and communities."
"Community based project."
"The project is about the exclusion of the people from resource management decision making."
"Better protection of the territory. "
"Empowerment of civil society groups."

"Conflict reduction between the company and the population."

It is noticeable that key words of the project title (voices, choices) and the project purpose (arrangements) are very scarcely quoted.

4.4. Complementarities and synergies with other initiatives

A significant number of projects and organisations contribute to FLEG/ FLEGT objectives and those initiatives may frequently interact. For FLEGT alone the European Commission supports at least 22 different projects, including several multi-country projects.

The project supported contributions to VPA (pre-) negotiations in Ghana and Viet Nam and to the AFLEG-FLEGT Task Force (COMIFAC). It also participated in meetings - organised by the European Commission - of FLEGT-related and EC financed projects and worked closely together with other EC funded projects, e.g. IIED's Forest Governance Learning Groups (FGLG) in Ghana and the WWF Global Forest Trade Network (GFTN) in Brazil and Viet Nam. From a FLEGT or European Commission perspective the external coherence of the project can therefore be positively assessed. However the European Commission may sometimes expect from the project or from IUCN that it plays a different role especially when engaging in VPA political negotiations.

From a broader perspective the overall picture of external coherence is complicated because of the fuzzy contours of the project due notably to the high number of activities implemented with external stakeholders for various purposes. As explained above (4.3.) there is also an easy confusion between IUCN and the project. Moreover IUCN also acts in forest governance outside of this project, e.g. building multi-stakeholder coalitions in Central and West Africa and in China for the negotiation and implementation of nationally defined and innovative actions in support of FLEGT/VPAs, or for similar MSD facilitation in Cameroon.

However it seems clear that efforts have been made for coordination and exchanges of information, including the participation to the Chatham House meetings and coordination with Tropenbos International (Ghana), WWF (Viet Nam, Brazil), Traffic and others. Some stakeholders have the impression that different international organisations including IUCN are more competing than cooperating. In the end however the overall external consistency – strictly speaking - can be assessed positively.

4.5. Approaches and strategies

The design team chose a broad approach to positively influence forest governance practices through a number of interventions: legal and economic assessments, participatory management pilots, capacity development and FLEG discussion platforms. Together these interventions aim to put FLEG or forest governance (higher) on the agenda of key stakeholders, to realize innovative arrangements for forest governance at various levels (local, provincial and national) and to generate knowledge to bridge the practice-policy gap at the national and international level. The overall project approach was to generate global lessons learned in forest governance from similar country projects with shared generic goals.

The evaluators could not find a specific change theory or strategy at the basis of such governance reform processes. Clearly the external pressure of the policy developments in the European Union and their effect on markets have helped as a driver for change in some of the project countries (for example Ghana). The strategy of the project has been to use such ongoing initiatives or processes as much as possible. The project also made a deliberate choice to use as much as possible existing structures and partner- or relationships in the selected countries.

Participation and forest governance are central elements in the project. The project document makes the overall project approach explicit: "the project will foster and promote a tripartite approach to all its activities, involving government, civil society and the private sector". The project recognizes that participation – next to equity, transparency and action - is a precondition for or a crucial component of

good governance. The project promotes a Tripartite Approach, meaning the participation of Government, Private Sector and Civil society. This approach was sometimes adequately extended to a broader multi-stakeholder (multi-partite) dialogue, where more attention is paid to the segmentation, composition and representation of each stakeholder group. Promoting broader participatory processes in forest governance was a key element in the project.

Many stakeholders appreciate the role plaid by IUCN in multi-stakeholder dialogues related to forest governance. IUCN respondents see a clear role for IUCN, they are however not very explicit about the preconditions and modalities of this role and the competences needed. Respondents from the European Commission see a role for IUCN as convenor. They also have specific ideas about the modalities of this role. Most other external international stakeholders see a clear role for IUCN in a variety of supporting roles in multi-stakeholder dialogues as part of governance processes. Most governmental stakeholders perceive the role of IUCN positive and point at different specific competences that make IUCN qualify. Example of quotes (see Annex 5 for more details) :

> *"With its core capacity as convenor and its presence in regions IUCN is well placed to facilitate multi-stakeholder dialogues for FLEGT."*
>
> *"IUCN can play a role to convene stakeholders, especially civil society. It is well placed to facilitate consultation meetings."*
>
> *"IUCN's position as international NGO with governments and NGOs as members is unique and qualifies IUCN to facilitate (inter)national multi-stakeholder dialogues."*
>
> *"IUCN was the right organisation as it is neutral and external. There was a need for an external player."*
>
> *"IUCN has credibility among government and civil society. Other organisations don't have this. "*

However other stakeholders are sceptical about IUCN capacities in forest governance processes:

> *"IUCN should keep to its core business. They are a credible sender of conservation messages, but not of governance. FLEGT is too complicated and sensitive for IUCN. Especially as IUCN is weak in communication and relation management."*
>
> *"Dialogues for forest conservation would be typical IUCN business. Forest governance is an innovation or new business for IUCN and maybe a bridge too far. It is a question for IUCN whether they really want to move in this direction. It is not clear whether IUCN wants to position itself in governance."*

Seeking active participation to the project implementation was less effective, due to the project structure (a project centred on IUCN); however it should be acknowledged that participation in pursuing objectives is more important than participation in implementation.

The project adopted an overall and broad approach of forest governance, going beyond strict legality and law enforcement (although it happened locally, for instance in Ghana, that the project focused on legality in a sense that this is a key word in the specific objective of the country log frame). IUCN considers correctly that legality is not per definition contributing to sustainability and equity. This broad perspective is certainly a positive and in some countries an innovative strategy.

Another approach that needs some clarification is the support to livelihoods. In general there is a tension between the short term needs of local stakeholders and the fact that improving forest governance will require investments now but will only provide benefits later. A livelihood approach can be a highly justified goal for poverty alleviation. It is difficult to see it as a contribution to the project purpose of improving governance. It can be a strategy to reduce conflicts and opposition, a strategy to reduce the pressure on the forests, or compensation in exchange of reduced access to the natural resources. It can also be a tactical move to motivate communities to participate in a long term governance exercise. In this context it can also be noticed that sometimes the project assumes that communities depending on the forest will support conservation (as in Brazil with the 'seringueiros'

movement) and in other cases the project tried to reduce the dependency (as in Sri Lanka). The livelihood aspects also unintentionally generate a tension between the focus on the local beneficiaries and the focus on the governance system. Finally it should be added that rural development alone is usually a difficult job even when it is not combined with forest conservation concerns. Therefore related activities cannot be just marginal tasks of staff who are mainly involved in forest governance. This implies not only a risk of failure but also a risk of negative impact through raising excessive expectations that cannot be fulfilled.

Halfway the project a choice was made to focus – where possible – much more on support to FLEG and FLEGT and to position IUCN strategically as a facilitator of multi-stakeholder dialogues for forest governance. IUCN as a union of governments, NGOs and academia has a unique reputation as convenor. It has proven it's convening power on many occasions. The project increasingly aimed to capitalize on this role and to position IUCN in international forest governance processes as a reliable partner with a unique set of competences. In the words of external stakeholders these competences are perceived as:

- advocate (of participatory approaches for forest governance and sustainable development processes at all levels),
- convenor (a party that is not-politically aligned, is neutral in the perception of stakeholders, is knowledgeable and trusted and therefore can bring stakeholders to the table),
- translator (not only literally, but also in terms of knowing the 'languages' of the various stakeholder groups and explaining positions where needed to stakeholders),
- educator (explaining international contexts, building new knowledge and skills among stakeholder groups through training, peer exchange and joint fact-finding),
- broker (working behind the scenes on acceptance of other groups or interests or to find common ground and overcome bottlenecks in the process),
- facilitator (suggesting adequate methodologies to organize interactive governance processes and facilitating multi-stakeholder meetings or separate consultations with stakeholder groups).

This positioning has been the result of learning by doing and not an explicit and clearly communicated project approach. An important moment in this learning process has been the involvement of the Keystone Institute in the Ghana VPA process (and later in another similar IUCN project in Cameroon). Unfortunately most of the wealth of learning in the project on multi-stakeholder dialogues is still implicit knowledge.

4.6. Organisational setting and management

4.6.1. Organisation

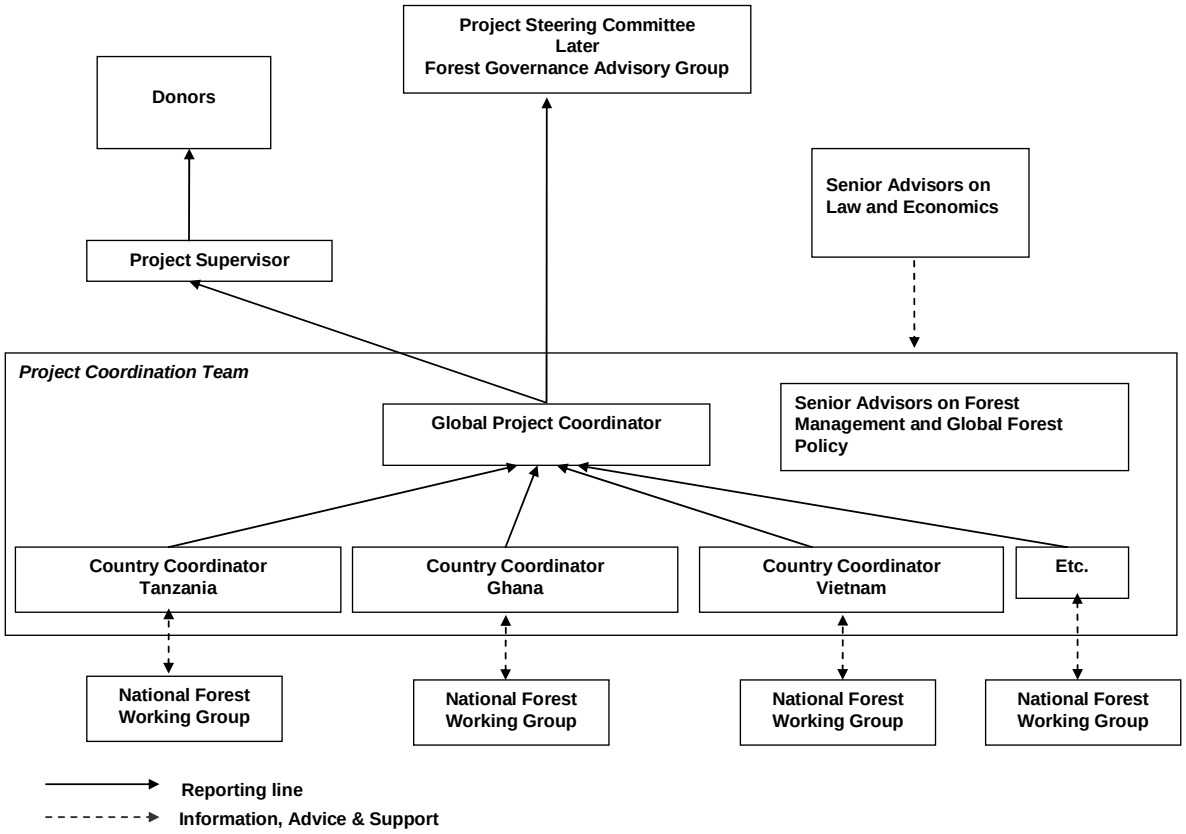
In the beginning the project was coordinated, administered and managed by the Global Project Coordinator, situated in IUCN Asia Regional Office in Bangkok. The head of the IUCN global Forest Conservation Program supervises the global project coordinator and is responsible for donor relations. The global project coordinator is since 2008 assisted by a Bangkok-based Project Officer. In 2009 this became the Forest Governance Officer, with the specific task to provide technical backstopping to he project in Vietnam and Sri Lanka and communications services to the entire project. The officer was part of the Project Coordination Team.

The project is executed by six country coordinators, who are located either in a project office or an IUCN country office. The project staff are formally hired by country or regional offices and report both to their superiors in these offices and to the global coordinator. The country implementation teams were supposed to interact with a national forest working group (an existing structure or a group newly to set up). This did not work in each country in the same way.

The global and country coordinators met once a year in a project coordination team. They are supposed to report to a project steering committee. High level global experts and partners are members of this committee. In practice this committee met only once but did not really steer the project. In its first meeting, it discussed the findings and recommendations of the internal review; it

also made its own recommendations on the project. Several recommendations were subsequently implemented by the project. Before the meeting several members of the project steering committee visited a project country/site to get to know the project better. The committee was then turned into a more general advisory group for IUCN on forest governance. This Group also met once and discussed the project and other issues.

For specific expertise the project could call on the advice and guidance of a number of IUCN senior advisors on law, economics and forest management. Being placed in the IUCN regional or country Forest Conservation Programs the project also had – at least in theory - wide access to knowledge and experience of other IUCN forest experts and could also bring 'real life experience' to their work. A range of project partners complemented the knowledge base and networks of IUCN in the various countries. This was meant to enhance local ownership and add value to other initiatives on forest governance. Some global partners were represented in the project steering committee. In practice these partnerships worked in a mutually beneficial way in some countries or cases, but not always. In the organogram of the project document the organizations is pictured as follows:



Until December 2008 global advisors spent roughly a total roughly 270 days on the project. There is a different perception between the global and country level on the need for this amount of time from global advisors. Some country coordinators indicated that they needed not more than a total of 10 days legal and economic advice from the global level for the whole project period. While the perception of some advisors on the global level was that quality would be enhanced if there had been a mandatory coaching of country coordinators for the legal and economic assessments, involving a far higher number of days than currently spent. The project coordinator spent most of his time in backstopping country coordinators, monitoring progress, and internal and external communication. Most country coordinators indicated they would have liked more time from the global project coordinator.

In general one can say that the role of the global advisors was more related to backstopping, quality control and advice on the content of the desired results, than in translating and disseminating lessons from the country projects into policy advice, new standards and practices at the international level and

in providing an international context to the country projects. One also can say that the project had a rather heavy overhead structure, as one external stakeholder comments:

> *I would forget about the heavy global structure of legal economic and forest advisors: they had no added value.*

4.6.2. Management

The project came across a range of management challenges as a number of issues was not resolved at the time the project was granted and sanctioned. These included the sharing of overheads: equally among implementing offices, only by the office that developed the project or another ratio for sharing. Finally a choice was made for the latter.

One internal stakeholder comments that a next time:

> *"They should involve countries in the design, share overhead (countries should get 7% of the 400 thousand); there should be more time to create demand for this project with government, and only 15% of total project funds should go to global and regional advisors."*

Another issue not explicitly resolved at the start concerned the management of the project by country or regional offices: especially the degree of backstopping and guidance the project could expect from the office and the quantity of other tasks the project staff had to contribute to. In some cases project staff complained that there were times they only could spend 30% of their time on the project, while in other cases staff could spend all their time on the project.

One internal stakeholder comments:

> *"The IUCN structure is a problem: the national coordinators should not be recruited and on the pay list of regional offices, while having to also report to the global project coordinator - sometimes the RCO gave us only 30% of the time to work on the project, the rest we had to spend on other assignments, if not they blocked payments."*

A third issue that was not clear from the beginning regarded the efforts country or regional offices needed to make to fundraise for the extra percentage of co-funding agreed to in the contract with the European Commission. Although its is described in the internal agreements as joint responsibility of the project team and has been frequently discussed with national project coordinators, the issue was brought up by several respondents as something to be communicated in the design phase of the project.

As an internal stakeholder comments:

> *"Improve clarity about donor relationships & expectations; better negotiate overheads with regions and their roles and responsibilities with regard to budget and finances."*

Finally there was an issue of human resources, that had to be hired. They were basically hired on a proven record of forest and project management. Specific skills in networking and (inter)national policy processes were not explicitly included in the terms of reference. The relative autonomy of country and regional offices in human resource management also was reflected in the hiring of consultants and in operationalising the partnerships foreseen in the project document. This meant that criteria for selection, terms of reference and performance evaluation for the same type of project staff, consultants or partners could vary from country to country, even though the global project coordinator provided generic criteria and advice. On top of that the project had in some countries difficulties in identifying suitable candidates and making them interested to apply. In some cases – notably in the case of Viet Nam - it had a negative effect on the quality of the human resources hired and the quality of products and services delivered. In short different offices had different expectations from the project, different priorities and different management styles. Much time of the global project coordinator was spent on negotiating these issues with the various offices.

Internal stakeholders made several comments on these issues:

> *"More attention for an induction phase, more attention to the needed skill sets, more careful delegation to RCOs - if they do not have the right capacities; work more with partners - take away perverse incentives in RCOs to use consultants in stead of partners or members; no*

double reporting lines; more ownership of senior management of RCOs (regional director, head of program)"

"Prevent staff turn over by providing more leadership at country, regional and global level."

"Avoid the perverse incentives in RCOs in HRM for a project. I would have the global project coordinator recruit the national staffs and avoid double reporting lines."

"Financial reporting procedures tailored to fit the requirements of the donor were not in place at the start of the project, neither were procedures for knowledge management (capturing of lessons learnt, internal and external communication), monitoring and evaluation of project progress. The project did not foresee in an inception phase that could deal with these issues in an efficient bottom-up fashion."

"I would elaborate much more on knowledge management and communication in the design phase of the project."

"Have a 3-6 month inception phase before the project really starts. Have budget and time for a few close advisors to the global project coordinator to help him set up financial procedures, monitoring and evaluation procedures and knowledge management."

Not surprisingly the mid term review pointed at a number of points to be improved that were directly related to the issues mentioned above.

4.6.3. Knowledge management and Communication

The project did not have a project information system with clear rubrics, where all relevant information could be easily stored and accessed. Formal reports were used as the main ways to capture and disseminate knowledge internally and externally. The project assumed that reports would be sufficient communication towards internal and external stakeholders. In reality most external stakeholders indicated that they either had not seen the reports or had not had enough time to read them.

The project did not pay much attention to communication, in the beginning. An intern prepared a communication strategy. This paper addresses how to prepare a communications strategy and does not provide any concrete guidance for overall project communications. The absence of a concrete communications strategy has led to a wide variety of opinions – internally and externally on what the project really was about (more details are given in annex 5). And more importantly sometimes important stakeholders did not even know the project existed. The title of the project was in some countries used as a brand. In explaining the brand some stakeholders (including country coordinators) thought the idea was better choices at the local level, others at thought of better choices the national level. Moreover the brand 'Strengthening Voices for Better Choices' unintentionally promises more than a project can deliver in a four year period: governance reform takes much more time.

Lack of consistent messages on what the project is about often leads to confusion, misunderstanding, lack of appreciation and a negative image. This is also the case with Strengthening Voices for Better Choices. The communication efforts since end 2008 did not focus on communicating the essence and added value of the project, but more on the results in the various country projects. The evaluators could not find a clear project strategy how to address internal communication, corporate (project) communication and product communication (marketing products and services). For communication no clear target groups were identified and there was no strategy developed to change the knowledge, attitudes and behaviour of the various target groups. As an internal stakeholder comments: Conservation does not work in a vacuum, we have to address the drivers of change and those groups that can make a difference. But we work too much with those we already know. We should look beyond the usual suspects, and communicate strategically to form new alliances.

Many external stakeholders perceive IUCN as a conservation organization and still wonder why it entered 'the market of forest governance'. It also is not clear for them how IUCN wants to position itself in multi-stakeholder dialogues for forest governance. A rather high ambition level of the project about the IUCN's role, combined with weak external communications has led to misunderstandings

and wrong perceptions of IUCN's position in some countries, especially vis-à-vis the FLEGT and VPA negotiation processes.

External stakeholders comment e.g.:

> *"IUCN is conservation, working with people, livelihoods and development. Dialogues for forest conservation would be typical IUCN business. Forest governance is an innovation or new business for IUCN and maybe a bridge too far. It is a question for IUCN whether they really want to move in this direction. It is not clear whether IUCN wants to position itself in governance."*
>
> *"It is not a typical IUCN project, as IUCN is not associated with proactive political work. It would be good if IUCN continues with this new path and communicates this clearly."*
>
> *"IUCN seems to be very satisfied with the project. They did not communicate their role properly, clarifying what added value could be. Communication is IUCN's biggest problem."*

The mid term review clearly pointed out the weakness in communications. The response of the project has been to formulate country communication plans 'to get the messages out'. In an effort to speed up corporate project communications a number of glossy brochures were produced. In the absence of an overall communication strategy the unintended effect of these brochures was that in countries such as Ghana and Viet Nam the partners in the multi-stakeholder dialogues felt that IUCN was claiming the credits for something that at least had been a joint effort.

An external stakeholder comments:

> *"IUCN should not claim ownership of MSD; IUCN should explain better its role and position. It should serve and support but leave the ownership with the government. These MSDs have to be fed with evidence based pilot studies. IUCN cannot deliver those, but should ask others to do them in stead of trying to everything themselves. IUCN should not make glossy brochures with their logo of initiatives it organized with others."*

4.7. Monitoring and evaluation

4.7.1. Monitoring and internal evaluation

The project log frame provides objectively verifiable indicators and sources of information that can be used by the project managers to monitor and evaluate progress towards the objectives and desired results. In hindsight the evaluators have question marks on some of the indicators, as detailed in Annex 7.

Day to day monitoring was done by the supervisors in the regional or country offices, where the country coordinators were situated. For a day to day monitoring there is a particular need to have short term indicators, giving quick information in order to allow adjustments in time. From this perspective some indicators of the logical framework, which could be useful for the final evaluation, are not necessarily adequate. For example the percentage of forest offence cases dropped on procedural grounds in the fourth year of the project is a difficult indicator as it hard to prove that such a drop could be attributed only to the project. And even if it could, it is hard to see this in the court recordings as such recordings when they are accessible, are always published a year or more later. Therefore there was a need to define intermediary milestones, outputs and indicators showing the progress towards the achievements of the objectives.

Project reporting took place on a monthly basis for internal use and on yearly basis to update the donor. The project reports describe project activities towards results but don't refer systematically to the indicators or sources of verification from the log frame. It seemed they also were not discussed extensively during project coordination team meetings. A check how adequate they were in reality has not taken place. Monitoring and evaluation was basically performed through visits by the global project coordinator, progress discussions in the yearly project coordination team meeting and the mid term review.

The mid term review of 2007 pointed out that much had to be improved in the field of monitoring. It concluded “a common absence across the countries of detailed indicators and plans to monitor all aspects of project implementation”. It recommended to formulate for each country cascading log frames country and monitoring and evaluation plans. The recommended monitoring and evaluation plans were made in five of the six countries; all in a very late stage. They are formulated on a rather abstract level. They do not contain clear milestones, that are easy to assess. In conversations with project staff monitoring and evaluation seemed to be something that was an (“almost mythical”) discipline beyond normal project management activities. The task to make a monitoring and evaluation plan was perceived as an extra ‘add on’ on the daily workload and not as a real help. In reality the plans were rarely or not used. The draft 2009 Project Coordination Team Report lists achievements (often framed in terms of activities) and does not provide insight into how monitoring and evaluation actually has worked in practice.

4.7.2. Mid-term review

An important instrument for evaluation has been the 2007 mid term internal review. The mid-term review identified 34 overall recommendations and several recommendations at country level. The final evaluation team considers that several recommendations were addressing structural issues generated by the design and quick preparation of the project, an aspect that the mid-term review did not assess. For this reason all efforts to implement recommendations were not fully effective. An additional constraint, which is also valid for the current final evaluation, could be that the recommendations were not sufficiently internalized by those who had to implement them.

To a certain extent the recommendations of the mid term review were followed. A rapid assessment of the responses given to the 34 overall recommendations (see Annex 13 for more details) shows that at least 17 (50%) were effectively followed, 7 were more or less correctly followed, 6 are unclear (due to the limitations of the final evaluation) and a small group of 5 is negatively assessed, which means that despite the possible efforts made to handle these recommendations they were still valid by the end of the project. In particular the mid-term review did not really change the way the project operated regarding monitoring, as explained here above (4.7.1). However it was useful in promoting many improvements.

4.8. Budget, costs and mobilisation of means

4.8.1. Budget

The total budget of the project was roughly 4.26 million Euros. The co-funding rate of the European Commission is 77,68 %. Projects from DFID and DGIS provided a substantial part of the co-funding.. The various IUCN offices also contributed by acquiring funding from local sources and joint projects with other partners. Especially in Brazil and the DRC the project was successful in raising extra funds. Roughly half of the budget was at the discretionary power of the regional and country offices. Budget decision were made on the advice of the country coordinator. The total budget was administered by the Asian Regional Office.

The Tsunami of 2005 affected the operations of the IUCN offices in Bangkok, Sri Lanka and East Africa, to the extent that these offices needed all their capacities to cope with the aftermath of the disaster and integrate conservation and sustainable development concerns in the relief operations. This caused considerable delays in hiring personnel for the project and the start up of the activities of country projects. As governance processes take time, the nature of the project did not allow much for speeding up activities in the following years. The mid term review recommended therefore an extension of the project with six months, which was asked for and granted in 2008. Similarly the rate of disbursement was a bit low in the beginning but picked up, as the project came closer to the end.

4.8.2. Costs

	Original budget	revised budget		
Expenditure Description	Costs (in EUR)	Costs (in Euro)	Difference (in Euro)	(in %)
HUMAN RESOURCES	1.455.675,66	1.762.196,73	306.521,07	17,39
TRAVEL	198.062,91	195.983,59	-2.079,32	-1,06
EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES	35.860,06	78.259,06	42.399,00	54,18
LOCAL OFFICE/ACTION COSTS	360.438,36	251.902,48	-108.535,88	-43,09
OTHER COSTS, SERVICES	511.623,46	690.558,15	178.934,69	25,91
National training course on facilitation skills	124.200,00	82.402,86	-41.797,14	-50,72
National training courses on improved forest governance, forest law and on global forest policy for a	335.520,00	112.230,94	-223.289,06	-198,95
National FLEG workshops	111.656,53	118.855,21	7.198,68	6,06
Regional FLEG workshops	63.056,72	84.572,01	21.515,29	25,44
Development of forest monitoring and information frameworks	18.225,00	19.833,19	1.608,19	8,11
Cross regional working group on forest governance	58.135,22	50.155,90	-7.979,32	-15,91
Support to National Forest Working Groups	49.830,19	35.973,21	-13.856,98	-38,52
Project Steering Committee	29.067,61	39.837,70	10.770,09	27,03
Project Coordination Team meetings	29.067,61	36.174,36	7.106,75	19,65
Pilot activities in 6 countries	597.962,25	488.633,24	-109.329,01	-22,37
TOTAL DIRECT COSTS OF THE ACTION	3.978.381,58	4.047.568,62	69.187,04	1,71
Administrative costs (maximum 7%)	278.472,42	208.861,69	-69.610,73	-28,45
TOTAL ELIGIBLE COSTS OF THE ACTION	**4.256.854,00**	**4.256.854,-00**	**0**	**0**

It can be noticed that there is no clear allocation of costs per country. Country level components had their own budget, but some budget lines managed at global level contributed to country specific activities. It is difficult to assess the cost-effectiveness or efficiency of the project activities because of the following reasons:

- the budget lines are not linked to specific results
- the expected results contribute to each other
- IUCN does not (yet) have a system to register staff time.

As to the last point: IUCN does require time sheets for consultants. The project also required time sheets from global project advisors before claims were approved. Staff time for advice to the project from regional offices was recorded in the accounts of the regional offices. Time of the project staff however is not recorded. Currently IUCN is testing a timekeeping system for IUCN staff in general. Without a coherent time registration system for the project it is difficult to set and monitor priorities. When asked, some project staff only had rather rough ideas about how they had spent their time. The issue of time keeping is even more important as it provides vital information on how much time specific project activities take. This information can also serve beyond the project as benchmarks for the organization in future project design, monitoring and evaluation.

The new budget approved in 2008 did not substantially differ from the original budget, except personnel costs were a bit higher than originally estimated because of the extension of the project and the need for more external consultancies. Training costs were lower than foreseen because the demand for such trainings had to be created first and the time to do so was much longer than foreseen. Furthermore part of the capacity development was learning by doing in the processes of national forest working groups and FLEG(T) and VPA processes. The difference in the pilot activity budget line is caused by the discontinuation of the pilot in Viet Nam and less priority for the pilot in Brazil. It was expected that by the end of July 2009, the estimated costs would equal the real costs.

4.8.3 Use of means

The main means for a project that addresses an issue of forest governance are human resources, both at the country level and the global level. For the posts of country-coordinators, IUCN had to hire external experts. In all but one country the project had to deal with staff turnover, hiring of new staff and getting the new country coordinators up to speed. Not in all cases the country coordinators had the same effective support from the regional or country offices. Most respondents from country offices indicated that they did not really feel owner of the project. The result was that the country coordinators often had to operate in relative isolation and sometimes felt a bit 'lonely'.

At the end of the project the prospects are that of the six country coordinators, four can be retained on full time positions (with secure or good prospects for continued engagement in the medium term), one has been retained on a part time position (prospects unclear) and one left IUCN just before the end of the project to take up international studies (i.e. not because the project finished). This means that much of the acquired knowledge and experience will stay within the organization.

Other means in the project refer basically to office space, communication means and means of transportation. The project was housed in the IUVN country offices in Viet Nam, Sri Lanka, DRC and Tanzania. In Ghana the project was housed in the former offices of the Forest Commission, in Brazil in the offices of a local NGO. The costs of transportation means were in some cases budgeted too low given the distances to and the number of some of the pilot project areas. This was addressed by flexible management and the revised budget.

4.9. External constraints, realization of assumptions and unexpected events

Most assumptions of the initial log frame where realized except the FLEG process in Latin America. This had a direct consequence on potential FLEG activities in Brazil under expected result 4 but not on the higher level objectives of the project.

However the major external constraints were unexpected and include the December 2004 tsunami in the Indian Ocean, which had an adverse impact on the operation of the Bangkok office hosting at that time the project coordination. This disaster is partly responsible for delays in the project implementation. Similarly unrest in the Democratic Republic of Congo after the elections of 2006 had a similar impact in that country.

Halfway the project period the seat of the coordinator moved to the IUCN Regional Office for Pan Europe in Brussels. According to some of the respondents in Asia this impacted the project, especially the way it used to function in Asia and the way the project office used to communicate with the global project coordinator. On the other hand respondents in the European Commission did not have the impression they had much more contacts with the project coordinator after the move to Brussels.

External events also include the VPA/FLEGT processes in Ghana and Viet Nam. The project had sufficient flexibility to adapt to those developments and used them as opportunities.

In fact the vague definition of the objectives and targets in the initial log frame made the project particularly adaptable and resilient. The 'governance' nature of the project made it in particular depend on processes that could not be controlled by IUCN and were prone to produce unpredictable results.

4.10. Activities and results

Because of the need to adapt the overall log frame to local contexts, the changes in these contexts, opportunities that emerged and the high dependency on governmental processes over which the project had no control, the project has evolved quite independently in each of the six countries. Each country focused more and more on its own specific activities This is illustrated in the annual work plans and reports.

Expected result 1 and related activities (assessments)

The logical framework foresaw two separate assessments, one on customary law and one on economic frameworks. Instead of producing two reports the consultants, carrying out the assessments were requested to look at links between the two and come up with one report. Merging both assessments can be considered as fully justified in order to identify the links between legal, policy and economic issues. The various assessments have been harmonised in international workshops and project team coordination meetings to follow a standard structure to allow for comparisons between countries. The assessments are not part of the country log frames, as these were prepared only after the mid term review.

The assessments are presented in the log frame as a preliminary step towards other results, especially result 2 (pilots) and have been produced too late for this purpose (Ghana: 2007; DRC and Brazil: 2008; Sri Lanka and Brazil : 2009). The consequence of this poor timing is that the results of the assessments could not be integrated in the approach of the pilot projects and the other activities towards the log frame objectives.

An internal respondent further comments:

> *"After the situation analysis we did not share it with the stakeholders in order to decide together what to do."*

The main focus and starting points of the assessments are restricted to legal, institutional, policy and to some extent economic aspects of forest governance strictly speaking. They do not address all the major causes and drivers of forest loss, poverty, inequality or other major issues of sustainable development. Therefore they do not provide concrete entry points for transition towards improved governance arrangements. An alternative would have been to identify first the final problems related to forests (unsatisfactory trends and situation from a sustainable and equitable development perspective), their causes and driving forces and then the role of governance. Such a perspective could for example lead to a broader consideration for mainstreaming forest and natural resources issues into all policies. Implementing Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) approaches in all key sectors, with consideration of impacts on forests, can also be considered as "good forest governance".

Furthermore the assessments are based on normative ideas about good governance and there is a tendency to consider that weaknesses or gaps regarding those requirements (for example lack of participation, lack of transparency etc.) constitute per definition a problem, even when other causes contribute more to resource depletion and poverty. For the same reasons recommendations, when they are made, tend to repeat what was already assumed in the beginning (see also comments in Annex 6 on the problem tree approach). Therefore although assessments provide a good description of the institutional context they do not help identifying concrete entry points for change and key objectives that could both be realistic and produce a significant impact towards the objectives of sustainability and equality.

Several assessments are in English, even in non Anglophone countries (DRC, Brazil, Viet Nam), which suggest they are not exclusively targeting a national audience. The draft DRC report was produced in French and translated in English so that advisors could review it; the Vietnam report was drafted in Vietnamese and English and the final document was also published in two languages; the Brazil report was indeed primarily produced for the global synthesis. Notwithstanding the translations, the evaluators found little evidence of the dissemination of these reports in the countries. External respondents mostly indicated that they had no awareness of such reports. The global synthesis report is due to be published in autumn 2009.

The project also produced studies that are not clearly part of the expected initial assessments:

- In Brazil 4 thematic studies on the needs of local institutions (on governance, forest policies, indigenous peoples, economic instruments): although the outcomes were unequal this lead to a very positive impact regarding the restructuring of State Councils in Acre.

- In DRC a study on timber flows in Beni province: this study was commissioned on request of the EC delegation but does not contribute clearly to the specific objective. The SAIA report (du Preez and Sturman, 2009) should be considered as contributing to lessons learnt (R5).
- In Sri Lanka a socio-economic assessment for the Knuckles area.
- In Viet Nam (bi-lingual) appraisals on community forestry (Hue and Bac Kan) to be used to revise MARD guidelines and a study on governance indicators.

Expected result 2. New approaches tested (pilots).

The project document describes the rationale for this result as follows: "As the urgency to enhance forest conservation and management continues to grow, the need to test and assess new and innovative approaches to forest governance becomes ever more acute. There is a particular need to develop a better understanding of: the potential benefits and risks of devolved decision making at the local level; the ways in which traditional/customary practices and national forest policies and laws can become more mutually supportive; and the potential role of the private sector in supporting such arrangements. These is also an important need to develop just and equitable approaches, which will empower local stakeholders and make a tangible contribution to livelihood improvements. To this end, the project will support the implementation of "cutting edge" approaches to improved forest governance in each of its six focal countries. The lessons and experiences of these pilot activities will be presented and analysed in the National Forest Working groups (see Result 5), which will use them in the formulation of actions for improved governance at national level."

In different ways, forums for dialogue have been established or developed, which have reduced conflicts between different stakeholder groups and generated a better mutual understanding, at local, provincial and national levels. The project also facilitated interaction between groups that historically had no dialogue at all, such as communities and the government and communities and the private sector. However not all the activities developed in the pilot sites were truly innovative and because of the timing they could not address the obstacles to be identified by Result 1 as suggested by the log frame.

Summary per country:

Country	Summary of actions and achievements on expected result 2.
Brazil (Acre)	The stakeholders consider the pilot component as a strong contribution to their interaction and commitment to work jointly. The project was notably successful in promoting responsible purchasing, timber certification and restructuring State Forums.
Ghana	Three sites were selected for pilot activities but they were effective in only one. The project improved the relations between community and forest services and promoted livelihood, although their economic viability and contribution to the project purpose are doubtful.
RD Congo	Significant progress has been made in developing structures for dialogue that did not exist before. Many stakeholders indicated that they have been given the opportunity to share their views and opinions with other groups and work together more effectively in finding solutions for problems.
Tanzania	The pilot has resulted in empowering local communities to feel ownership and responsibility for the forest. It created a new attitude among the district forest service that governance is not only a matter of using the stick, but that the 'drum' or participation can also be a powerful additional tool.
Sri Lanka	A local forum has been created in which stakeholders can discuss their concerns. Support to alternative livelihood has been provided. This was apparently more effective than in Ghana, but had the same unclear link with the purpose. It also received only a modest contribution of the project, compared to the inputs provided by project partner Dilmah). A national multi-stakeholder forum – the first of its kind in Sri Lanka – was created (as the project steering committee) to address broader issues of forest conservation. This structure had then to be transformed into a National Forest Working Group, but its future is still under discussion.
Viet Nam	The pilot has been discontinued, because it did not add enough value to similar ongoing initiatives. The project opted instead to do a comparative study on

	community forestry that could be used in the FLEG(T) process. In two provinces cooperation in this study and in other initiatives with the Provincial Departments on Agriculture and Rural development has resulted in more openness for participatory approaches in those institutions.

There are still needs for a continued support at pilot site level, for example in Ghana and DRC. Key obstacles identified in the legal and economic assessment, such as the clash between institutional and customary law and the weak implementation of the legislative framework present extra challenges to implement solutions resulting from multi-stakeholder dialogues, initiated by the project. Another problem is that in some of the countries, it is not clear
to what extent IUCN and the project have contributed to the results achieved. Involvement of other donors, international and local organisations or the government also play a very important role in these results.

Expected result 3. Capacity development and related activities (training)

As the title 'Strengthening voices for better choices' indicates, a project's important aim is strengthening of capacities and empowering key actors in communities, civil society, private sector and government to take the leadership, plan, coordinate and manage an interactive process towards forest governance reform. A relatively large part of the original budget was set aside to support training in governance (€ 460.000 – only the pilot activities were budgeted higher at roughly € 600.000). These were estimates at the time of the design of the project.

There was no learning, empowerment or capacity development strategy formulated in the design phase or in the beginning of the project. In Sri Lanka and Viet Nam a training needs analysis was carried out by RECOFTC. RECOFTC experts also gave a workshop to all country coordinators on how to carry out a training needs assessment and the developed a manual for the project on capacity building needs assessment. Respondents who had directly or indirectly worked with RECOFTC indicated that the added value of their interventions for the project had been minimal. It is possible that the RECOFTC competences are more in the field of community forestry and not enough in the field of transitions in governance and working at the national and international policy level.

The RECOFTC studies and approaches addressed the gaps in technical knowledge at various levels of stakeholder groups that needed to be addressed. They were unfortunately too generic to identify concrete entry points and priorities to take a next step in the process of forest governance reform. They did not articulate the often implicit demand for learning in stakeholder groups and focused more on a general overview of gaps in knowledge in the technical and legal aspects of governance reform and not or not enough on the process aspects. As one internal stakeholder commented:
It was a mistake to contract RECOFT, they did not have the right background to guide us on how to set up capacity development for governance issues.

In all countries training workshops and orientation sessions were organized for government, civil society and private sector on forest governance. As the project had to create the demand – especially on the national level – for such training workshops, the number of workshops on improved forest governance, forest law and global forest policy were less than originally foreseen. Much of this demand was created in Ghana and Viet Nam during the national and international FLEG(T) and VPA processes. These processes themselves proved to be powerful learning by doing opportunities on how to realize new arrangements for forest governance. Similarly the country exchange visits in the project were impressive learning moments, especially where government staff had to explain to their visiting peers the rationale, organization and steps in the process of FLEG(T) and VPA. Participation in international meetings (e.g. Chatham House, World Conservation Congress etc.) - facilitated by the project - also provided important learning opportunities.

In most countries training workshops were also organized on facilitation skills needed for multi-stakeholder processes or consultations for forest governance. Again only half of the budget originally set aside for such trainings was used. The trainings – as far as the evaluators could study them - included a lot of methodologies used in community forestry, e.g. participatory rural appraisal, semi-structured interviews etc. There were fewer indications for training in specific knowledge, attitudes and

skills for multi-stakeholder dialogues. The input of the Keystone Institute was restricted to interaction with the VPA Steering Committee and various stakeholders in Ghana and a report. This report remained virtually unknown to the other countries.

The absence of a strategy for empowerment or capacity development (with milestones and indicators) in the countries was in most cases compensated by the apparent flexibility and responsiveness of the country coordinator to make support available for training where the need seemed to arise. The downside was at least in one case that when important needs, e.g. interest based negotiation skills training in a VPA process were identified, the training budget was already fully used.

The original log frame provides concrete figures about different groups of training beneficiaries. The training workshop reports do not in all cases provide clarity which of these groups were targeted, or how many exactly attended. The impact of learning was not measured: the reports do not provide insight to what extent a positive change in knowledge, attitudes and skills was reached.

Despite the cuts in the training budget, the evaluators also could not find in any of the country or project progress reports a deviation from the log frame with respect to training results. Given the impact of the project in most countries however, one could say definitely that capacities were enhanced although it is difficult to track which interventions contributed to this fact and which did not. And to what extent trainings contributed to the desired project results in capacity development.

Expected result 4 and related activities (FLEG)

The project has substantially contributed to the FLEG process, especially in the VPA (pre-) negotiations of Ghana and Viet Nam. The main inputs were raising awareness, building capacity on FLEGT, and facilitating stakeholder dialogues among the various stakeholders groups (Government, businesses and civil society). The activities of the project contributing to FLEG/FLEGT are summarized in the table below. It should be noted that their outcomes and the specific contributions of the project to FLEG are difficult to identify.

Country	Actions linked to FLEG/FLEGT or FLEG objectives
Brazil	Brazil is not involved in formal FLEG processes, but many actions contribute to the same objectives. E.g. the project was involved in the “Acre free of illegal logging” campaign and in the National Seminar on Forest Law Enforcement organised by the Brazilian Government (August 2006, Belém) and is supporting “responsible” (legal) purchasing by State authorities.
Ghana	Contribution to VPA negotiations which are now completed (actions include stakeholder consultation, communication strategy, exchange visits on FLEG issues with Liberia, Cameroon and China). The country-level log frame is explicitly focused on illegal logging.
RD Congo	Several communication and awareness raising actions (including workshops on FLEG for journalists and parliament members and a media programme on FLEG). A contribution to AFLEG-FLEGT Task Force at regional level (COMIFAC). This contribution has been much appreciated although the AFLEG-FLEGT Task Force was not very successful.
Tanzania	The project implemented awareness raising activities on FLEG (TFWG, Informal Discussion Group on the Environment, national tripartite FLEG workshops) and contributed to three round tables organised on EAFLEG (2007, 2008), FLEG assessments, a roadmap and the draft policy brief for EAC members.
Sri Lanka	No explicit action on FLEG(T), except information provided on FLEG.
Viet Nam	Contribution to improvement of better awareness and understanding on FLEGT of related stakeholders, notably through the translation of FLEGT documents and the contribution to several meetings (meeting of key FLEGT stakeholders late 2007, briefing session in early 2008, national multi-stakeholder round tables in 2008, NGOs briefing, stakeholders analysis including a business forum on FLEGT in 2009). Position IUCN as an actor in FLEG and FLEGT processes that is able to

	bring together representatives of government, businesses and civil society and facilitate a meaningful dialogue on FLEG(T) issues..
International and global level	Contribution to international forums, Chatham house, the World Conservation Congress, EC meetings, Global Partnership on Forest Landscape Restoration, FAO Committee on Forestry, CBD COP, Climate Change negotiations on REDD etc. IUCN Statements were based on experiences in the project and placed forest governance issues in the wider context of the interconnectedness between good forest governance, climate change, biodiversity and sustainable development.

The achievements and the related activities differ qualitatively from the expectations expressed in the objectively verifiable indicators and activities of the initial log frame. This should not be considered as a negative appreciation because results are more important than their indicators and activities, and because the indicators were not fully adequate (as explained in 4.3.). Anyway the extensive set of planned activities (20 sub-activities in the initial log frame) could not be followed too rigidly in order to adapt the project to the different country contexts.

This means that the project was flexible enough to adapt to the unpredicted events regarding FLEG initiatives and especially the VPA negotiations in Ghana. However this opportunistic behaviour posed new challenges, notably the need to define the right niche and role for IUCN in the overall scene of actors involved in those processes. Insufficient communication (or preparedness) in Ghana and Viet Nam has lead – at least initially - to misunderstandings among key stakeholders about IUCN's role, taking into account the conservationist image of IUCN, the links between the project and European Commission (a project funded by the EC and at the same time supporting negotiations with the EC) and its hybrid status (NGO or not, international or not, process participant or facilitator). Similar confusion problems have been reported in Cameroon and Liberia where IUCN was also involved in a VPA process.

External stakeholders perceive the added value of the project/IUCN to FLEG(T) processes basically as financial and organizational support, awareness raising, networking and communication. Different groups place different accents. There is definitely a difference on how important IUCN's role has been in the perception of IUCN staff and in that of external stakeholders. It seems that IUCN staff give themselves a larger and more important role in the processes than external stakeholders do. External stakeholders see IUCN's role as a small but good contribution to a larger joint process of many more actors. The perception and knowledge on FLEG(T) itself are also unequal among external stakeholders.

The perception of stakeholders on the contribution of IUCN and SVBC to FLEGT is described in Annex 5 and is usually very positive. Relevant quotes include the following:

"Political dialogue is sensitive. IUCN helped to set up the dialogue with civil society."

"Stakeholder engagement and understanding of FLEGT improved. Links between countries have been established."

"The consultation process worked, by taking civil society serious and extending the road map. This was greatly thanks to IUCN's networking."

"The role of IUCN was crucial to pull FLEGT together in Viet Nam; IUCN was instrumental for the co-organization of the EU Consultations."

"In Tanzania the chambers of commerce and other representatives of the private sector would not have been engaged in meetings on forestry with the government. This was the first time they were consulted on FLEG."

"IUCN made only small contributions. But what IUCN did, they did very well."

"In Ghana certain changes would not have been achieved so smoothly. The likelihood of reasonable decision making in forestry would have been less. IUCN had an impact on the achievement of milestones in the VPA process... "

However the perception by EC services is not as positive:

"IUCN seems to be very satisfied with the project. From an EC perspective we are not. IUCN does not realize that FLEGT is a government - government process; IUCN acted as if it could be on the same level. "

Expected result 5. Communicating lessons learnt and related activities

This result deals basically with the project's "knowledge management". This term may not have been fully understood and dealt with by project staff. Knowledge management includes both internal and external processes.

- Internal processes: how a project systematically collects, archives and retrieves the knowledge of its project staff and how it manages internal communications among its staff in order to strengthen its knowledge base.

- External processes: how a project flows its knowledge into the hands of the people it most wants to use it; how it strengthens its knowledge through its interaction with external stakeholder groups; how it learns whether its insights have made a difference.

Knowledge acquired in a project deals both with explicit, codified or documented knowledge, but especially projects that deal with governance processes have to deal with implicit knowledge. Implicit knowledge is embedded in the experience, skills and wisdom of project staff and stakeholders acquired during the implementation of the project. Learning in projects takes mostly place by codifying or making implicit knowledge explicit. This can be in various learning products: e.g. publications, websites, webinars, videos with testimonials, workshops, checklists, and description of process milestones, that illustrate the tipping points (when change started to take off) and the degree of influence or change realized.

In a process to influence governance such milestones roughly are found in the degree of awareness, receptiveness, responsiveness and pro-activeness of key stakeholders. Knowledge management requires a systematic capturing, storing, enriching and disseminating of such learning. Capturing asks for enough time for reflection. Storing asks for room in daily management for writing up specific information. Enriching asks for time to connect experiences from different project members and partners and look for added value or new insights. Disseminating asks for time to communicate in plain language to key audiences messages that will influence their knowledge, attitudes and behaviour. It is questionable whether enough time and effective methodologies for knowledge management were available in the project.

Activities to communicate lessons learnt

The original log frame summarized the following activities for this result area: Cross-Regional Working Groups, National Forest Working Groups, and Targeted Communications Activities.

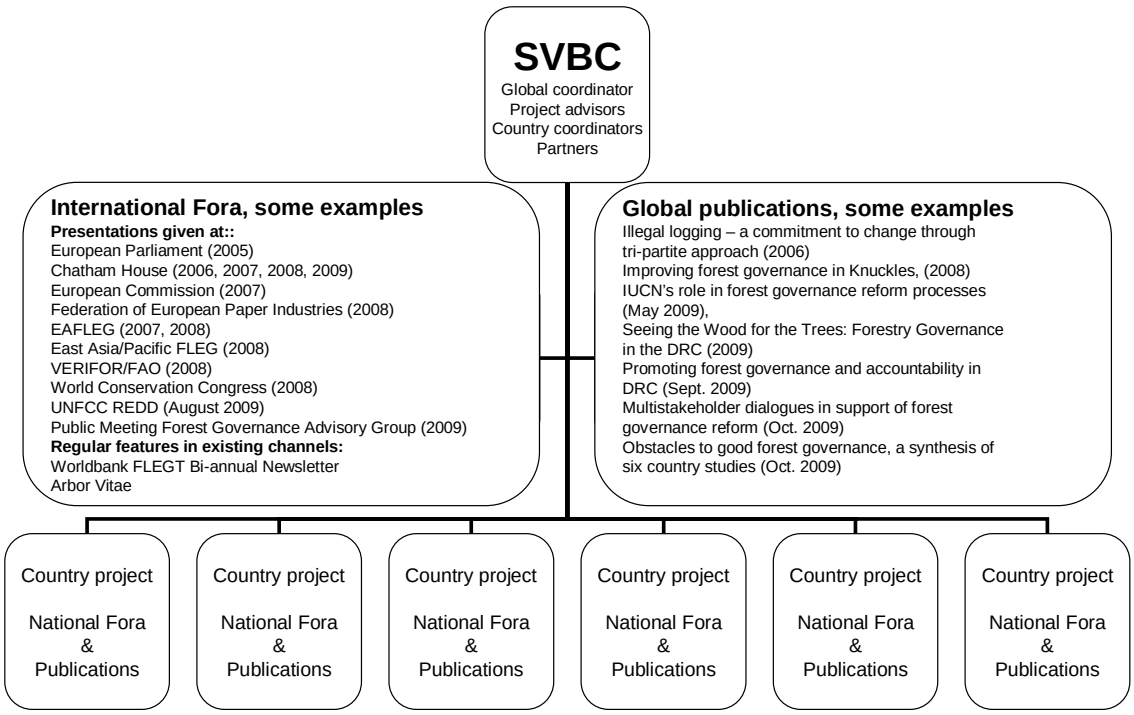
The project did not realize a (new) cross regional working group on forest governance, but opted to invest in and contribute to existing forums, such as Chatham House and the World Conservation Congress. The project made it possible for a wide range of government officials from different levels and representatives of NGOs to attend these meetings and contributed to the meetings with individual presentations or the organization of whole sessions. The projects of Viet Nam, Ghana and DRC contributed to exchange visits on forest governance, with countries such as China, Liberia, and Cameroon.

In all countries the project worked on establishing or reinforcing national forest working groups. All working groups focused on forest governance reform. And in all cases lessons learnt in the pilots or contacts with the local level played an important role. These working groups did not always have the

name national forest working group (e.g. in Brazil the name is State Council, in Sri Lanka National Forest Forum) or function as a formal working group (e.g. the stakeholder consultations in the (pre)negotiation process in Ghana and Viet Nam resulted in formal and informal networks for forest governance reforms).

The project also did not succeed in the publication within two years of its assessments of legal, policy and economic obstacles for forest governance reform. This may have been a too ambitious target. A range of publications are due in 2009. The project did not realize five IUCN policy briefs, but did realize a number of presentations on forest governance and a number of brochures for use in international forums. A key document of the project is the written input into the public consultation by the European Commission on the 'additional legal options to combat illegal option'. This document was produced with specific inputs from country project coordinators. The communication activities to disseminate lessons learnt from the project can be summarized as follows.

Communicating SVBC lessons learnt



Content of lessons learnt

It is not clear to what extent specific lessons learnt in the assessments, pilots, trainings and FLEG activities have been disseminated to and internalized by national forest working groups or international forums. The project did contribute to extending the debate on legality issues in those forums to a wider scope of sustainability, including illustrations from the project on aspects of equity, transparency, participation and action. Often the content of such communication was more the IUCN Forest Conservation Program perspective on the topics of the international discourse (legality, REDD etc.) than specific lessons learnt on governance from the various result areas of the project. The project in Ghana documented some specific lessons learnt in forest governance. An external stakeholder comments:

> *"The project manager in Ghana from the beginning has surrounded himself as a multi-stakeholder process manager with a group of key leaders from major stakeholder groups. This*

is vital for the process. It is not clear whether this is an explicit project learning. The voting questions in Chatham House demonstrated they did not reflect learning and making implicit knowledge explicit. It was a demonstration of the wrong questions, we need questions how do we know we doing it right? What are pitfalls?"

In Chapter 4.6.3 the unintended results of the absence of a global communication strategy have been mentioned. Another unintended side effect was that the messages of the lessons learnt in the project communication were in many cases more on the project and not so much on specific lessons learned on the project result areas. As some of such lessons learnt were prominently communicated in glossy brochures the unintended communication effect is: "not much news." E.g. an external stakeholder, who was well informed on the project, commented:

"So far the focus has been on reporting about the project. We don't really know what lessons learnt this project generated on governance processes. We want to know the added value of the multi-country aspect, the added value of IUCN to the forest governance processes; and a clarification on the role and core capacities of IUCN."

Most of the knowledge generated in the project is not explicit knowledge, captured in the codification of processes, the analysis of power maps, milestones and tipping points. It is mostly in between the ears of project staff and internal stakeholders. It is questionable whether forest experts will effectively captures such lessons themselves. Especially when it is done in the way the project organized a write-up workshop on lessons learned in multi-stakeholder processes. To do so effectively other approaches are needed. For such an alternative learning approach see Annex 9. In Annex 10. an example is provided of what is meant by codifying a process and distilling lessons learnt in a specific country (Ghana). In Annex 11 a first step is provided to codify a process for Viet Nam by making a simple calendar of milestones in the process. Information presented in this way was not available In Vietnam.

In general one can say that the project did not foresee in enough time, adequate human resources and methodological support to reflect, capture and disseminate lessons learnt. Although an effort is now underway to publish lessons learnt a caveat has to be made. The project has generated a wealth of knowledge on national and international forest governance reform processes. Especially on the role of participation and multi-stakeholder processes in forest governance reform. The interviews with external stakeholders revealed a vast richness of lessons learned that are not yet captured by the IUCN. Although there is enough basis for a synthesis of project knowledge, it is doubtful whether they will be captured by the currently used methodologies that are more adequate to capture explicit knowledge and not to capture implicit knowledge.

Perception of lessons learnt

Questions on lessons learnt are apparently understood very differently between stakeholders. Respondents may refer to their own learning, to the learning of other stakeholders, to the findings of studies, to messages the project wants to deliver, to the achievements of the projects or to recommendations they want to promote. This means that this concept of "lessons learnt" is understood in very different ways. The external stakeholders describe a wealth of important lessons learnt both on design and implementation of the project and on what works and does not work in multi-stakeholder dialogues and the governance reform processes. Internal IUCN stakeholders mainly focus on management issues or anecdotal description of achievements.

Examples of quotes from IUCN staff (see Annex 5 for more details):

"Through multi-stakeholder dialogues governments realize that the stick is not always needed. Government understands that for law enforcement they need public support and the right enabling conditions."

"Private sector now knows more about the context the operate in; they have a more positive attitude towards the law and now follow the procedures. "

"Communities know about the law and forest management."

"Change in attitude takes more time. Preparation and selection of leaders of stakeholder groups are important."

"MSDs take a long time and have their own dynamics, there is a need to work on concrete milestones."

"Negotiation between government and private sector alone does not bring good solutions."

"You need to build capacities in communities to get their voice heard."

Relevant quotes from external stakeholders:

"Space for discussion is key although it can take time; critics are very valuable and useful (both positive and negative), it makes us more humble, help us correcting our mistakes and helping others correcting their own mistakes."

"The process is unpredictable. A mono-strategy would be ineffective."

"Recognize the importance of your partners, once they are recognized as important they support you."

"Set out clear rules of the game right from the start."

"There is a new concept: sharing benefits not losing them because of illegal activities. "

"Need to clarify the expectations in the beginning."

"It is not always easy to implement a multi-country project."

"Don't impose your ideas, the Government should feel it is the author of the good ideas we have suggested to him."

"Build partnership with institutions having the same philosophy."

"There is always a tendency to promise too much to the donor (in order to get the funds)."

4.11. Outcomes and impacts

4.11.1. Outcome: achievement of the purpose

Promoting arrangements for better forest governance receiving the support of key stakeholders was the purpose (specific objective) of the project and therefore its main expected outcome. The table below summarizes the achievements for each country with some comments. It is not clear whether all activities and expected results have been necessary to achieve the project purpose. This affects the efficiency of the project.

Country	Achieved arrangements the project contributed to.
Brazil	6 forest companies involved in a forest certification process through SIM. Agreement on "agenda da produção madereira empresarial" (action plan). Steps towards responsible public purchasing (commitments by the State's Government and the city of Rio Branco, one decree). Decision to restructure the Acre Forest Council and other State Councils.
Ghana	Civil society inputs in the VPA (ratified by the Government in June 2009). Some informal agreements between Assin Akropong: community and Forest

	Commission. Contribution to District Forest Committees.
RD Congo	Several platforms established (Bikoro, Province, National + 32 Comités de Vigilance at village level), although their sustainability should be confirmed.
Tanzania	District by-laws, New Harvesting Guidelines, Awareness raising activities on FLEG, Contribution to FLEG policy briefing notes for EAFLEG, Revamping of National Forest Working Group
Sri Lanka	Forest Protection Plan; KEPA Management Committee; National Forest Forum.
Viet Nam	Contribution to awareness and understanding on FLEGT of related stakeholders, notably through the translation of FLEGT documents and the contribution to several stakeholder meetings

4.11.2. The impact as the contribution to the overall objective

The overall objective was to have arrangements in place at regional level which contribute to sustainable and equitable forest conservation and management. This could not be achieved at this point in time. So we can only assess whether conditions have been put in place for such a future impact. These conditions are:
(a) that the promoted arrangements support sustainable and equitable forest conservation
(b) that lessons learnt (in terms of recommendations for arrangements) are of broad applicability
(c) that they are disseminated to external stakeholders who are ready to use them for the same purposes.

(a) Although e.g. in Ghana it was “not apparent how the VPA Steering Committee incorporated the various (and sometimes divergent) opinions of the various stakeholders into their recommendations to government” (report “the VPA process in Ghana”, may 2009), in general one can say that the project contributed to such new arrangements. Several arrangements built with the contribution of the project clearly contribute at least to sustainability.

(b) Lessons learnt will presumably be helpful for promoting similar processes and arrangements in other countries, but as explained above they still have to be captured and disseminated.

Is not clear at all that everywhere all stakeholders support the overall goals of conservation and sustainable development and those negotiations always reduce inequalities instead of replicating them. In particular the focus on legality (notably in FLEGT issues) is not always and per definition consistent with the objectives of sustainability and equity. There may be a need to systematically assess the environmental and social impact of arrangements (VPA and others) in order to check to what extent their effects can be positive and to recommend how to enhance them.

4.11.3. The external effects

The project has generated or may potentially generate other effects, including side-effects and contributions to objectives that were not in the main log frame:

- Better mutual understanding and dialogue, cultural changes and attitude changes of stakeholders vis-à-vis each other (including for example less social exclusion of pygmies in DRC), therefore a reduction of conflicts
- Concrete learning experience and capacity building in forestry departments on effective interaction with stakeholders in governance issues, which contributes to sustainable achievements
- Interest from other project and countries on the VPA multi-stakeholder process in Ghana
- Reduction of damaging practice in the project countries and regions (for example in Tanzania and Brazil) and potential reduction of illegal practice abroad (VPA in Viet Nam can have an impact on Laos, responsible purchasing in Acre can have an impact in Rondônia)
- Establishment of IUCN in new locations, for example Acre.

Although these impacts are unquantifiable, the project had many positive social, economic and environmental consequences and most are assessed positively by the evaluation team. Broadly speaking it can be stated that the project has changed the speed and the trajectory of governance processes. This in itself can lead in the future to deep long-term and irreversible impacts, positive but unpredictable.

4.12. Crosscutting issues and sustainability factors

4.12.1. Crosscutting issues

The main crosscutting issues relevant to the project are gender, indigenous peoples, marginalized groups and the environment.

Gender, indigenous peoples and other marginalized groups

The project helped the participation of women groups in DRC. Regarding indigenous people and or marginalized groups the project also helped the participation of pygmies in DRC and contributed to strengthening their social status in a sense that they were – for the first time - involved in consultations, listened to and therefore less marginalized. The comparative study on community forest management in Viet Nam touched on the sensitive issue of minority ethnic groups living in the forests. The local community arrangements in Tanzania specifically included youth.

Environment

Regarding the environment forest ecosystems are of course central in the project objectives and IUCN has a policy for reducing the carbon footprint due to long distance travels

4.12.2. Sustainability factors

Social and political support

Participation, ownership and political support are key elements that contribute to sustainability and that were central in the project. However participatory forest governance reforms and participative multi-stakeholder dialogue take a long time and in some countries the project has not achieved all the results that were expected to contribute to the continuation of the process. Strong local and national support exist in Brazil for example but in spite of this there is still a need for an external facilitator continuing the role played by IUCN in the project. In other countries as Ghana pressure from abroad (EU or other donors) for better forest governance is still needed and provided.

Capacities and knowledge

Capacity building is also a key element that contributes to sustainability. It was a central element in the project, but capturing and dissemination of knowledge obtained during the implementation still require more attention. Lessons learned should still be captured and spread within the countries and across countries to generate further synergy effects.

Institutional viability

The project promoted sustainable institutional reforms (for example in Brazil). However sustainability of the newly established institutions in DRC is weak, in Sri Lanka the future of the national forum is still under discussion and in Viet Nam the MARD/EU FLEGT working group has not yet been activated pending the results of the Proforest scoping mission.

Financial and economical sustainability

Explicit efforts towards financial sustainability of forest protection activities and livelihood activities were made in Sri Lanka. However there is little evidence that the promoted livelihood activities in Ghana will be viable. Institutional arrangements in Brazil aim at reducing costs (for instance by merging forums) but newly created institutions in DRC may need external funding for the continuation of their operation.

The sustainability varies from country to country as summarized in the table below.

Country	Sustainability
Brazil	Strong prospects for sustainability due to broad political support, effective dialogue, commitments and long-term decisions already taken and relative level of development; however the civil society in Acre is weak (needs for a new role after its political victory) and there is still a facilitating role to be played by IUCN or another similar institution (not necessary in a project approach, but may be as permanent institutional arrangement).
Ghana	At national level sustainability is ensured by the nature of VPA and the budget support given in the natural resources sector, however the need for such external pressures reflects a lack of local ownership. In Assin Akropong (pilot site) initiatives to create livelihoods (bee keeping, grass cutter rearing, mushroom production, and snail farming) show little evidence of economic sustainability.
RD Congo	Sustainability of the newly established institutions should be strengthened. People have other priorities and lack of resources. Representatives from villages in multi-stakeholder platforms, expect a payment or support with transport to be able to participate in meetings. This mentality towards support from international organisations, seems to block capacity building and the development of self-initiative. Many participants indicated that the project is in an early phase and cannot continue without support from IUCN and other external partners.
Tanzania	The pilot has taken root both in the communities and in district forest service. The consultations of private sector and the multi-stakeholder approach form an irreversible experience. The IUCN project Livelihoods and Landscapes can offer some continued support where needed. However continued external support is needed for local and national processes. Fortunately political will exists in the current administration to take next steps in forest governance reform.
Sri Lanka	The sustainability of the local forum in Knuckle will benefit from newly created mutual understanding. Efforts were apparently made for the economic viability of livelihood initiatives although excluded persons or communities may expect more. Support to recurring activities (e.g. transport facilities for forest patrols) will be sustained by using part of funds generated from ecotourism activities. The future of a national forum is still under discussion.
Viet Nam	The VPA process is on-going. Further support to the FLEGT awareness raising and agenda setting process at higher levels in MARD can be realized e.g. with support from LLS. IUCN has to better coordinate, plan and execute its interventions towards the government in dialogue with other actors (e.g. FSSP, EC, Vifores).

4.13. Perceptions of stakeholders

The quality of a project does not only depend on how adequate, effective and sustainable outcomes and results are and how efficient the use of time and money has been. From an organisation perspective the quality of a project also depends on how major stakeholders perceive the project and such quality, especially when the project is closely associated to the name of the organisation and when the borders of the projects are unclear as in SVBC. Reputation is the perception by stakeholders of the added value of an organization. In terms of reputation management: “perception is the only reality!”

Therefore the evaluators have also analyzed various perceptions of internal and external stakeholders in Annex 5. Those are opinions of stakeholders that should be clearly distinguished from the data that they provided and that contributed along with other information sources to the views of the evaluators.

Many stakeholders have a positive perception of SVBC and IUCN’s role in forest governance and multi-stakeholders processes. Most external international stakeholders see a clear role for IUCN in a

variety of supporting roles in multi-stakeholder dialogues as part of governance processes. Many governmental stakeholders point at different specific competences that make IUCN qualify. Respondents from the European Commission see a role for IUCN as convenor. However different groups place different accents. Regarding FLEGT most groups see IUCN's role as a small but good contribution to a larger joint process of many more actors, however the perception and knowledge on FLEG(T) itself are also unequal among external stakeholders.

IUCN respondents also see a clear role for IUCN in multi-stakeholders processes, they are however not very explicit about the preconditions and modalities of this role and the competences needed. Regarding FLEGT processes it seems that some IUCN staff give themselves a larger and more important role in the actual processes than external stakeholders do. Potentially most internal and external respondents see specific roles for IUCN to in participatory process to support international governance reform processes.

5. Evaluation

5.1. Relevance

Evaluation approach

Under this criterion we consider primarily the justification of the specific objective and expected results as stated in the initial project log frame. The specific objective is considered as justified if it addresses existing needs and contributes logically to overall objectives in line with the policies of the donors and IUCN. The expected results are considered as relevant if they are necessary and sufficient to achieve the specific objective.

Positive aspects

The specific objective of the overall SVBC project is considered fully relevant both to the European Commission, to IUCN and to the local needs in all six project countries. The process reflected by the expected result is relevant as well, at least at the multi-country level. The project was flexible enough to adapt to changes in the context (for example in cases where a VPA process started). From the perspective of learning lessons that are broadly applicable for multi-stakeholder dialogues related to forest governance (an implicit objective), the overall approach of working in several countries and at several levels is also highly relevant.

Negative aspects

The proposed expected results are steps in an iterative process instead of being complementary contributions to the specific objectives that have to be achieved in parallel. The expected results are also very broadly defined allowing for flexible interpretations. In practice this lead to pursuing expected results at a stage where they were no longer relevant (for example result 1) or in such a way that they were not clearly contributing to the specific objective (for example economic activities in result 2). Therefore all activities were not necessarily relevant to the objective. Although the selection of the six countries reflects the interest of IUCN as a global organisation expecting lessons of broad applicability it does not directly contribute to the expected added-value that the target beneficiaries in each country could expect from co-operating with others.

Differences between countries

The six countries are very different with respect to the forest governance context and therefore the adequacy of a same log frame (or the grouping of the six countries in a same project) is questionable.

Overall assessment

The project is relevant at the highest levels of its logic of intervention (overall and specific objectives) but not fully at lower levels (expected results). Because the expected results in each country do not clearly contribute to the foreseen arrangements in others, the justification of having the 6 countries in a single project is weak with respect to the explicit purpose of the log frame, which consists of building arrangements in parallel in 6 different countries.

5.2. Coherence (external and internal)

Evaluation approach

Coherence refers both the complementarities with other initiatives (external coherence) and to the internal consistency of the project.

Positive aspects

The project found synergies and complementarities with other interventions in most countries and used existing opportunities to support FLEGT and VPA processes. Therefore the external consistency is considered as highly satisfactory.

Negative aspects

The project has different logics of interventions or log frames, explicit or not. The proposal includes concerns that are not formulated in the overall log frame (for example to learn lessons that can be used beyond the 6 countries) and several country specific log frames (sometimes more than one per country) were prepared without explicit link with the overall log frame. Therefore the advantages of the log frame approach, which includes a clear statement of a unique specific objective, are lost, even at the level of each country. As they adequately reflect local concerns the country specific log frames also show limited similarities and therefore a limited consistency between countries. At the multi-country level the overall consistency is limited not only by the multiple log frames (and their different purposes) but also by the fact that the specific objective in the overall log frame represents in fact 6 improvements (therefore 6 purposes) instead of one.

Differences between countries

The comments made above are valid for the overall project. The national Sri Lanka log frame (but not the local one) is more explicitly consistent with the overall log frame than the log frames of the other countries.

Overall assessment

The external coherence is satisfactory, but the internal coherence is poor. Although it was highly justified to adapt activities to each country, grouping them in one single project cannot be considered as fully coherent, because they do not contribute to a single purpose.

5.3. Effectiveness

Evaluation approach

Effectiveness considers the extent to which the purpose (specific objective) and expected results are achieved. The evaluation refers only to the overall log frame of the project (therefore not to the different country log frames) and cannot be based on measurable and objectively verifiable indicators.

Positive aspects

Many arrangements (targeted in the specific objective – see 4.11.1) and results (4.10) have been achieved, although not all predictable or corresponding to the expectations as expressed by the initial objectively verifiable indicators. Results include assessments (result 1), pilot tests (except in Viet Nam; result 2), capacities built (result 3), contributions to FLEG-FLEGT (especially in Ghana and Viet Nam; result 4) and communication of lessons learnt (result 5).

Negative aspects

Many assessments (result 1) were prepared too late to be used in the projects. The pilot (result 2) and training activities (result 3) were not all contributing to the purpose. Lessons learnt (result 5) are still being captured and disseminated. The exchange of experiences (result 5) between the countries has been limited which reduced the added-value of the multi-country dimension of the project. The added value of the ETPA approach is not explicitly confirmed. The dependency on external stakeholders, which is inherent to the multi stakeholder approach, is a constraint for pursuing and achieving clear targets.

Differences between countries

There are significant differences in effectiveness between countries, with arrangements in place in some countries. The project has mainly be successful where there was an on-going process driven by other forces than the project, for example in Ghana and Brazil. The balance between the focus on national or local context and the focus on FLEGT/VPA also differs between countries.

Overall assessment

Satisfactory but variable effectiveness.

5.4. Efficiency

Evaluation approach

Efficiency refers to the ratio between results and costs. The assessment is constrained by the lack of measurable (and measured) indicators and also to the unclear linkages between inputs and outputs. This is notably the result of the accountability system in IUCN and from the fact that many results and activities are interdependent.

Positive aspects

The project had significant outcomes and impacts (internal or external to the logical framework) at low costs. Positive factors include embedding into the wider IUCN Forest Conservation Program, high flexibility towards changing contexts and the synergies found with other actors.

Negative aspects

Efficiency as been hampered by a series of difficulties and constraints including external factors (for example the Indian ocean tsunami in the beginning of the project implementation period), the project design (need for adapting the project to local context, implementation of activities that are not clearly contributing to the purpose), structure (multi-country and multi-continental project implying extra-costs that did not result in sufficient added-value at country level), geographic scope (travel costs due to long international and internal distances), the fact that activities were implemented without contributing to the purpose (abandoned activities in Viet Nam, late assessments, poorly relevant training) and project management (poor focus on targets and milestones, no working monitoring system, 'loneliness' of project coordinators, insufficient support received by them, lack of knowledge management and effective communication, long delays before receiving approvals from IUCN advisors etc.).

Differences between countries

The overall efficiency seems much higher in some countries (for example in Brazil) than in others.

Overall assessment

The average efficiency could be improved.

5.5. Sustainability

Evaluation approach

Sustainability refers to the extent to which outcomes will be maintained after the end of the project activities. At this stage it can only be assessed indirectly through conditions or factors of sustainability.

Positive aspects

Many outcomes are inherently sustainable, for example the better mutual understanding among stakeholders, collaboration and dialogue between private sector, government and civil society, conflict reduction, lessons learnt, capacities and knowledge built, institutional and legal arrangements, conflict reduction, awareness and knowledge on Forest Governance issues and FLEG(T) processes, will certainly remain long after the project implementation period. Many processes supported by the project will continue and IUCN can still play a role as a permanent institution or at short term through other projects (e.g. LLS).

Negative aspects

Participatory forest governance reforms and participative multi-stakeholder dialogue take a long time and in some countries the project has not achieved all the results that were expected to contribute to

the continuation of the reform process. In many cases there is still a need for a continued support and facilitation role by IUCN or a similar organisation. Funds for this are not guaranteed. Some actions (for example promotion of alternative livelihood in Ghana) show little evidence of sustainability. Some processes supported by the project require external pressure (e.g. Ghana). Awareness raising and capacity development are also needed beyond the forest sector. Also capturing and dissemination of knowledge obtained during the implementation of the project require more attention. Lessons learned should still be spread within the countries and across to benefit from further synergy effects.

Differences between countries

Need for external support and pressure differs from country to country (see under 4.12.2).

Overall assessment

Several positive elements contribute to sustainability, but continued support is still needed. How progress will continue in the coming period is difficult to foresee, as not in all countries there have been leaders or institutions identified who can guide the process and play the role of the project in strengthening the agenda setting process, catalysing, clarifying, motivating and facilitating exchange.

5.6. Impact

Evaluation approach

Strictly speaking the impact often relates to the contribution to the overall objective. In line with Aidco's Environmental Integration Handbook[4] we consider all consequences for sustainable development (including side-effects, external to the logic of intervention).

Positive aspects

The project had many positive social, economic and environmental impacts in the six countries, including awareness raising, reduced conflicts, better understanding, more dialogues, arrangements, reduction of damaging practices, and to some extent increased income opportunities of local communities There also potential impacts in neighbouring states or countries (for example in Liberia, Rondônia and Laos) linked to timber purchasing and also in other countries from the lessons learnt. For IUCN there has been a strengthening of its presence and credibility in the 'market' of forest governance.

Negative aspects

At country level "Strengthening the voices" of communities at large is still to be achieved. At global level there is still a need to capture and disseminate lessons of broad applicability. According to perceptions of external stakeholders, there has been in some countries unintended and negative side effects in perceptions caused by staff turn-over and discontinuation of activities.

Differences between countries

Impacts varies from country to country

Overall assessment

The overall impact is positive and significant, and much larger than expected in mid term review.

[4] http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/multimedia/publications/publications/thematic/environmental-integration-handbook_en.htm

6. Conclusions and recommendations

6.1. Recommendations to IUCN and local partners for next steps at national level

Several activities implemented by SVBC require a long term support or involvement. Therefore it is strongly recommended to ensure the minimal continuation required. Sometimes there is also a need to strengthen the sustainability of specific achievements or to address new problems. Although this can be done sometimes by other stakeholders, IUCN staff should still feel responsible to ensure that this happens. It is not necessary that all those activities are gathered in one single project similar to SVBC and some of them can be envisaged through other IUCN projects (for example LLS). The required further support should be identified on a case by case basis. The limitations of the current evaluation make it impossible to identify what follow-up exactly should be provided in each country and which new interventions should be designed locally. However overall recommendations can be made with some country-level suggestions as examples:

1. Continue facilitating on-going multi-stakeholder processes

IUCN has played an appreciated and valuable role in facilitating multi-stakeholder processes. These processes are not completed and sometimes have a permanent nature. IUCN as a permanent institution (not as an external assistance project) should continue to play a facilitating role where it is invited to do so, as far as resources are available.

2. Strengthen multi-stakeholder platforms and their sustainability

IUCN has contributed to the setting up of multi-stakeholder platforms that sometimes still need to be strengthened and made more sustainable (that is less dependent on external projects).

Brazil	Refer to the problem and objective tree approach to help decide priorities in "multi-sector agenda" implementation, by selecting key feasible actions that can generate significant impacts.
Ghana	Continue the support of multi-stakeholder dialogues in the implementation phase of the VPA and support the REDD dialogues with the knowledge of networks, opinion leaders and IUCN facilitation skills.
RD Congo	There is a need for continued support building sustainability of multi-stakeholder structures. Continue building the information flow between the local, provincial and national level.
Tanzania	Support National Forest Working Group with relevant FLEG information and capacity development to take leadership to set the agenda and drive further forest governance reform.
Sri Lanka	Continue building a forest platform at national level with a broader participation of government agencies.
Viet Nam	Continue to support the dialogue between private sector and government on FLEGT issues with awareness raising, capacity development, and facilitation of stakeholder meetings.

3. Address specific local needs and priorities

In some countries there is a tension between the project objectives and local needs or priorities (for example DRC) and where local needs have been addressed (for example livelihood activities in Ghana) this was not always on an effective and sustainable manner. More attention should be paid to the design of demand-driven actions and to economic viability.

Country	Suggestion
Brazil	"Strengthening voices" of local communities should be a priority. The local interest for REDD and payments for environmental services should be taken into account when designing new projects or activities.
Ghana	Assess and improve the economic viability of sustainable alternative livelihood in the pilot site.
RD Congo	There is a need for addressing clearly the tension between local demands and forest governance issues.
Tanzania	Continue to work on empowerment in the Rufiji district,

4. Monitor and assess impact of VPA and other arrangements

As mentioned in 4.11.2 it is still useful to check to what extent the arrangements built or supported by the project (VPA and others) contribute to the overall goals of sustainability and equity. Therefore it is suggested to systematically assess and monitor the environmental and social impact of arrangements in order to check to what extent their effects can be positive and to recommend how to enhance them.

5. Continue or develop new awareness raising and communication actions

As mentioned below there is still a need to capture and disseminate lessons learnt from the project, including at country level. IUCN should also continue playing its role in communication and awareness raising, taking advantage from its broad international expertise. Two more specific suggestions can be made at country level:

Ghana	To illustrate for internal and external audiences IUCN's role as MSD facilitator and showcase organizational learning, have a film maker in Ghana make a six minute video on IUCN and MSD lessons learnt in Ghana (see technical Annex 12).
Viet Nam	To support further awareness raising and broaden the group that knows about FLEGT, invest in Viet Nam in a 'glossy' calendar in partnership with the major stakeholder groups in the pre-negotiation phase on FLEG(T), have for each month a short statement in Vietnamese on changing markets for wood products, and the steps to deal pro-actively with such changes. Support each statement with a large eye-catching photo. Have the logos of the partners on the calendar and in return have them distribute the calendar in their networks.

6.2. Recommendations for next steps at global IUCN level

6. Organize a discussion on learning lessons from the SVBC project

The Strengthening Voices for Better Choices has been a multi-country project with a strong innovative character. With it the IUCN Forest Conservation Program entered – one can say – a new market. The project has been managed in a responsive and flexible way within the existing IUCN organizational context. The way the project has been designed, implemented and has generated impact, may be seen as an indication that for IUCN such projects are a way forward. To improve future design and implementation of projects in this 'direction', it is recommended to start an internal discussion at the decision making level in the IUCN organization on how to learn as a team and as an organization of the experiences of this project and to draw lessons for internal management priorities, procedures and processes. The start of such discussion could be a session with members of the evaluation team to look specifically at the design, organization and implementation aspects of this type of projects. This session could be based on the recommendations made below in 6.6.3.

7. Capture practical learning on multi-stakeholder dialogue

The project has generated a wealth of learning on multi-stakeholder dialogue. Unfortunately most of this learning is implicit learning and not codified. Somehow the focus of the country coordinators has been mostly on the activities and doing them right, and not on capturing lessons learned with regards to the process of forest governance reform, and especially the participation aspects of governance processes. Therefore it is recommended to capture practical learning into an online toolkit, guidelines or roadmap for government agencies and NGOs that engage in interactive approaches for forest governance reform and or consultation processes with the private sector and civil society to support a process towards a VPA. Active participation of the field partners and staff of SVBC is recommended both for the quality of the tool and for their own learning process. As this is also of interest to the European Commission for its work on VPAs and related activities, the Commission should explore to what extent they could participate and support such an exercise.

8. Codify the process of forest governance

Codify the process of forest governance reform as accomplished in the various innovative arrangements in the various countries of the project. Codification means a description of the various steps in the process. Such description can be the basis for analysis to identify milestones, principles, tipping points and lessons learnt. In Vietnam, e.g. the internal respondents could not reproduce anymore the various steps taken in the VPA process. A beginning of a description of these steps was made based on interviews with external stakeholders(see annex 11). Make such codification exercise a routine in similar projects, e.g. Livelihoods and Landscape. For an example of codifying lessons learned on milestones and tipping points in multi-stakeholder dialogues in Ghana see technical annex 10. Once the participation processes are described in the various countries, the added value of a multi-country project can be made explicit: by comparing the descriptions a global synthesis can be made.

6.3. Recommendations to IUCN for future project design

9. Develop project ideas in advance

Diagnosis (problem analysis) and project ideas are to be prepared in advance with IUCN partners in countries and locations where IUCN intends to work, including the current SVBC countries and other countries where IUCN involvement has to continue. Project ideas should ideally be ready before any call for proposals. In the case of multi-country approaches, it is advisable to explore to what extent IUCN meetings (World Conservation Congress, World Parks Congress or regional members meetings) can provide informal platforms to brainstorm with a wide range of project stakeholders on project ideas. Special brainstorming formats to generate project ideas could be developed to facilitate such meetings.

10. Base multi-country projects on country-specific needs

Multi-country projects should ideally group country projects, prepared in advance as a response to local problem trees, when this grouping provides a concrete added-value. This can e.g. be a shared trans-boundary resource, or issues for which exchange of experiences can benefit stakeholder groups in each country.

11. Invest more time in project design: feasibility, inception phase, kick off meeting

Sufficient investment in project preparation is important in general and especially in case of a large project having a strong innovative character. Attention should be paid to the time required, the sequence of steps, the need for participation, and the balance between global IUCN concerns and local needs in project preparation. A preceding feasibility study should be the basis for the project. If a feasibility study is not possible the project planning should include an inception phase or at least a kick-off meeting in which a number of issues can be dealt with before the projects really takes off on the ground.

12. Include knowledge management and communication strategy in project design

During the feasibility study or inception phase it is also recommended to brainstorm with all disciplines on the knowledge areas needed for the (innovative) project, the framing of rubrics needed and the methods how to generate or access, store and disseminate the necessary new knowledge. For each knowledge area it should list the main concepts and define these in clear rubrics or headings. The rubrics should be used consistently in all forms of internal and external communication.

With representatives of the end-users the project team should brainstorm on the most effective means and modalities of knowledge storage (project documentation and information systems) and knowledge dissemination (e-news letters, reports, list serves).

The organization of bottom-up collection and capturing of implicit knowledge and lessons learned by global advisors should not be organized in a top-down expert approach (that can be used for capturing explicit knowledge) but in a mutual peer learning approach. (See Annex 9)

In the design or inception phase, the project team should define priority target groups for the three areas of communication: internal communication, external (corporate) communication about the project and external communication to market the products, services and lessons learnt of the project.

To make sure all project staff understand the essence of the project and use the same messages in their external communication about the project, a communication strategy should be designed during the feasibility of inception phase. The communication strategy should include short messages for key audiences on the essence of the project, the role of IUCN and the added value of the project to the priorities of key stakeholders.

The project team should develop a communication strategy for all three areas of communication based on an assessment of current knowledge, attitudes and behaviour of each target group and the desired knowledge, attitudes and behaviour. On the basis of this assessment the team should formulate communication objectives, and then identify and budget the most appropriate communication means.

Communication works, if it is planned in a participatory way (with input of key audiences), and when it is strategic. The latter means that communication is less about information, but more about the context, the trust, the motives and the values of the various target groups. Communication works if it results in attention, hits a subconscious emotion that triggers interest, excitement and willingness to act. In the design phase specific ToR have to be formulated for expert communication staffs, to avoid that other staffs who are more content oriented get tasked with the responsibility for communication.

13. Involve partners in project design

It is important to build a common understanding of the project purpose, therefore project partners should be involved in the problem analysis and in the preparation of the project. The role, tasks and responsibilities of partners should also be clear from the beginning of the project. Where possible partners should be included in the design and inception phase. To manage the risks of quality delivery

partners and experts (IUCN members and or IUCN Commission Members) could be asked to produce a one page quote and implementation approach of a possible task in the project, before they get invited to participate in the design or inception phase.

14. Involve adequate expertise for designing innovative multi-stakeholder dialogue projects

Include in the design phase of a similar project besides to technical, legal and economic advice, also knowledge on the facilitation aspects of change processes to improve forest governance: the milestones, timeframes, tools and interventions that guide and support these processes.

Include in the team of global advisors not only legal, economic and forest expertise, but also expertise on how to strategically guide multi-stakeholder processes, how to help governments to choose among the various options and modalities of participation in a consultation process with private sector and civil society; how to best organize such a process and how to coach country coordinators to be most effective in their role as facilitators.

Include in the team of global advisors also expertise on how to capture learning, organize knowledge management procedures and communicate strategically lessons learnt to key internal and external stakeholder groups, in a way that it enhances the reputation of IUCN in general and of the Forest Conservation Program in particular.

15. Involve adequate methodological expertise for problem analysis

Different approaches exist to prepare a diagnosis before defining actions. Problem trees are one tool among others and they have limitations (for example they do not easily reflect iterative processes and feedback loops and they do not consider opportunities or strengths). However when properly used they can be very powerful tools. For this reason they are part of the proposed guidance for project design in the EC Project Cycle Management manual. This tool was not used for the preparation of the project overall log frame. Afterwards it was used for the preparation of country-specific log frames, but not in a perfect manner. Therefore we propose the following improvements, which can be supported by adequate training:

- Use the problem tree method more systematically for project preparation (even where complementary tools are also used). Problem trees have to be transformed in objective trees, which are a tool to select the objectives and expected results of the project
- Problem “trees” should always precede project identification and never be used to justify project ideas
- Because a problem tree is a basis to define what should be done, it is important to define the problems without any assumption or expectation on the actions to be implemented; this means for example that a problem should not be defined as “the lack of the solution aimed at solving it”; in general problems should not be worded in terms of “lack of…”
- For the same reason a problem “tree” should not be restricted to the causes and consequences of the specific problem we want to address; therefore the problem tree (in fact a problem diagram) should usually not have a single “tree” shape centred on a “central problem” (the trunk of the tree), because in the reality “roots” can have direct impacts on “leaves” (in other words a same “tree” can have several “trunks”).

Problem tree approaches can be useful to design a project according to the log frame approach and also for assessing situations (as in R1 of the project) or planning the facilitation and other activities of multi-stakeholder dialogues. A correct problem tree transformed in an objective tree is notably a suitable tool to define priorities of actions.

16. Involve adequate methodological expertise for Log frame preparation

- Log frames (logical frameworks) should be built and used with adequate discipline (see Annex 7). They should not be prepared only for obtaining funds, they should be a tool to use during the project implementation, to define what should be done and to monitor what is done.
- "Expected results" should be pursued in parallel in order to contribute complementarily to the purpose (specific objective); in other words no result should be a condition for or a step towards another one and together expected results should be necessary and sufficient to obtain the purpose; expected results are "objectives" in the objective tree having no causal links (arrows) between them and being all causes of the purpose.
- The "purpose" (specific objective) should reflect a single idea and be the direct consequence of all expected results; this was is not the case when a similar purpose is pursued independently in different countries.
- Large scale or multi-country projects/programmes can have cascading log frames, but in this case the hierarchy between log frames should be explicit: the purposes of low-level log frames should become the expected results of the overall log frame.

17. Prepare a feasible monitoring framework even in the case of intangible and unpredictable outputs

In the development phase of a project when a log frame is prepared, one should define indicators of the objectives and results, with clear target levels. These indicators should be as objectively verifiable as possible. The indicators should be used both to provide a concrete and clear understanding of the expected achievements and to monitor progress. They also can help to fine tune the wording of the objectives and results.

In addition to the indicators mentioned in the log frame, with their target levels, it is also necessary to formulate intermediary targets and milestones to guarantee an efficient implementation of the project.

The need for objectively verifiable indicators poses a particular challenge for projects leading to unpredictable and intangible results, in particular for projects that support participatory processes or multi-stakeholder dialogues. These challenges and constraints should not be a reason not to formulate such a project, but to invest in extra efforts to guarantee accountability and measurability. There are no easy solutions to these challenges, but in project development it is important to rely on a clear distinction between the outcomes of the supported process and the objectives of the project. If e.g. IUCN wants to interfere with existing forest governance processes its objective should not be the outcome of the process (for example new arrangements decided) but the improvement of the process (for example a more balanced representation of marginalized stakeholders, an improved organization of the dialogue, an enhanced support among key stakeholder groups).

6.4. Recommendations to IUCN for future project implementation

18. Focus on the purpose and the log frame

It is important to continuously focus on the project purpose and refer to its log frame. Several recommendations made above contribute to this: a clear and unique purpose (specific objective) also reflected in the title, clear logical links between the results and the objective and a unique logical framework.

During implementation the focus on the purpose and reference to the log frame should be part of the project culture. Therefore it is important

- To keep a continuous eye on the log frame (it should be posted on the walls of the project office!);

- To continuously respect the hierarchy between purpose, results and activities in order to ensure that all activities contribute to the purpose;
- To plan and implement the activities in such a way they produce the expected outputs and results at due time, using a combination of milestones and sufficient flexibility; all activities should be conducted with a clear understanding of their contribution to the purpose and willingness to enhance this contribution.
- To monitor the implementation of work plans, the production of outputs, the degree of achievement of the results and the potential gaps between achievements and expectations.
- When communicating about the project to permanently refer to the purpose and the overall objectives.

19. Improve human resources and project management

Interaction with internal stakeholders on suggestions to improve the management of a multi-country and innovative project, such as Strengthening Voices for Better Choices resulted in a range of suggestions with regard to human resource management and project management. The most frequently mentioned suggestions are:

- More attention should be paid to the recruitment of the right personnel (having not only solid technical background but also skills in facilitation and participatory approaches in case of similar projects) and to keep it through adequate incentives.
- Project staff need sufficient responsibility, recognition and autonomy on how they deliver the expected outputs and results.
- They should nevertheless benefit from technical support and advise (not instructions) from IUCN experts working in regional offices or at global level.
- They should preferably work in a small team instead of being alone and subcontracting many consultants.
- For multi-stakeholder dialogue projects include knowledge and skills in networking, interactive policy processes and process facilitation in the profile and terms of reference of country coordinators that will have to manage or facilitate dialogue processes supporting formal (inter)national governance processes.
- Double reporting lines should be avoided. Project staff and other human resources needed for the project should be identified with the help of RCOs, but hired and steered by the global project coordinator. Project staff should report directly the global coordinator. Local consultants and partners should report directly to the country coordinator.
- Buy-in by regional and country offices should not be expected from just giving them a role in human resource management of the project. Directors of RCO should play a prominent role in the design and inception phase of the project. The budget also should provide room for special tasks of RCO directors in the project, e.g. to liaise with important external stakeholders and to integrate learning into the RCO organization. And the project budget should have a realistic remuneration for other logistical and administrative of RCO support to the project.
- Capturing and communicating lessons learnt should not be left to the country coordinators. There should be a separate global component focused on helping to flash out lessons learnt, communicating this learning to the relevant actors in the international discourse and helping country coordinators to see the bigger picture. Learning should be always be on the agenda for project team coordination meetings. The methodology should support learning on the project result areas and purpose.
- The role of global advisors should be framed less as technical resource persons for backstopping of country activities, but more as experts who from a specific discipline and perspective can draw lessons learned from country experiences that are relevant for the international policy dialogue.
- Decisions to hire local consultants or provide budget to project partners to carry out specific tasks in the project should not be taken by the RCOs, but by the global coordinator on the advice of the country coordinator. Local consultants and partners should report directly to the project coordinator.
- Global advisors should operate in a demand oriented way. Only in case the global project coordinator is of the opinion that the country coordinators need coaching, (s)he can organize such advice on a mandatory basis.

20. Clarify the role of global coordinator (in case of multi-country project)

Internal IUCN respondents also have a range of suggestions to clarify the role of the global coordinator of multi-country and innovative projects such as Strengthening Voices for Better Choices. Many respondents mention that the role of the global coordinator should not be focused mainly on providing advice and backstopping to country coordinators and monitoring progress of the project. The most frequently mentioned suggestions on the role of the global coordinator can be summarized as:

- to provide leadership to the project, to constantly keep the purpose and objectives clear to the project staff and translate the complexities of issues into practical language that tell project staff what they can do about it 'next Monday'
- to invest in human resource management of project staff, constantly enhance their professionalism (including the updating of their knowledge and skills) and focus on learning on project purpose and objectives.
- to be constantly alert on the tendency to make things more generic or more complex and turn that around by making things more simple and strategic.
- to listen to experiences and ideas of country coordinators, then provide direction and speed things up – this implies an output based management style as opposed to a input management style, which seems part of the current management culture.
- to constantly work on a culture of transparency, trust, learning, open communication and other IUCN values.

21. Invest in knowledge management

To operational knowledge management the global project coordinator should make it one of his priority responsibilities and tasks. He should regularly survey the degree of satisfaction of the end users of the project knowledge to explore how to improve knowledge management.

22. Organize communication

The global project coordinator should make it is his responsibility to make sure that the gap between how external stakeholders perceive the project and its added value and how internal stakeholders would like the project to be perceived, is as small as possible.

The global project coordinator also should make sure real communication expertise is used that has the competence to focus on the 'irrational-emotional-intuitive' parts of the brains of the audience. This has nothing to do with good illustrations, pictures, clear messages, but much more with the fact that e.g. words do not only have a dictionary meaning but also strong positive or negative associations. It is important that a global project coordinator hires communication staff who are familiar with issues such as framing, target group research, marketing, decision science research, etc.

Simple stakeholder satisfaction surveys among key stakeholder groups at the end of each calendar year of the project could help identify where the project needs to improve its communication or services (a ten minute telephone call can do miracles and creates a lot of goodwill).

Explicit credits should be given to others in publications about a multi-stakeholder dialogue, this will create positive word of mouth by these groups on IUCN's role. Glossy brochures with only the IUCN logo on the front page have the opposite effect.

Donor and partner communication should not be based on the assumption that project progress reports are (thoroughly) read by all representatives of the donor: remember that 'memos do not communicate'. Short personal e-mail flashes, with links to a project web-site with rubrics, visuals and short texts that are based on user-research are much more effective.

6.4. Recommendations to IUCN for carrying out an (external) review

On the basis of the experiences of this external review the evaluators have a few recommendations. The first is based on the need to already have a critical look at the log frame during an internal mid term review. The second is based on the need for more time in the preparation phase of an evaluation.

23. Select midterm evaluators that have not been part of the design team

- Include one or two evaluators in the internal mid term review team that have not been part of the design of the project, which makes a more independent and critical look at the log frame possible.

24. Invest in the preparation of an evaluation

-
- Take enough time for the preparation phase of an evaluation: time to formulate terms of reference in dialogue with the country coordinators and other internal stakeholders, time to map key respondents and time to brief them in an adequate manner on the evaluation. Make the external review more an integral part of the monitoring, internal learning and evaluation plan and culture. Have more explicit learning demands from the evaluation, based on earlier issues emerged from internal monitoring and evaluation, so that the review can add more value to the internal learning process.
- Make sure the evaluators have the financial figures on the project, have had time to read most of the information and have spoken to the key internal respondents before they start their interviews and missions.
- Make sure a project has an up to date project-information system, where all countries use the same rubrics.
- When briefing respondents and making appointments for interviews send them also an abbreviated version of the terms of reference of the evaluation; as the IUCN manual on evaluations is quite theoretical, IUCN should provide project staff with a practical checklist for the organization of an evaluation, in which such points as the above can be “crossed off”.
- Make optimal use of the learning opportunity when including a young professional in the external team: articulate learning demands, formulate learning objectives, do a zero measurement in advance; make time available for coaching and include specific tasks and responsibilities for coaching in the ToR; and evaluate learning afterwards.

6.5. Recommendations to EC or other donors

25. Integrate the specific added value of participatory processes in the appraisal of projects

Although the European Commission accepted to fund SVBC there is a risk that similar multi-country projects with intangible and unpredictable outcomes depending on external stakeholders are not approved because they do not sufficiently comply with the Project Cycle Management requirements consisting of having clear and objectively verifiable targets. On one side the current evaluation makes recommendations to IUCN to enhance its logical framework approach, on the other side it acknowledges the fact that the project was flexible enough to be efficient in generating interesting and unpredicted impacts. Therefore it is suggested to donors to take into account the specific constraints and added-value of participatory processes in the future appraisal of project proposals.

26. Explore the possibility of capturing and disseminating lessons learned in multi-stakeholder dialogues to improve forest governance

Multi-stakeholder processes are vital instruments for forest governance reform and sustainable development projects. It is therefore recommended to capture the practical learning in the Strengthening Voices for Better Choices project into an online toolkit. Such toolkit could contain guidelines for government agencies and NGOs that engage in interactive approaches for forest governance reform and or consultation processes with the private sector and civil society to support a process towards a VPA. As this is of interest to the European Commission for its work on VPAs and related activities, the Commission should explore to what extent the Commission could participate in and support the development of such toolkit.

Annexes

Annex 1. Terms of reference and inception note

Terms of Reference

Final External Evaluation of the Strengthening Voices for Better Choices Project

May 2009

Background

The project "Strengthening Voices for Better Choices" promotes the development of improved forest governance arrangements in six key tropical forest countries in Africa, Asia and South America. Three broad categories of stakeholder groups will be targeted: government (line departments, parliamentarians, local authorities and the judiciary); civil society (NGOs, community based organizations and forest-dependent communities); and the private sector[5] (particularly timber companies). The project will identify the policy, legal, institutional and economic obstacles to improved forest governance (including the control of illegal logging); pilot test innovative approaches to overcoming these obstacles; enhance the capacity of key stakeholders to implement forest governance reforms; and disseminate the lessons learned at national, regional and global levels. The project will also support the regional Forest Law Enforcement and Governance (FLEG) official processes being organised by the World Bank in collaboration with others and contribute to the EU FLEGT Action Plan.

The project works in several different regions spanning three continents, with a focus on the following six tropical countries:

- Brazil, South America
- Democratic Republic of Congo, Central Africa
- Ghana, West Africa
- Sri Lanka, South Asia
- Tanzania, East Africa
- Viet Nam, South-east Asia

The overall objective to which the project contributes is as follows:

"Forest governance arrangements that facilitate and promote sustainable and equitable forest conservation and management are in place and under active implementation in priority regions of Africa, Asia and Latin America."

The project's specific objective (or purpose) is:

"Policy, legal, institutional and economic arrangements that contribute to improved forest governance are identified and promoted in six key tropical forest countries, and enjoy the active support of government, civil society and the private sector."

[5] Although the private sector is - strictly speaking - a part of civil society, it is frequently ignored by programmes and projects, which often tend to focus only on NGOs, academic institutions and other groups. In order to highlight the importance of involving the private sector in the process of forest governance reform, it is treated throughout this project proposal as a distinct and separate stakeholder group.

Innovative and Value-Added Features of the Project
Although many organisations are now beginning to address the issue of forest governance, the proposed project has a number of unique and innovative characteristics which set it apart. Amongst other features, the project will work at the landscape, national, regional and global levels, thus enabling direct linkages to be made between field experience and policy. The project will also work simultaneously in six countries spanning three continents, thereby allowing it to capture lessons and develop policy insights across an unusually diverse range of ecological, social, political and economic conditions; this will ensure that the project's findings and recommendations have particularly broad applicability and relevance. Finally, the project will foster and promote a tripartite approach to all its activities, involving government, civil society and the private sector; in doing so, it will capitalise upon IUCN's unique membership base, which is composed of States, government agencies and NGOs.

To achieve the overall and specific objectives, the project will carry out a number of activities which will lead to the following results:

- Result 1: Policy, legal, institutional and economic obstacles to sustainable and equitable forest management identified in six priority countries.
- Result 2: New and innovative approaches to overcoming the obstacles to good forest governance pilot tested and assessed.
- Result 3: Selected representatives from government, civil society and the private sector have enhanced skills and knowledge which enable them to participate more effectively in the development and implementation of forest governance reforms
- Result 4: Awareness of, and commitment to, FLEG processes and action increased and sustained.
- Result 5: The lessons learned from the project's experiences are effectively captured, analysed and disseminated at the local, national, regional and global levels.

Commissioning Authority and Intended Users

This evaluation is commissioned by the Director, Environment and Development Group as required in the project contract (Section 1.8 (d) of the Annex 1 to the project contract).

The results of this evaluation will be used by the Director and the Forest Conservation Programme in the future design of projects of this nature. It is expected that the evaluation and its results will be of considerable interest to the European Commission and its partners.

Purpose and Objectives of the Evaluation

The overall purpose of the evaluation is to provide a final assessment of the effectiveness and sustainability of the project's results, effectiveness of its implementation approach and the continued relevance of the project approach to the project's stakeholders.

The specific objectives of the evaluation are as follows:

- To examine the extent to which the project effectively delivered against its objectives and intended results;
- To assess the sustainability of delivered results;
- To assess the effectiveness of the manner in which the project was implemented;
- To assess the extent to which the project's approach is still relevant to the defined stakeholders of the project.
- To identify and formulate lessons relevant for the design and implementation of IUCN's work on Forest Governance.

In meeting these specific objectives, it is expected that the project evaluation will identify any lessons relevant to the design of future projects or interventions of this nature.

Proposed Methodology

The evaluation team will collect a mix of quantitative and qualitative data from field visits, document review, survey and interviews. The exact nature of the methods to be employed and the workplan for the evaluation will be developed further with the evaluation team and will be captured in their inception note.

Qualifications of the Evaluation Team

The evaluation team will be comprised of two senior evaluators. The evaluation team will work closely with the SVBC project team and the Forest Conservation Programme, but is expected to have a clear independence from both and will include the following qualifications:

- At least ten years experience leading and conducting evaluations;
- The demonstrated ability to evaluate standard evaluation criteria such as relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability in a manner useful to the evaluation's client
- Experience with an action learning approach to conservation programmes;
- Experience in reviewing conservation programmes, and in this case, experience in understanding the role of governance and forest issues in South America, Africa and Asia;
- Ability to communicate orally and in writing in English. French and Spanish language skills would be a desirable asset.

The evaluation team will be supplemented by an IUCN Young Professional and the evaluation team will therefore have responsibility for integrating and mentoring this individual into the evaluation process.

Schedule and Deliverables

The proposed schedule has the following milestones:

- Finalization of the Terms of Reference (mid-May)
- Engagement of the Evaluation Team and preparation of the inception note and workplan (end-May)
- Data collection and field visits (June-July)
- Report writing and submission of the draft report (mid-August)
- Incorporation of comments and submission of the final report (end-August)
- Presentation and discussion of the findings and recommendations during a meeting to an audience of EC and IUCN officials and selected others in Brussels (September)

Annex 2. Inception Note with Evaluation Matrix and Work Plan

Inception Note
Final External Evaluation of the Strengthening Voices for Better Choices Project
June 2009

Background

This inception note follows a meeting held in Brussels (IUCN office) on 16 and 17 June, attended by Guido Broekhoven, Alex Moiseev (on the 17th), Frits Hesselink, Chantal van Ham and Jean-Paul Ledant for the preparation of the final evaluation of the project "Strengthening Voices for Better Choices". The note aims at providing feedbacks from the evaluators on the ToR, outlining the evaluation matrix discussed during the meeting and drafting the work programme.

Comments on the Terms of Reference

According to the ToR the specific objectives of the evaluation are as follows:

- To examine the extent to which the project effectively delivered against its objectives and intended results;
- To assess the sustainability of delivered results;
- To assess the effectiveness of the manner in which the project was implemented;
- To assess the extent to which the project's approach is still relevant to the defined stakeholders of the project.
- To identify and formulate lessons relevant for the design and implementation of IUCN's work on Forest Governance.

Points 1, 2, 3 and 4 refer to the evaluation criteria that should be used and point 5 to the final outcome of the evaluation. Therefore we suggest, as agreed during the meeting, to cover point 5 through the final conclusions of the evaluation, to be based on assessments 1 to 4.

The ToR also refer explicitly to the interest of the EC. Therefore we suggest considering all the key EC evaluation criteria, which include impact (as the OECD DAC referred to in the IUCN evaluation guide) and coherence in order to base the recommendations (point 5) on a comprehensive assessment based on the donor's requirements.

Finally it is suggested to modify point 4 as follows: "To assess the extent to which the project's approach has remained relevant to the context" in order to reflect (a) the fact that the project is almost completed and (b) the fact that the criterion of relevance usually refers to the context (problems to be solved, including to the needs of stakeholders) and not specifically to the stakeholders (who can be adjusted to the project).

Proposed evaluation matrix

The evaluation matrix built during the meeting is reproduced hereafter. It is understood that it is a tool to be used with flexibility and that can evolve during the evaluation in case new questions appear.

Evaluation criteria	Questions	Sub-questions	Criteria/Indicators	Data sources and analysis methods
1. Relevance	1.1 To what extent was the selection of countries adequate in order to lead to	No further questions for now	Degree of heterogeneity of lessons (lessons regarding principles	Comparison of lessons

	project's findings and recommendations having broad applicability and relevance?		for governance arrangements) Applicability in other countries of lessons learned	Survey of people (outside project countries) who have been exposed to project lessons
	1.2 To what extent is the project still relevant to the changing context?		Degree and type of changes and level of adaptation	Progress reports, interviews
2. Coherence	2.1 How does the project complement other FLEG and FLEGT initiatives?		Degree and type of added value to other FLEG(T) initiatives	Progress reports, interviews, deskwork to compare project outputs and other initiatives
3. Effectiveness	3.1 To what extent has the project built arrangements for improved forest governance that receive active support of key stakeholders in six countries?	Including: The ETPA approach Support to MSDs To what extent has the project produced its expected results	See indicators in project log frame and national M&E frameworks	(See log frame & national M&E frameworks) Site visits, interviews, document study
	3.2 Are the project results (as formulated in the log frame) necessary and sufficient to achieve the project objective?	3.2.1 Was it justified to expect the same results in all six countries? 3.2.2 What are the logical links between assumptions, results and specific objective?	The logic and degree to which the results contribute to the objective	Analyse the logical framework and design of the project
4. Efficiency	4.1 To what extent has the multi country and multilevel structure of the project contributed to achieving the project objective?	4.1.1 Does the project include components (including countries, levels) that do not contribute to the objective? 4.1.2 Have solutions to increase efficiency been identified and replicated.	Components that do not contribute to the objectives Evidence that solutions have been identified and replicated	Project reports
	4.2 To what extent has the organisation, management, M&E contributed to the realization of the objective and desired results?	(including linkages between HQ & RCOs) What management mechanism, if any, was used to identify efficiency and transfer knowledge	Management procedures and tools for KM and business processes Degree of value added of the PSC	Interviews with project managers and team members, RCOs, reports
	4.3 To what extent have the		Degree of value added of	Interview with project staff and partners,

	implementation arrangements (including partnerships) contributed to the realization of the objective and desired results?		partnerships and their contribution	documents
5. Sustainability	5.1 Are there any indications that arrangements built by the project will be maintained in the future?		Degree of stakeholder support for these arrangements Degree to which these arrangements respond to stakeholder needs & interests Degree of financial commitment to sustain the arrangements	Interviews with stakeholders
6. Impact	6.1 Are there indications that the arrangements are sufficient and adequate to contribute to improved forest governance?	6.1.1 Do the arrangements promote improved forest management (sustainability and equitability)?	Degree to which the stakeholders are satisfied with process and the extent to which stakeholders have documented what good governance looks like. Degree to which the arrangements respond to the assessments.	Interviews and assessments & desk study
	6.2 Are there indications that stakeholders who were involved in unsustainable (or illegal) practices have changed knowledge, attitudes or behaviour positively?		Perceptions in the project environment	'watchdogs' case studies, stakeholder interviews
	6.3 to what extent are the lessons learned applicable, disseminated and used in and beyond the project?	(communications, including to the EC)	Degree of uptake of lessons in international processes and institutions	Interviews with international organisations, desk studies,

Work plan

Team	Lead	Due	FH	JP	CV
Finalize Inception Note	Team	22-jun	1		
Prepare logistics Travel to field visits, London In-country logistics	Chantal				1
Prepare document list	Chantal	22-jun			0,5
Prepare stakeholder list	GB, CV	22 June – 6 July			1
Document review and preparation Prepare a format for country reports Schedule and draft schedule for country visits	Team	By 6 July	3	3	2,5
Prepare surveys and interview protocols IUCN/project staff Project stakeholders Stakeholders external to the project	Team		1	1	1
interviews (Europe)					
Field visits	Team	by 6 July	1	1	1
London	Team	22-24 June	2	2	2
Nairobi workshop	FH, CV	6-8 July	3		0
Ghana	Team	9-14 July	6	6	6
Viet Nam	FH	By end July	6		
DRC	CV	By end July			6
Brazil	JP	By end July		6	
Data analysis and write up					
Brussels analysis workshop	Team		2	2	2
Data collection from Sri Lanka, Tanzania	Team		1	1	1
Additional telephone interviews	Team		2	2	1
Report writing	Team	30-aug	3	2	1
Review of draft report	AM, GB	7-10 Sep			
Final report	Team	15-sep	1	1	1
De-brief EC	Team	TBD	1		
De-brief IUCN	Team	TBD	1		
Total			34	27	27

Annex 3. Key documents

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Annex 4. List of respondents

Global and regional level

William Jackson	Director Global Program, IUCN
Stewart Maginnis	Director Environment and Development Group, IUCN
Guido Broekhoven	Global Project Coordinator, IUCN
Andrew Ingles	Head Livelihoods and Landscape Strategy, Asia, IUCN ARO
Matthew Markopoulos	Forest Governance Officer Asia, IUCN ARO
Dr T.P Singh	Regional Group Head Ecosystems & Livelihoods Asia, IUCN ARO
Peter Elliott Neil	Coordinator Regional Forest Conservation Programme, IUCN ARO
Patti Moore	Senior Legal Advisor, IUCN ARO
Kent Jingfors	Regional Programme Coordinator, IUCN ARO
Anshuman Saikia	Deputy Regional Programme Coordinator, IUCN ARO
Ed. Barrows	LLS Advisor, IUCN ESARO
Thomas Greiber	Legal Officer, IUCN ELC
Julia Falconer	DG Development, European Commission
Mathieu Bousquet	DG Development, European Commission
Flip van Helden	DG Environment, European Commission
John Bazill	DG Environment, European Commission
Vincent van den Berk	FLEGT Advisor, EC Delegation to Malaysia
James Mayers	Head of Natural Resources group, IEED
David Young	Teamleader Forest Sector Transparency, Global Witness
Rene Boot	Director, Tropenbos International
Atse Yapi	National Forest Programme Facility Officer, FAO
James Mayers	Head of Natural Resources group, IEED
David Young	Team leader Forest Sector Transparency, Global Witness
Sara Stokes Alexander	Senior Associate, Keystone Institute

Brazil

Liliana Pires	Head of Acre IUCN office
Frederico Machado	SVBC project officer, IUCN
Doris Cordero	Regional Office, UICN Sur
Kruskaya Dijsselbloem	former SVBC secretary
Jorge Atilio Silva Iulianelli	Consultant for SBVC
Mara Vanessa Fonseca Dutra	Consultant for SBVC
Luis Meneses	Consultant for SBVC
Eufran Ferreiro fo Amaral	Secretary for the environment, Acre Government
Carlos Ovidio Duarte	Forest Secretary, Acre Government
Marcelo Aguelles	Former SVBC coordinator, Federal Forest Service
Adelaide de Fatima	President ASIMANEJO
Pedro Bruzzi Lion	Coordinator FAO project, former CTA (Acre NGO)
Estevaõ do Prado Praga	Head of GFTN, WWF
Maria das Dores	Community member, PAE Remanso (pilot area)
Almir	Community member, forest worker, PAE Remanso (pilot area)
Dionísio (Dau)	chairman Cooperfloresta
Alberto Tavares	WWF Brasil
Eduardo Amaral Borges	coordinador general, Pesacre

Ghana

Adewale Adeleke Yekini	SVBC Country Coordinator, IUCN Ghana Project Office
Samuel Kofi Nyame	Project Coordinator, IUCN Ghana Project Office
Chris Beeko	VPA Coordinator, Forest Commission of Ghana
Dr. Richard Gyimah	VPA Secretariat, VLTP Project Analyst, Forest Commission of Ghana
David Guba Kpelle	Forest Instrument project; GFTN, Forest Commission of Ghana
Isaac Apetorgbor	District Forestry Manager, Forest Services Division
Sete Kadoudu	Deputy Forestry Manager, Forest Services Division
Alex B. Asare	RMSC, Forest Commission of Ghana,
Mrs Konadu Pokuua	RMSC, Forest Commission of Ghana,
Awuan Ian Edward	RMSC, Forest Commission of Ghana,
Kyeretwie Opoku	Coordinator, member Forestwatch Ghana, Civic Response
Emelia Arthur	Member of the Forest Watch Management Committee, Forest Watch, Ghana
Rebecca Dottey	Former Coordinator, Forest Watch, Ghana
Ama Kudom-Agyemang	Freelance environmental communicator
Albert Katako	Programme Coordinator Forest and Natural Resources, Care International
K. Samuel Nketiah	Head of Tropenbos programme in Ghana, Tropenbos International
Alex Dadzie	Vice President Ghana Timber Association
Clare Brogan	Consultant, EC NREG Consultant, FRR
Ton van der Zon	Environment and Water Advisor, Royal Netherlands Embassy

DRC

Joel Kiyulu	, SVBC Country coordinator, Project office
Joseph Ipalaka	Member of Parliament, DRC
Rose Lisweya Bomeka	Secrétaire Exécutif, Gouvernement Provincial
Mr. Ngirima	Inspecteur de l'Agriculture de l' Equateur, Provincial Government
Norbert Endoto	Provincial Minister in charge with the environment (Equateur prov.)
Dr. A. L. Kalambayi wa Kabongo	Secrétaire Général à l'Environnement et la Conservation de la Nature
Alain Pénelon	FLEG technical assistant, FLEG COMIFAC
Iola Leal Riesco	Forest Governance Co-ordinator, FERN
Mari-Lise Du Preez	Researcher on forest and fisheries, SAIIA
Francoise Van de Ven	Secrétaire Générale, FIB , RDC
Timothée Alunga	Ingénieur de prospections, Ledya, private sector
Bokele Wanyoke	President CDV Nkalamba, Village representative
Norbert Itale	Administrateur Bikoro, Local government
Toma Lompese	Forest Engineer, ITB
Joseph Matonde	Priest, president of consultative Council/Bikoro
Jean-Baptiste Yoka Ibongu	Traditional Chief , Bikoro
Mamie Mboliaka Boongo	Women Representative Bikoro territory
Révérend Joseph Nzee Boika	Representative indigenous peoples Bikoro Village
Daniel Nkake	CDV President Itipo, Village
Ali Boufoud	Auditor, ITB Bikoro
Berger Bompema	Secrétaire Général REBOGOF, Provincial MSD structure
Willifried Ipaka Kebadio	Responsible for radio broadcast Mbandaka
Jean-Pierre Kundu	Directeur provincial, Fédération des Entreprises de Congo, Mbandaka
Arthur Mayambo	Ingénieur agronome, FAO, Mbandaka
S. Ngoyi, G. Kalongi, B. Nzemba	Representatives of Media in Kinshasa
François Kapa	Project facilitator FAO, Kinshasa
John Mafolo	Project facilitator, ICRAF Kinshasa
Bienvenue Ngoy	President, GTF
Alain Gallez	Attaché de la Coopération au développement, Belgian Embassy

E. Bola Bobonda Mamambe	Président National Union pour le Développement des Minorités (UDME/ONGH)

Tanzania

Abdalla Said Shah	Head of Tanzania Office, Senior Program Manager IUCN
Mkwizu Yassin Bakari	Program Officer Environment & Climate Change Norwegian Embassy
Leo Rwegasira	District Lands and Natural Resources Officer, Rufiji District Council, Tanzania

Sri Lanka

Shiranee Yasaratne	Former IUCN Country Representative, Sri Lanka
Karunaratne Nimal	SVBC Country coordinator
Prof Shantha K. Hennayake	Former IUCN SVBC Country coordinator, Sri Lanka

Viet Nam

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Vu Minh Duc	Head Governance and Business Unit, IUCN Viet Nam
Ly Thi Minh Hai	Environmental Governance Officer, IUCN Viet Nam
Tran Manh Hung	National Coordinator Forest Governance Project, IUCN Viet Nam
Jake Brunner	Program Coordinator, IUCN Viet Nam
Tran Kim Long	Deputy Director ICD, MARD
Prof. Dr. Ngai	Director, DARD, Bac Kan province, MARD
Dr Ha Chu Chu	Director, ECO-ECO
Hoangh Thanh	Program Officer RD&EC sector, EC Delegation to Viet Nam
Nguyen Quang Tan	RECOFTC Associate, RECOFTC
Pham Minh Uyen	Programme Officer, Royal Netherlands Embassy
Nguyen Dao Tuong Van	Deputy Director, FSSP
Ms Thu Ba	Programme Officer Sustainable Development Cluster, UNDP
Le Khac Coi	Forestry Program Manager, GFTN Coordinator,WWF
Tom Osborne	Viet Nam Forest Trade Officer, TRAFFIC
Prof. Hoang Xuan Ty	Director, Greenfield Consultancy
Do Hong Anh	Project Development officer, Greenfield Consultancy
Nguyen Ton Quyen Trinh Vy	Vice Chairman Office manager, Vifores

Annex 5. Stakeholder perceptions

How stakeholders perceive the added value of the multi-country aspect

In theory a multi-country project offers a range of opportunities for enhanced horizontal and vertical knowledge exchange. However the added value of more countries depends on the selection and on the organization of capturing and disseminating learning. The project basically relied on reports and meetings for knowledge exchange.

Horizontal knowledge exchange can be knowledge sharing between project staff and project beneficiaries or stakeholders. In the case of the project the yearly project coordination team meeting and reports offered opportunities to exchange lessons learnt. Some country coordinators have experienced such added value but for others this remains theoretical:

> *In the 4 international meetings we could see what was happening in other countries, you could see where you were lacking behind, where you could go faster. In cases of staff turnover the new coordinator could learn from his peers.*
>
> *We learned much of the MSD from Ghana where the process started earlier; we learned issues about facilitating the process and facilitating meetings.*
>
> *In theory, the global project helps to draw lessons from different parts of the world and show commonalities leading to exchange and learning. If this happened in practice between countries is questionable. At the IUCN global level, the information from the countries was compiled and differences were analysed. Not each country was pleased with the content of the report.*

Horizontal exchange is also possible between project beneficiaries and stakeholders: peers working in different countries and all dealing with forest governance issues. The project did not make use of this opportunity, e.g. to bring representatives from the private sector or government countries together.. Therefore the multi-country aspect is less appreciated by external stakeholders in the countries and often totally ignored (especially by stakeholders at the local level). Some external project stakeholders at the national level in the countries indicate that they would like to benefit more from this aspect, especially if the selection of countries would make exchange more relevant:

> *MSD experience in Ghana has been transferred to government officials of other countries; the approach to stakeholders in each country is different. Cameroon would have been a good addition because of its functioning government. This is important for governance processes.*
>
> *We would like to know more about FLEGT in other Asian countries. IUCN should organize regional workshop with SVBC beneficiaries to share experiences. They should have included Indonesia, Malaysia, Laos and Cambodia in the project.*
>
> *The added-value of the multi-country dimension is for IUCN only.*

A multi-country project also can bring relevant evidence-based information from more than one country to the international policy arena and show what works in forest governance and what does not. To a certain extent the project did communicate lessons learnt at the international level (see chapter 4.10.5). In principle it has led to a better picture how IUCN can take the role of facilitator to bring different interests together and stimulate inputs of various corners to speed up the process towards consensus in forest governance.

What was much appreciated was the support from the project to bring representatives from the government, civil society or private sector to international meetings. E.g. in a relatively great number of cases project stakeholders were facilitated to attend meetings of Chatham House. Two internal and one external respondent saw other aspects that may plead for IUCN to work in multi-country projects or at least to work in parallel on the same issues in different countries:

When the issues are the same in a multi-country project, you have less transaction costs.

Increasingly IUCN works in multi-country approaches. IUCN's value proposition is knowledge - partnering - linking local with global - developing standards, tools that can be applied; IUCN is empowering and supporting governments to do new approaches.

IUCN's global network of offices and members makes it possible to choose the best countries for such an innovative project, other organizations would have to start from scratch.

How stakeholders perceive the added value of IUCN to FLEGT processes

External stakeholders perceive the added value of the project/IUCN to FLEG(T) processes basically as financial and organizational support, awareness raising, networking and communication. Different groups place different accents. There is definitely a difference on how important IUCN's role has been in the perception of IUCN staff and external stakeholders.

External stakeholders in the project are in general positive, although the views of EC are more nuanced:

Political dialogue is sensitive. IUCN helped to set up the dialogue with civil society.

FLEG(T) became halfway the overarching focus of the project, I am not sure whether that was a good decision.

Respondents from external international stakeholders comment:

Giving people from local and national levels a seat at international meetings. This has made the statements of governments, private sector and the EC more real where it concerns the local level.

Stakeholder engagement and understanding of FLEGT improved. Links between countries have been established.

The consultation process worked, by taking civil society serious and extending the road map. This was greatly thanks to IUCN's networking.

Respondents from government comment:

Some financial support, facilitation of consultations, friendly behind the scenes advice to coordinator of the Ghana VPA process.

The role of IUCN was crucial to pull FLEGT together in Viet Nam; IUCN was instrumental for the co-organization of the EU Consultations.

Asked "what would be different in the country, had there been no IUCN or the project", IUCN staff frame the added value of the project to FLEGT or forest governance processes in general as follows:

In Brazil, Sri Lanka & DRC there would not have been communication between stakeholders, less capacity and understanding on MSDs.

There would be no FLEGT in Viet Nam, there would be no support process to come to a VPA in future; there would have been no exchange with China, no assessments, website and workshops. Government and private sector and civil society would not have established relation ships on this issue.

Ghana would not have been the first country to sign a Voluntary Partnership Agreement with the EU; the European Commission has now a good example for MS; they liked the way the process developed in Ghana; there would not have been such a quick turnaround in looking into Ghana

forest policy and start a review on policy reform; communities would not be aware of governance matters.

In Tanzania the chambers of commerce and other representatives of the private sector would not have been engaged in meetings on forestry with the government. This was the first time they were consulted on FLEG.

Asked “what would be different in your country, had there been no IUCN or project”, external stakeholders frame the added value of IUCN to FLEGT processes as follows:

Some low and mid level people in a few departments in one Ministry have now idea about FLEGT (not the decision makers) and some directors of private companies; IUCN Bangkok presented information from Malaysia, Ghana and Indonesia in our workshops. Without IUCN that would not have happened.

IUCN made only small contributions. But what IUCN did, they did very well.

If IUCN had not done it, there would have been weaker local ownership and a weaker negotiation position.

In Ghana certain changes would not have been achieved so smoothly. The likelihood of reasonable decision making in forestry would have been less. IUCN had an impact on the achievement of milestones in the VPA process... In other project countries, impacts may have been less obvious.

There would have been more conflicts, less consensus on VPA issues and much less awareness.

How stakeholders perceive the role and core capacities of IUCN in multi-stakeholder dialogues in forest governance processes

A multi-stakeholder dialogue can be held in different ways and with different degrees of participation. The role of government communication is different in the various phases of the policy cycle. Likewise a multi-stakeholder dialogue in a pre-negotiation phase of a VPA can be very different from one during the negotiation phase. In the latter the government always is the official coordinator, convenor and organizer. The role of a facilitator in a multi-stakeholder dialogue therefore can have many faces depending on the phase, the modality of dialogue the government has opted for and the socio-political context in the country. As one respondent commented:

The atmosphere in the country, our culture of democracy, our tolerance for opposing views, the role of the media, the stage of our forest policy realizing that a VPA is an opening towards sustainable forest management, a history of multi-stakeholder collaboration in district and regional forest forums. This all contributed to the success of the VPA process. The important thing for us was to set out clear rules of the game right from the start: the choice for the modality of consultation that best fitted our situation.

With regard to IUCN's role in a multi-stakeholders process to provide input into the VPA negotiations, IUCN respondents see a clear dole for IUCN, they are however not very explicit about the preconditions and modalities of this role and the competences needed:

> *With its core capacity as convenor and its presence in regions IUCN is well placed to facilitate multi-stakeholder dialogues for FLEGT.*
>
> *Niche of IUCN is its information base on FLEGT: we are a credible think tank; our role is convening, facilitating, translating, educating and networking knowledge.*
>
> *A multi-stakeholder dialogue is a translation of the IUCN tripartite approach. The policy-practice loop is embedded in this approach. IUCN works with its own staff, with members and partners and is a trusted and appreciated organisation in Ghana to support consultation processes for forest governance.*
>
> *In governance IUCN's role is to bridge the gap between government and communities, based on its credibility towards government, its convening power, its neutral platform, its access to science and its networking skills.*
>
> *With regard to IUCN's role in a multi-stakeholders process to provide input into the VPA negotiations, some respondents from the European Commission and its Delegations see a role for IUCN as convenor, others have doubts:*
>
> *IUCN can play a role to convene stakeholders, especially civil society. It is well placed to facilitate consultation meetings.*
>
> *IUCN has a niche in establishing contact with actors. In the facilitator role IUCN should be probing, encouraging and probing stakeholder groups about what they think. This has not been reflected on. Hopefully the process can be driven more strategically in the future.*
>
> *IUCN seems to be very satisfied with the project. From an EC perspective we are not. IUCN does not realize that FLEGT is a government - government process; IUCN acted as if it could be on the same level. They did not communicate their role properly. Communication is IUCN's biggest problem. They tried to do things alone, without communicating with the EC and clarifying what their added value could be.*

Most external international stakeholders see a clear role for IUCN in a variety of supporting roles in multi-stakeholder dialogues as part of governance processes:

> *IUCN's position as international NGO with governments and NGOs as members is unique and qualifies IUCN to facilitate (inter)national multi-stakeholder dialogues.*

IUCN can play a strong role depending on its relationships with major stakeholders and their perceptions of IUCN (reputation), ranging from advocate for MSD, broker between stakeholder groups to facilitating the process. For the latter IUCN has to create enough space and trust with the government (and international organizations) to be tasked with such job.

IUCN can play a role in forest governance but its policy advice should be evidence based. It can be a convenor and facilitator for policy dialogue.

Some external international stakeholders have doubts about IUCN's role in governance processes, as they perceive IUCN basically as a conservation organization:

Dialogues for forest conservation would be typical IUCN business. Forest governance is an innovation or new business for IUCN and maybe a bridge too far. It is a question for IUCN whether they really want to move in this direction. It is not clear whether IUCN wants to position itself in governance.

Most governmental stakeholders perceive the role of IUCN positive, they point at different competences that make IUCN qualify:

IUCN is well placed to convene stakeholders in governance consultation processes and facilitate multi-stakeholder dialogues.

IUCN can play a useful role, e.g. in the VPA steering committee as an observer. Informally as a mediator, or assisting with information + communication or facilitating consultations on the outputs of thematic working groups organised around the VPA.

IUCN was the right organisation as it is neutral and external. There was a need for an external player.

IUCN is well placed, they adopted the right approach, they have partnerships at high level (but are they an NGO?).

Some governmental stakeholders do not see a role for IUCN in governance processes, as they do not perceive IUCN does as having the right competences.

IUCN should keep to its core business. They are a credible sender of conservation messages, but not of governance. FLEGT is to complicated and sensitive for IUCN. Especially as IUCN is weak in communication and relation management.

Stakeholders from civil society basically are positive about IUCN's role:

IUCN has credibility among government and civil society. Other organisations don't have this.

Behind the scenes communicator between stakeholders, clarifying positions softly pushing towards consensus. This is what I saw IUCN was doing all the time.

IUCN role is awareness raising through round tables, publications and workshops.

In the beginning there was a misunderstanding on IUCN's role; this was clarified; IUCN is perceived as neutral.

Stakeholders from private sector comment:

Industry can also help IUCN in facilitation, if they have the funds. Especially as dissemination of information should be done by people from the country, they are more convincing and better placed to find a way forward. But there is a need for external support to push things forward though, IUCN can play that role.

IUCN as an conservation organization has an important role to organize round tables, translate, explain and share information with the private sector.

How stakeholders perceive the core/essence of the project

Many external stakeholders had not really heard of the project. They did not see any difference between the project and IUCN. This is partly due to the fuzzy borders between the project and the IUCN Forest Conservation Program and other forest projects, partly due to IUCN's communication.

IUCN staff also give very different answers to the question what the project is really about. Some are focussing on the community level, others on the national or international level. Some are focussing on multi-stakeholder dialogues:

> *Project to implement new ways of forest governance through multi-stakeholder dialogue and community involvement.*
>
> *Use of multi-stakeholder platforms to help shape forest governance issues in a broader sustainable development context than a focus only on illegal logging.*
>
> *Global support to forest governance reform through multi-stakeholder dialogues - reality check of global discussions through network experiences in 6 countries.*
>
> *Bringing people together to discuss and create shared understanding of forest issues, causes, solutions and how to implement solutions*
>
> *Empowering civil society to participate in institutional forest governance processes to improve their livelihoods*
>
> *In the early phase, the project was based on community oriented work, taking the lessons from the countries into forest governance. At a later stage the project seemed to be more focused at improving forest governance in general, losing the links with the sites*
>
> *Support forest governance reform to combat illegal logging, with a diversified approach to the project countries.*
>
> *Improve forest governance at the local level by training, facilitating the communities to review the by-laws that administer their forests. I am proud of the awareness in the district about illegal logging and the understanding of the laws.*
>
> *Enabling communities to have their voice heard in forest management by decision makers at district and national level and acted upon for the benefit of the communities.*
>
> *Impacting local and national processes to improve forest governance at village level.*
>
> *Policy advocacy project to build capacity to improve governance and enhance lives for disadvantaged people in and around the forests. I like the international sharing; I like the policy adjustments that benefits poor people.*
>
> *Policies are formulated centrally and fail to include local knowledge and international best practice this leads to missed opportunities the project aims to improve policy making and implementation.*
>
> *Bringing to bear and make stakeholders recognise their rights, role and responsibilities in forest governance and how to work together.*

Most external stakeholders perceive the essence of the project based on the parts of the project they have been involved in.

European Commission:

Using experiences with improving governance in 6 countries to draw through exchange lessons learned for the global level (the total is more than the sum of the parts)

FLEGT awareness raising.

IUCN worked effectively in the VPA process offering human resource, financial support and raised awareness.

Other international Stakeholders:

Using IUCN´s convening power to try to provide a platform for dialogue among regulators, private sector and communities.

Government stakeholders

One of the initiative to introduce FLEGT to Viet Nam, next to WWF projects, EC and WB activities.

Multi-stakeholder dialogue on forest policy. People feel they have been informed about the VPA process. IUCN as a neutral facilitator between stakeholder groups.

Community based project providing technical advise for grasscutters, bee keeping, mushroom growing, snails. These alternatives make people less dependent on the forest and can be duplicated to other areas with high unemployment.

Civil society

Involve ordinary people in the process of forest policy implementation that benefits them.

Useful impact on the VPA policy process.

The project is about the exclusion of the people from resource management decision making and improve forest governance.

To gather stakeholders around the table, discussing ways forward.

Development of good governance by dialogue between the local people, the government and companies. Better protection of the territory.

Empowerment of civil society groups in tri-partite dialogue.

Private Sector

FLEGT awareness raising

Bring out pertinent issues that have blocked the industry to move forward. Identify common issues with other stakeholders.

To gather stakeholders around the table, discussing ways forward.

Reduce the conflict between the company and the population. IUCN has facilitated and provided an instrument leading to harmonisation.

How stakeholders perceive the lessons learnt from the project

Questions on lessons learnt are apparently understood very differently between stakeholders. Respondents may refer to their own learning, to the learning of other stakeholders, to the findings of studies, to messages the project wants to deliver, to the achievements of the projects or to recommendations they want to promote.

Several IUCN staff consider that stakeholders learnt a lot from multi-stakeholder dialogues:

> *Through multi-stakeholder dialogues governments realize that the stick is not always needed. Government understands that for law enforcement they need public support and the right enabling conditions.*
>
> *Private sector now knows more about the context the operate in; they have a more positive attitude towards the law and now follow the procedures.*
>
> *Communities know about the law and forest management.*

Others internal stakeholders explain lessons learnt from the project on MSD or FG:

> *Change in attitude takes more time. Preparation and selection of leaders of stakeholder groups are important.*
>
> *MSDS take a long time and have their own dynamics, there is a need to work on concrete milestones.*
>
> *Negotiation between government and private sector alone does not bring good solutions.*
>
> *You need to build capacities in communities to get their voice heard.*
>
> *Reforms in the countries are ongoing but statutory law has major flaws, often there are clashes with customary law and the institutional framework is often confusing and weak.*

IUCN staff also identify lessons learnt for similar projects, which to some extent overlap with the next question (what should be done differently next time?)

> *Need for planning, communication, more field activities to influence policy, more community forestry…*
>
> *IUCN is weak in relation management, advocacy and facilitation; policy decision making is still a black box for us, especially in our country"*
>
> *You should have a link with the local level when dealing with national FLEGT processes".*

Several external stakeholders explain what lessons can be learnt or were learnt by themselves on MSD or FG:

> *Space for discussion is key although it can take time; critics are very valuable and useful (both positive and negative), it makes us more humble, help us correcting our mistakes and helping others correcting their own mistakes.*
>
> *It pays to have stakeholders involved.*
>
> *The process is unpredictable. A mono-strategy would be ineffective.*
>
> *It is important to recognize that all stakeholders matter.*
>
> *Set out clear rules of the game right from the start.*

There is a new concept: sharing benefits not losing them because of illegal activities.

Forest governance needs MSDS: it creates relationships, trust, understanding, empathy, credibility. It engages communities. It builds capacity and support in society.

Forest companies have to make social responsibility contracts, which is a benefit for the local people.

Others explain what lessons can be learnt for conducting similar projects:

Need to clarify the expectations in the beginning.

It is not always easy to implement a multi-country project.

Recognize the importance of your partners, once they are recognized as important they support you.

Project manager from the beginning has surrounded himself with a group of key leaders from major stakeholder groups. This is vital for the process.

It is important to identify the right individual as project coordinator; and give him the time.

Don't impose your ideas, the Government should feel it is the author of the good ideas we have suggested to him.

Build partnership with institutions having the same philosophy.

Money: Brazil is much more expensive than Ghana or Viet Nam.

Work phase by phase (but do not plan for several years).

IUCN should not claim ownership of multi-stakeholder dialogues.

IUCN should explain better its role and position. It should serve and support but leave the ownership with the government.

Allow for time and resources.

Networking competences of staff is important (science is not enough).

It is easier to work on concrete issues (for example sustainable purchasing).

Sometimes the answer consists of positive or negative judgements on the project:

IUCN has been clever at using their resources quite flexibly to have involvement in places where it is really needed.

People in the villages are aware that the forest companies are not their enemies. There is more control over the administration, more transparency on where the collected money flow to.

There is more willingness to rethink policy statements taking into account better the realities on the ground, the perceptions of people.

NGOs had to find a new role with the new government, we improved their capacities of analysis and ability to make proposals.

Governance means different things to different people especially with regard to tenure rights. That has not been addressed, as too political.

After the situation analysis we did not share it with the stakeholders in order to decide together what to do.

So far there is more reporting than analyzing - there seems to be a disconnect between project practice and knowledge needed for the policy level.

There is always a tendency to promise too much to the donor (in order to get the funds).

Sometimes we only know the subject or the area of the learning or respondent quote the areas where training was delivered (e.g. agricultural techniques, managing sources of clean drinking water, forest code, natural resources management) or capacities where built (e.g. How to solve conflicts at different scales).

There were also interesting comments on knowledge management:

"The designers, implementers and managers have about 50% of the knowledge and skills sets needed for this project, resulting from IUCN's work as convenor, their experience in working with stakeholders and community forestry. It sometimes looked like if this first 50% prevents them to see they lack the other 50%: the knowledge and skills sets of brokering, advocacy and facilitation in formal and highly political national and international governance environments."

In general lessons learned were not or insufficiently captured.

How stakeholders perceive what should be different a next time

Several IUCN staff recommend that design should be better prepared, country driven and more participatory. An inception phase is also proposed by different respondents. Recommendations for project design or the inception phase include the preparation of monitoring and evaluation procedures, knowledge management, definition of responsibilities, decision on the share of overheads, clarification on how to allocate resources, change process required, finding agreements with partners, the role of Regional Offices, clarification of expectations.

Design should be country driven.

Have a 3-6 month inception phase before the project really starts.

Make sure that the project is organized with clear responsibilities. Pay more attention to project management.

Suggestions made by IUCN staff on better management includes avoiding double reporting, reducing adverse incentives on human resource management, more leadership, reducing the turn over of project staff, more flexibility in finances.

The IUCN structure is a problem: the national coordinators should not be recruited and on the pay list of regional offices, while having to also report to the global project coordinator - sometimes the RCO gave us only 30% of the time to work on the project, the rest we had to spend on other assignments, if not they blocked payments.

There is also a demand in IUCN staff for more time or means:

We need more time to create demand for this project with government.

Identifying the leaders of the stakeholder groups took long.

Means are necessary to work on the field; we shouldn't loose contact with the local level.

Some IUCN respondents whish more communication and more exchange of knowledge

The Regional Office has important human resources, not sufficiently used.

More direct communication with IUCN. More exposure to international discourse.

Forest program should learn more form the MSD experience in the water program

Legal advice should be mandatory not on demand basis. There should be more coaching and handholding of country coordinators.

Integrate Commission knowledge on knowledge management and learning in the design phase of a project.

External stakeholders

On planning, project preparation and management several external stakeholders make comments which are both confirming and complementing those from IUCN staff:

The project seems to be based on too many assumptions. Was there in the design phase enough time to understand the political and policy arena of forest governance they were entering. Somehow IUCN should explore quietly the playing field and not jump in or out too fast.

Be more quick with an explicit approach and strong objectives, but flexibility for action in the different places. It would be good to have more flexibility to use funding from different projects, bringing resources together, so there can be more impact.

Clarify the expected outputs.

Work with a team instead of being alone and hiring consultants

I would elaborate much more on knowledge management and communication in the design phase of the project.. I would forget about the heavy global structure of legal advisors, economy and forest advisors they had no added value.

Hiring consultant was difficult, we should prefer local consultants (whom could be controlled) For IUCN, the success of the process depends a lot on the individual. Be careful that the person is not overloaded.

IUCN should not engage in local projects but leave that to members.

IUCN should reduce its bureaucracy.

Much more long term planning, now it was too much ad hoc. It was not always clear where the process was leading to.

Changing staff gives IUCN a bad name. It kills knowledge and relations.

Share more cross country, e.g. how to integrate indigenous people in VPA process?

External stakeholders including the EC (but not only the EC) recommend more or less explicitly that IUCN draw lessons on its position or revise it:

I am not sure whether IUCN has learned enough about its position in the VPA steering committee. . In Liberia there were frictions, maybe they should have handled it more diplomatically…

There is a need for accountability vis-à-vis national institutions, IUCN reports only to IUCN IUCN: they should clarify their "brand", it is not clear to which extent they are conservationists or more social.

Voices from different stakeholders should have been kept in a paper from IUCN.

Less isolation is demanded by stakeholders at different levels including the EC:

Involve all stakeholders.

IUCN should communicate better with us; invite us to project meetings and brainstorm more with us.

IUCN should not work in isolation, it should seek strategic alliances.

Strategies should be designed with partners.

IUCN should not work in isolation and do everything alone.

Do joint fact finding as part of MSD and not through consultant reports.

Although this does not answer the question many external stakeholders, mainly beneficiaries, respond to it by expressing their wish for a continuation of the project:

Continuation of the activities of IUCN is required.

The process needs a long term support, we are just in the beginning of the harvest (the results were obtained in the last period, the outcome would be lost is the project stops.

Time is needed for reaching the objectives. This project cannot finish yet.

We are on the good way now, but before leaving people have to be prepared on the next phase. People have to be capable to take over. Most projects stop with the contract and people are not yet ready.

This was a pilot study that needed to be continued and followed up. There are new initiatives but without them the project would not have been sustainable.

The wish for continuation is often associated with a wish for more budget, a broader scope and more action (*"More training is required")* notably on capacity building and training. However the demand is also on quality:

Capacity building should be more systematic (need assessment, annual plan, selection of participants…).

Additional themes are sometimes recommended, some at local (charcoal production risks in DRC) other are more global or general (REDD, environmental services and non-wood products, markets abroad).

Finally some external stakeholders wish more focus on communities and field work:
IUCN should support those who live far away in the forest.

Focus more on the grass roots level, engage communities more concerning issues as land use, and benefit sharing.

SVBC was too ambitious, IUCN should do case studies on governance on the ground as evidence for policies.

Annex 6. Comments and guidance on problem trees

The SVBC overall log frame is not explicitly based on a problem tree or any other assessment of the specific situation in the six countries. Country-specific problem trees have nevertheless been prepared later on as the foundations for country-specific log frames. Although this can be considered as a valuable improvement those problem trees still show some logical weaknesses:

- The approach does not fully prevent from the “circular rationale” consisting of justifying a project by the lack of the solutions it proposes: this happens with the many problems formulated as “lack of…” or with problem trees built around a “central” problem identified at the beginning as the target of the future project.
- Therefore a “tree” shape (with one single “trunk”) is maintained, focusing on a central problem identified in advance, ignoring the potential direct links between “roots” and “branches”.
- The problem tree in Ghana includes a contradiction that is frequent in FLEG issues: it both considers that illegal practices are a problem and that the law is not adequate.
- Problem trees also include very generic problems (for example “The policy and legal framework in Viet Nam for forest management is not sufficiently and effectively implemented”) which do not adequately show the precise causal links between their causes and consequences.
- All arrows do not reflect a cause-effect link or linking overlapping problems (e.g. Sri Lanka).

Properly done problem trees can be very valuable tools for project preparation (including for a participatory design of the project) but also for the type of assessments that were prepared under expected result 1 or for selecting priorities in participatory processes (for example in the agendas prepared in Brazil).

Recommendations for adequate problem trees are as follows:

- Forget any idea regarding the future project or actions: the problem tree should be a basis to identify a project and not to justify it; (the only decisions to be taken in advance regard the area and framework, the overall concerns justifying the process and the stakeholders to be involved in the analysis).
- Define a problem as an unsatisfactory situation making sure that there is only one idea per problem and no overlapping ideas between problems.
- Identify what you are speaking about (a name) and what is wrong about that (an adjective). Therefore “illegal logging” can be a problem, however this means that one should consider that the problem is the fact that logging is illegal (and not the fact that it is excessive or destroys vulnerable species for example).
- In order to be precise and concrete think about the potential indicator of your problem.
- Never define a problem as a missing solution (or as a constraint to a solution)
- Identify all important causality links between the identified problems, even when this does not lead to a “tree shape” diagram; it is normal to start with a particular problem of major concern but this problem will not necessarily be central in the diagram and should not necessarily be the main target of the project.
- A causality link cannot be confused with a deduction regarding the existence of another problem.
- Include all relevant problems that have important links with the problems you selected in the beginning without being restricted to a particular area (social, environmental, economic or other problems are to be identified if they play a significant role).

The problem tree should be transformed into an objective tree (where unsatisfactory situations are replaced by satisfactory ones) as a basis to decide what to do. This (participatory) decision should be made by selecting a particular objective in order to have both a high probability to achieve it and a high positive impact if it is achieved.

Annex 7. Comments and guidance on logical framework

1. Unique or cascading log frame(s)

A project should be based on a unique logical framework. If the project is complex and has several components each component can have its own log frame but it should have an explicit link with the overall one: the specific objective of the component log frame should exactly correspond to an expected result of the overall one. And there should be no implicit log frames or objectives run in parallel.

In SVBC there were country specific log frames disconnected from the overall one and parallel objectives which were not reflected in the log frames, for example “strengthening voices” (as reflected in the title), learning lessons of broad applicability promoting the “ETPA” concept (equity, transparency, participation and action), tripartite approach and broad forest governance (beyond the focus on legality) as reflected in project documents or possibly positioning IUCN as a key global actor in forest governance reforms (as suggested by the geographical coverage of the project).

With different and disconnected log frames (explicit or implicit) SVBC is a project difficult to understand, to manage and to evaluate. The main expected benefits from log frames that is to provide a common understanding of the project rationale and a single tool for monitoring and evaluation, are lost.

The table below (at the end of the annex) compares the project log frames

2. Logical links and hierarchy between objectives

All objectives should be included in the logical framework and logically linked with a unique specific objective to be achieved by the end of the project. The specific objective should represent one improved situation. Other objectives should either justify the specific objective (be a consequence of it and therefore considered as “overall objectives” which the project contributes to) or be intermediary steps towards it (be causes of the specific objective, products of the activities and considered as “expected results”).

In the project these rules were not fully respected:
As explained here above there were several explicit or implicit log frames;
The specific objective of the overall log frame in fact is 6-fold as it represents 6 improved situations in different countries, pursued in parallel;
The indicator of the specific objective includes a target to be reached after the project (while per definition the specific objective should be achieved by the end of the project).
Because the outcomes of the project are very unpredictable and out of control due to the dependence on participatory processes, the “arrangements” referred to in the purpose tend in fact to have a status of overall objective;
A part of Result 5 contributes directly to the overall objective without contributing to the specific objective;
Expected results of the overall log frame are not all clearly contributing to the purpose and therefore tended to be considered as additional objectives of the same level (i.e. objectives to be pursued even without contributing to the specific objective).

This contributes to reducing the added value of having a logical framework and makes the project difficult to understand, to manage with efficiency and to evaluate

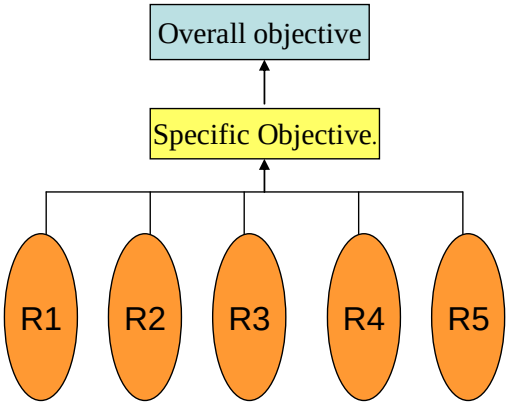
3. Links between expected results

Expected results should be independent from each other, pursued in parallel in such a way that put together they generate the specific objective. They should be both necessary and sufficient (under the assumptions) to produce the specific objective.

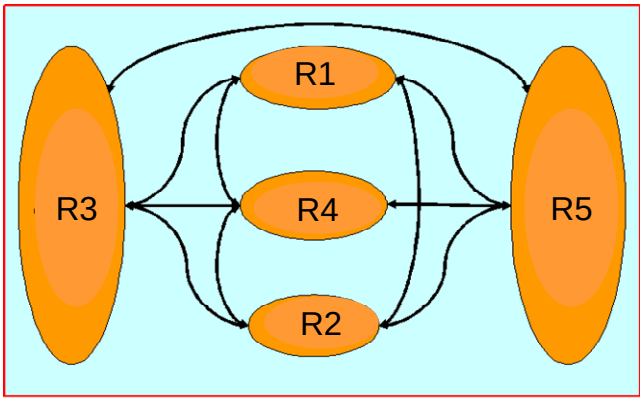
In SVBC expected results are inter-dependent. Project managers established several complex links between them (as illustrated by the Figure below) and there formulation strongly suggested logical steps (for example Result 1 identifies obstacles and Result 2 test solutions to address those obstacles). Moreover expected results tended to be pursued everywhere, even where they are less justified, and not always as means leading to the specific objective.

Comparison between expected and proposed project structures

Expected structure in logframe approach



Proposed SVBC structure according to project documents



Because of the interlinks between results, each particular activity is supposed to contribute to several results and cannot focus on a single target. Therefore inputs used to achieve each particular result are difficult to track, the efficiency cannot be properly assessed and managed, the overall management is made more complicated, including the allocation of responsibilities and time planning. And because of activities that do not contribute to the specific objectives efficiency can suffer from unnecessary efforts.

The table below summarizes the main problems for each expected result:

Result	Comment
Result 1: Policy, legal, institutional and economic obstacles to sustainable and equitable forest management identified in six priority countries.	Should logically precede R2 (and ideally project identification), but was in fact pursued independently from R2 and achieved too late, therefore without contributing to the purpose.

Result 2: New and innovative approaches to overcoming the obstacles to good forest governance pilot tested and assessed.	The contribution to the purpose is not explicit; therefore R2 tend to justify activities at local level that were not all contributing to the purpose (for example support to the implementation of Knuckles management plan in Sri Lanka, training on mushroom cultivation and bee keeping in Ghana). The reason why approaches should be innovative is not clear.
Result 3: Selected representatives from government, civil society and the private sector have enhanced skills and knowledge which enable them to participate more effectively in the development and implementation of forest governance reforms	A very "open" result making room for capacity building before the needs have been assessed.
Result 4: Awareness of, and commitment to, FLEG processes and action increased and sustained.	The logical link with the purpose is unclear. R4 is not necessarily relevant in all six countries but was considered in all countries.
Result 5: The lessons learned from the project's experiences are effectively captured, analysed and disseminated at the local, national, regional and global levels.	Dissemination at regional and global levels does not contribute to the purpose but contributes directly to the overall objective. If the six countries (referred to in the purpose) have been selected in order to learn lessons to be disseminated at regional and global level (referred to R5) there is an inversion in the hierarchy between ends and means.

4. Objectively verifiable indicators

The log frames should identify clear and verifiable targets. Indicators and sources of verification should be defined in order to provide a concrete description of the expected achievements and demonstrate that it will be possible to testify to their achievements. Indicators should be defined at the right level; therefore indicators of a particular result should not reflect its causes or consequences.

In SVBC the 2 last objectively verifiable indicators for Result 3 reflect consequences of Result 3 and the objectively verifiable indicators for Result 4 reflect the actions contributing to Result 4. In fact the 5 expected results of the overall log frame include steps to define (Result 1), implement (Result 2) and evaluate (Result 5) actions. This suggests that the project had to define its own targets when pursuing them. This is related to some confusion between inputs and expected outputs: the assessments of problems to be solved - the studies referred to in Result 1 - and participation are both parts of the methods and of the products of the project. Moreover several country specific log frames have no clear and quantified objectively verifiable indicators (ex: Ghana, DR Congo, and Brazil). It should be recognized however that the project has intangible outcomes that are difficult to measures objectively through indicators.

This is a constraint for the proper evaluation and monitoring of the project and is a reason why this evaluation does not pay more attention to the current state of the objectively verifiable indicators identified in the logical framework(s). In addition this is also an obstacle to the concrete understanding of the project objectives, which would be both necessary for efficient management and solid ownership.

Comparison between project log frames

Colours tend to track similarities between country log frames and the overall one.

	Overall Project	Brazil	Ghana	DR Congo	Tanzania	Sri Lanka	Sri Lanka local	Viet Nam
Overall Objective	Forest governance arrangements that facilitate and promote sustainable and equitable forest conservation and management are in place and under active implementation in priority regions of Africa, Asia and Latin America.	Social, economic and environmental patterns of forest activities are improved in private lands and community forests in the State of Acre and Extractive Reserves in Rondônia		Forest governance system is improved	Political support and Coordinated efforts in addressing forest governance in Tanzania	Forest governance arrangements that will deliver sustainable forest management and improve local livelihoods.		Forest governance arrangements that facilitate and promote sustainable and equitable forest conservation and management are in place and under active implementation in priority regions of Africa, Asia and Latin America
Specific Objective	Policy, legal, institutional and economic arrangements that contribute to improved forest governance are identified and promoted in six key tropical	Increase the social, economic and environmental benefits of the forest activity in the Amazonian South-west region	Illegal logging in Ghana decreased	Selected major forest management decisions at local and national level are debated, resolved (and implemented) in a participatory,	Stakeholders are coordinated to build common understanding on forest governance issues in the country.		Management plan for Knuckles Conservation Area agreed and implemented by all stakeholders	The implementation of policy and legal frameworks for forest management in Viet Nam is improved

	Overall Project	Brazil	Ghana	DR Congo	Tanzania	Sri Lanka	Sri Lanka local	Viet Nam
	forest countries, and enjoy the active support of government, civil society and the private sector.			equitable and transparent manner.				
Result 1	Policy, legal, institutional and economic obstacles to sustainable and equitable forest management identified in six priority countries.	Technical and management capacities at private forest companies and forest communities are improved	Adequate procedures for allocation of TUCs and management of forest resources agreed and implemented	Relevant in formations for adequate decision making on forest laws international policy (FLEG) and information market developments market to consult are available to local and national stakeholders.	Coordination mechanisms in place and used effectively among stakeholders working on Forest governance at national level and at local level	Policy, legal, institutional and economic obstacles to sustainable and equitable forest management identified	Institutional mechanism (including communication) are set up and operational for the community and landowner involvement in the management of KCZ	Stakeholder are better informed and aware about growing and changing market demand for timber of Viet Nam, including about policy, legal and economic issues
Result 2	New and innovative approaches to overcoming the obstacles to good forest governance pilot tested and assessed.	The social segments of the forest sector are articulated and organized	Capacity to enforce forest law strengthened (R2a)	Local organisations and selected national organisations (e.g. CS) have improve capacity to negotiate the interests and legal rights, and to monitor the results	Improved understanding of international issues surrounding Forest governance	New and innovative approaches to overcoming the obstacles to good forest governance pilot tested and assessed.	Key stakeholders have the capacities to conduct participatory planning and management as referred to in result no. 4	More practical guidelines for implementation of forest legal framework at lower levels are formulated

	Overall Project	Brazil	Ghana	DR Congo	Tanzania	Sri Lanka	Sri Lanka local	Viet Nam
Result 3	Selected representatives from government, civil society and the private sector have enhanced skills and knowledge which enable them to participate more effectively in the development and implementation of forest governance reforms	Forest industries have more controlled and certified wood available for its operations	Support provided to reform of inadequate laws and policies (R2b)	Stakeholders have put in place and are using mechanisms to share information about forest governance and to advocate for local and national arrangements for sustainable and equitable forest management	Effective information flow from and to communities participating in the forest management to and from central government		Legal options for community involvement in conservation area management pilot tested	Capacity for development and implementation of policy and legal frameworks is improved
Result 4	Awareness of, and commitment to, FLEG processes and action increased and sustained.	New market opportunities are establish for SIM program members	Forest management and contract allocation carried out in transparent manner (R3)	Communication mechanisms between the national and the local level in place and in use through a communication strategy	Improved awareness on forest governance issues among government officers outside forest department including MPs and the judiciary		Participatory planning process for the management of KCA responsive to local realities designed and implemented.	Proposals to improve elements of the policy and legal framework have been formulated in consultation with stakeholders
Result 5	The lessons learned from the project's experiences are effectively		Empower forest communities to manage and protect forest	Pilot activities show benefits of stakeholder participation to achieve			The full potential of the resources in KCA are explored and	

	Overall Project	Brazil	Ghana	DR Congo	Tanzania	Sri Lanka	Sri Lanka local	Viet Nam
	captured, analysed and disseminated at the local, national, regional and global levels.		resources (link to pilot site log frame) (R4)	sustainable and equitable forest management.			integrated in the mgmt plan	

Annex 8. Differences between projects and programs

During the evaluation it became clear to the evaluators that not all internal stakeholders had a clear picture of the differences between projects and programs and the management consequences of these differences. From the wide range of information on project and programme management here a selection is made to clarify the differences.

Project
The whole idea of a project is so simple when it is boiled down yet, it is at the same time so broad and so all encompassing that it can be easy to become overwhelmed in the process of breaking down exactly what a project in fact is. To put it somewhat simply, a project refers specially to any short-term and or temporary task engagement or endeavour in which a particular and unique outcome. often in the form of a specific product and or service is generated or created. This is usually done via the utilization or a predetermined project management team and run by a designated project management team leader. It also involves the utilization of a number of specific and particular supplemental concepts and utilizations including project staff, project scheduling, project calendars, project life cycles, etc. In general, a project has a fixed time and a fixed goal and multiple projects may run at the same time

Program
The concept of program refers specifically to the series, listing, or group of those similarly structured and or otherwise interrelated projects that when the decision is made to coordinate the management of all them in a coordinated way will garner benefits and improved ability to maintain control as opposed to if the management of each of these took place on a project by project basis. Some tangible examples of instances in which it is beneficial to group management of certain projects within the overall scope is when it comes to organization and maximum efficiency in regards to staffing. It is far more efficient to distribute staff across a number of independent projects yet within one umbrella program than to attempt to coordinate staffing across all projects independently. It also helps to better utilize office resources and other supply materials. Specific enumerated program elements may consist of not only large scope work-related items, but also in regards to elements outside of scope of the discrete projects that make up the program.

Difference between project and program management:
Project management is the act of creating plans and managing resources in order to accomplish a project. A project is a scheduled undertaking for the purpose of creating a product or service or an improved situation. Program management, on the other hand, is the act of creating and managing multiple projects, most of the projects are usually related to one another. Project management is usually short-lived with specific time constraints while program management is more an ongoing process in order to achieve the goals and objectives. The job of a project manager usually involves working on finite projects or objectives. The program manager works more often with strategy.
A project management team works to identify the triple constraint of time, scope and cost of a project. Then, they plan and report on the delivery of the project. While the project is being accomplished the triple constraint is reviewed. When the project is closed, the project management team will review and report on the accomplishment of the project. A program management team works to identify the mission, projects to be accomplished, and its closure. The team provides support for the requirements of the projects. They monitor the program plan and keep track of information within the specific projects. After the completion of the project, it is reviewed and documented.
Operation type activities are similar to project activities in that they too produce deliverables, consume resources and incur cost. However they are on-going or repetitive in nature, hence they are not project activities or tasks. Some examples of operation activities are weekly maintenance of databases, paying invoices or help desk operations activities. Programs are much larger than projects. They are made up of many projects and on going activities such as operation type activities. Programs are similar to projects as they consume resources, incur cost and produce deliverables. However programs are more complex and include repetitive operation type activities such as maintenance work, facility administration etc. Programs are funded typically on a fiscal year basis. Projects in general are more time focused than programs.

http://www.project-management-knowledge.com/difference-between-project-management-and-program-management/

Annex 9. How to organize the capturing of implicit knowledge

To capture implicit knowledge a different methodology is needed than for capturing explicit knowledge. The write-up workshop on MSD lessons learnt in Nairobi (6-8 July 2009) was organized on the assumption that it was dealing with explicit knowledge. In fact most of the knowledge on multi-stakeholder dialogues acquired in the project has never been made fully explicit, only in some very generic terms which do not really provide any 'new' learning that is of interest to others. To capture implicit learning in an IUCN Forest Conservation Program project a different approach is suggested for a write-up workshop.

Expert approach to capture explicit knowledge (based on 6-8 July workshop in Nairobi)	Mutual learning approach to capture implicit knowledge (suggestions to improve process and outputs)
A SVBC 3-day write-shop with project coordinators of SVBC and LLS is facilitated by a senior project advisor. He introduces a new concept for MSD: multi-stakeholder process MSP. Each participant then presents his/her lessons learned according to ten criteria of the facilitator on context and analysis: – objective MSP – stakeholders – results – role IUCN – main challenges – what is a MSP? – Where did the mandate come from? – Success factors – What would you have done differently? – What is IUCN's unique selling point? The advisor then collects ideas for lessons on cards, clusters them in four groups: – Open-ended MSPs – MSPs for VPAs, – MSPs for cross-boundary protected areas, – MSPs for evidence based information. Senior advisor assigns rubrics and invites people to choose for one group. Headings for an academic thesis writing method are explained and groups start writing; advisor will later on provide references for the writing. Groups report back and read their writings to the plenary. Plenary feedback. Last group work is writing a conclusion, introduction and plan of action to finish within the next week the various chapters of the publication. Plenary reading and feedback.	Two or three day workshop, facilitated by a learning, communication or knowledge management expert (not a forestry expert), with help of a senior forest advisor as resource person. Approach: Think in terms of making implicit knowledge about the project into explicit knowledge. Think in terms of modules of learning, before deciding on the final form. Start with brainstorming about the basic key terms for a glossary. Each group clusters the terms and frames a rubric for each cluster and then decides for which audience this knowledge might be relevant. Decide on the audience and form for the knowledge codification. Ask who wants to work is small groups on which cluster. Small groups each discuss for one or more rubrics: – prerequisite concepts – key concepts (preferably in visuals) – learning objectives, phrased in new knowledge, attitudes, skills – learning techniques – learning assessments – references Get feedback in plenary. Work in pairs on: – summary of module content – introduction in bullets – box defining and illustrating the rubric – key components of the rubric – graphics and visuals, illustrating the components – suggestions for learning assessment, e.g. do your own MSD test. Get feedback in plenary. Decide on final structure and format. Assign homework for writing.

Annex 10. Lessons Learnt on Multi-stakeholder Dialogues in Ghana

The description below is based on interviews in Ghana with relevant internal and external stakeholders and the results are validated afterwards by the country coordinator and the Ghana VPA coordinator.

a- The organization of the process

The real dialogue between stakeholders took place in the VPA steering committee that since 2006 was composed out of the following stakeholder groups (diagram borrowed from a presentation by Bosman Owusu, Seminar on the FLEGT/VPA process in Ghana: legality and livelihoods, Wageningen University, June 8, 2009).

STAKEHOLDER GROUP	ELEMENTS WITHIN GROUP
RELATED GOVERNMENT MINISTRIES AND AGENCIES (Public sector)	• Ministry of Finance & Economic Planning • Ministry of Trade, Industry, PSI & PSD • Customs • Attorney General's and Minister of Justice • Forestry Research institute of Ghana • Parliamentary Select Committee
TIMBER INDUSTRY (Private sector)	• Ghana Timber Millers Organization • Ghana Timber Association
NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS (Civil Society Organizations)	• Forest Watch Ghana – Coalition of 32 Civil Society Organizations • World Conservation Union (IUCN) – Observer Status • National Working Group on Certification
MLFM & FOREST SECTOR AGENCIES (Public sector)	• MLFM • TIDD • FSD • WD

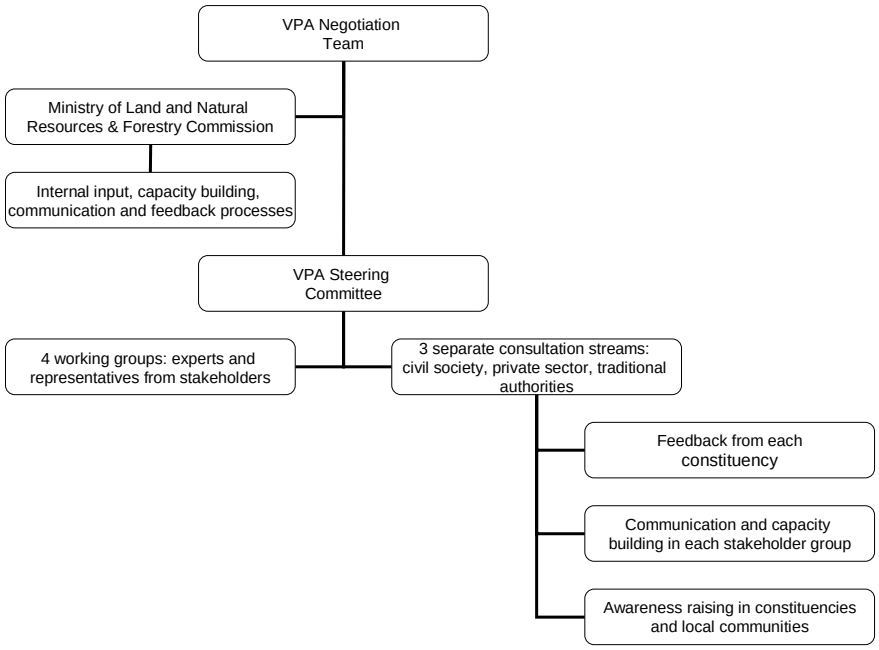
The negotiations between Ghana and the European Commission were done by a negotiation team under the responsibility of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other relevant Ministries. The team included representatives from the stakeholder groups. The VPA steering committee coordinated all the technical input into the negotiations team and discussed the results of the negotiations to plan the steps for the next round of negotiations.

The consultation with the stakeholder groups focused on generating their input on the findings of the five working groups on issues as licensing and verification system/implementation of legal standards, legislative Reform, domestic market development and regulation. To these ends stakeholder groups were informed about the EU policies, VPA and the idea of creating consensus through a consultative multi-stakeholder process. The process in each stakeholder group lead to a communiqué as input for the discussions and consensus building in the VPA steering committee.

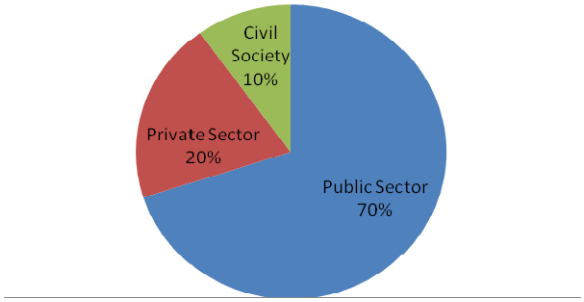
In short the meetings and other forms of communication supported the process of consensus building between the government and the three major stakeholder groups in the VPA steering committee. The

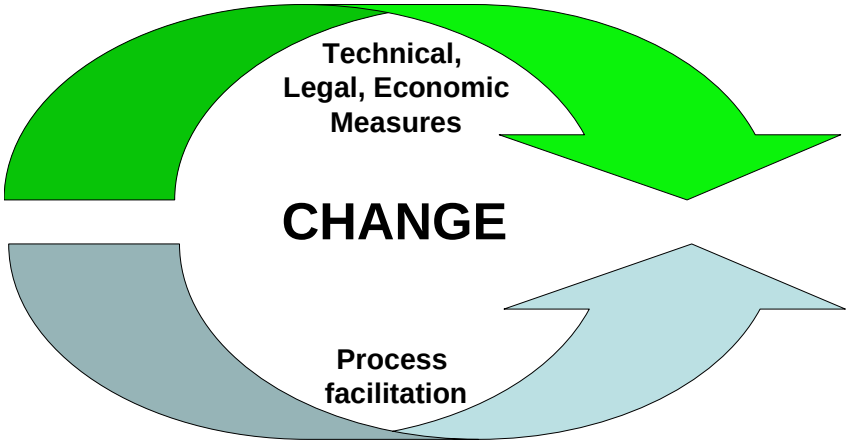
characters of the meetings were often a combination of information sharing, strengthening capacities, preparation of positions, feedback collection and formulating position statements. Each stakeholder group was supposed to organize feedback from its constituency. Information sharing with constituencies has been a weak point in the process and needs much more attention a next time.

The formal process as described was supported with informal meetings, networking activities and other communication to establish good working relationships, mutual trust and a joint vision. They also were needed in the process to bridge the gap that had existed between the government and the stakeholder groups. This included clarifying positions, rectifying wrong assumptions or perceptions, and negotiation improved conditions for the dialogue. The formal process was coordinated by a VPA Coordinator from the Forestry Commission. IUCN operated closely with the VPA coordinator and the leaders of civil society to support the consultation process. Much of IUCN's work was behind the scenes. The formal organization of the MSD is illustrated in the organigram below.



It is important to note that since 2005 IUCN had a seat on the interim committee, that guided the VPA process. In 2007 IUCN gave that seat up for observer status to make place for a real representative from civil society. Later the steering committee agreed to nominate a second representative from civil society in the VPA steering committee. As this was the first time of a multi-stakeholder dialogue in the forestry sector, the government took the lead in the selection. It appointed mostly members from the public sector. The reasons were the short time frame of the original roadmap. The government was afraid that too much participation would slow down the process too much. The graphic below shows the back ground of steering committee members. It is borrow from a presentation by Bosman Owusu, Seminar on the FLEGT/VPA process in Ghana: legality and livelihoods, Wageningen University, June 8, 2009.





b- Lessons learnt from the process

How does a multi-stakeholder dialogue relate to the policy process? In a democratic open society one always needs a form of multi-stakeholder dialogue for major policy change affecting a whole sector of society. There are many different forms, ranging from one- or two-way information campaigns to joint policy planning and formulation exercises. A well tailored and managed stakeholder process always helps, but no dialogue can take over role of the government. In a policy process the technical, legal and economic decisions are taken by the government. These decisions are so to say the different parts of the engine of the policy decision making. The multi-stakeholder process provides the oil that makes that engine work. In Ghana the process of governmental VPA decision making and negotiations was based on consultations with various groups of stakeholders. The main actors had limited knowledge in advance of the character of this process as a change process that needed a strategy based on inputs from key stakeholders. Through learning by doing stakeholders learnt that the dialogue was actually the facilitation of the decision making on technical, economic and legal aspects of FLEGT (see illustration above).

What makes participation meaningful? The tipping point in the VPA MSD in Ghana was the multi-stakeholder meeting, organized by IUCN with EC after the second negotiation round in Accra in 2007. At that meeting civil society brought to the attention of the EC that the consultation process as started since 2005 was far from satisfactory. The EC delegation in response gave a strong signal to its counterparts that for them the VPA must be based on serious consultations with and support from national stakeholders in Ghana. This external ‘pressure’ triggered the change in the attitude of the

government. It changed the Roadmap for the VPA and ToR for the consultations: IUCN became observer and civil society got a seat and later a second one on the steering committee. The government started to change its attitude towards civil society and its contributions and vice versa. Mutual recognition and respect became the basis for more meaningful interaction and participation in the process. Only from the moment the key stakeholder groups were at the table, the process towards consensus really started to take off.

Who sits at the table? The third lesson learned is that representatives of all stakeholders should be engaged in a meaningful way and that the way to do so is to actively engage them in the selection of their representatives in the VPA process. In Ghana in the beginning the government selected the representation of civil society, that did not really work. Similarly not all stakeholders were engaged: not the communities, who have an interest in positive change nor members of the elite, who have high stakes in business as usual with regard to illegal logging. This indicates that there are still challenges in Ghana to create the conditions for the implementation of the VPA and for improved governance.

What is the character and structure of a multi-stakeholder dialogue? A fourth lesson is that a successful MSD is not a logical, rational and purely science-based process of decision making, but a process of involvement of stakeholders in government decision making based on mutual learning, recognizing the different interests and perspectives. Its value is not in fast decision making, but in creating involvement needed to improve policies in such a way that they become more relevant to local needs and that a basis for the support for their implementation is created. In Ghana the real multi-stakeholder dialogue took place in the VPA steering committee and was formally facilitated by the VPA coordinator. IUCN took a mediating role in the discussions. IUCN did not facilitate the VPA process. The multi-stakeholder dialogue in the VPA steering committee was based on input from separate consultations. IUCN played a key role in facilitating these consultations. The formal VPA decisions were taken in the negotiation process between government and the European Commission. Private sector and civil society had an observer status during those negotiations.

What does facilitation of a multi-stakeholder dialogue mean? A fifth lesson is that facilitating a multi-stakeholder dialogue is not the same as facilitating round tables with different stakeholder groups. Most of the work is behind the scene translating of positions of groups in the language of other groups to create better understanding and clarifying interests. Sometimes translation has to be done literally, e.g. for the communities. Access to information is key condition to participate. IUCN played a very important role in making knowledge flow effectively between key players. Facilitation also includes strengthening of capacities of stakeholder groups. This should not be based on training needs assessments, but on articulating the demand for new knowledge and skills needed for the next step in the VPA process. This asks for a responsive approach and much flexibility to provide a variety of different types of support.

What are milestones in a multi-stakeholder dialogue? A last lesson is that a multi-stakeholder dialogue in each situation takes a different form. It is a process. The process takes many forms and a range of interventions: bilateral meetings, workshops, training etc. This does not imply that the process cannot be steered and guided towards results. In Ghana an informal team emerged of the VPA coordinator, IUCN and Forestwatch Ghana. Although the team did not meet or take formal decisions, the content of much of their interaction can be characterized as discussing the various milestones in the process

situation analysis

- identification of stakeholder groups and their representatives
- terms of reference for the multi-stakeholder dialogue
- creation of working relations with and between stakeholder groups
- preconditions for change
- awareness and attitude change in stakeholder groups
- the receptiveness and readiness of decision makers for change
- specific formulations for decision making on improved forest governance.

c. Milestones and tipping point in the Ghana VPA Multi Stakeholder Dialogue

In interviews with some of the key stakeholders the highlights of stakeholder consultation process of the Ghana VPA process were identified. With the colour red are the kick off and tipping point in the process marked. The interviews also indicated that many favourable conditions for a successful multi-stakeholder process were in place, e.g. previous forest reforms, open democracy with a free press, strong civil society etc. During the process it also became clear that from the outset the rules of the game or terms of reference for the multi-stakeholder process should be clear.

Policy focus Actors	2005 FLEGT	2006 Negotiations 1	2007 Negotiations 2	2008 Negotiations 3	2009 VPA
Government	Expression of interest in VPA: limited role for stakeholder participation (time as argument). See civil society as enemies. First National Workshop.	Interim Committee VPA: 1st Roadmap IUCN accepted as member. Start of 5 expert working groups IUCN facilitates civil servant to participate in Chatham House meeting.	Widening the framework for MSD. New roadmap and ToR for MSD. VPA steering committee with civil society representation & IUCN as Observer.	Signing VPA with meaningful input of civil society and other actors. Government is receptive for input of civil society. Consensus with stakeholders.	Ratification VPA Forest governance review under way. Meaningful MSD planned for REDD with more time for consultations (social support as argument). See civil society as partners.
European Commission		EC funding for Forestry Commission to support preparation process for negotiations.	EC delegation meets civil society and expresses the need for meaningful input of stakeholders.	In other forums EC refers to Ghana VPA and MSD as a good example.	
International community	Pre-negotiation project funding for Forestry Commission and civil society by bi-lateral donors		NREG with targets and triggers is framework for VPA implementation: WB, EC, 3 donors		Need to explore meaningful ways to include communities in REDD process
IUCN	First mapping of stakeholders. Clarification of position as FLEG coordinator.	Trust & networking relations with key actors established. Clarification of roles and responsibilities. Keystone report on MSD. Civil society	Facilitation of a number of strategic capacity building activities. Facilitation of tripartite meeting with EC. Awareness raising Community Forest	Facilitation of Chinese visit to Ghana Presentation SVBC at the WCC in Barcelona Support for feedback from constituencies	Acceptance by all actors as a key facilitator to enable meaningful interactive forest policy making, especially with regard to bridging the

Policy focus Actors	2005 FLEGT	2006 Negotiations 1	2007 Negotiations 2	2008 Negotiations 3	2009 VPA
		representation widened beyond Forest watch constituencies.	Committees.		gap between government and civil society
Civil Society	Awareness campaigns. Perceive government as their enemy.	Separate awareness raising, action research and capacity building activities Agenda setting for key issues	Expression of frustration with process in tripartite meeting meets with sympathy of EC. Civil society communiqué	Constructive approach in feedback to reports. Participation as observers in negotiation team. Consensus with stakeholders.	High degree of professionalism established Areas identified where they can work with government
Traditional Authorities			IUCN information meetings on FLEG and VPA. Communiqué National House of Chiefs	Constructive approach in feedback to reports. Consensus with stakeholders.	Awareness of the external drivers of change
Private sector			IUCN information meetings on FLEG and VPA. Private sector communiqué	Constructive approach in feedback to reports. Consensus with stakeholders.	Satisfied with new status of listened to in forest policy processes
Communities	Stakeholder collaboration in district & regional forest forums	Listened to in specific projects (community forestry, chainsaw, Allanblackia etc.)	Key information translated in 4 local languages and disseminated in sensitization meetings	No representation in VPA process	Some awareness about the difference between benefits and rights (?)

Practical Lessons learnt on MSD in Ghana

Interviews with key stakeholders in Ghana brought to light a wealth of very practical lessons learnt that had been so far mostly 'implicit' knowledge. The practical lessons can be clustered on learning about the process, the stakeholders or partners in the dialogue and the role of IUCN.

The process	The partners	The role of the IUCN
The issue is highly political at all levels with high stakes of members of elite groups, who are not directly engaged in the MSD	Differentiate clearly between primary, secondary and tertiary stakeholders – select partners on advice from constituencies	Understand that governance means different things to different people, based on their interests
The objective – consensus – and the rules of the game have to be clear from the start	Use the knowledge of others to for stakeholder mapping - to be done as 'power mapping'	See the partners as clients and owners of process
Often the attitude of the government is not very receptive for a participatory approach	Explain in all phases role, position and mission of IUCN in the MSD and VPA process	In the top down phase of the MSD take a seat on steering committee and try to bring in civil society
Consensus building is not a logical decision making process, mutual learning is key	Participation is measured in terms of involvement, learning and not in fast decision making	Lower ambitions and understand that the issue cannot be solved by MSD
Ensure adequate time frame and resources	Identifying the right leaders within stakeholder groups	Importance of networking skills
The process has various phases: networking; relationship building; information sharing; joint research; formulation of positions (communiqués); consensus building, negotiations.	It is important that partners also invest in the process, look for their own funding for meetings, feedback activities and other communication	Knowing the phases were you are in makes it easier to be both responsive to demands and be strategic, e.g. there were no funds for the (key) demand of interest-based training.
Relations building is time consuming	Invest time in establishing and maintaining relations	Being not from the same country, makes acceptance easier
Define role of IUCN in process and in implementation of VPA	Explain the role of IUCN, linked to its mission of supporting societies	Not being burdened too much with other IUCN tasks, as this takes more than 100%
Mix of formal and informal interventions and meetings; much behind the scenes work	Clarify the benefits of MSD to stakeholders: less conflicts	You have to combine different roles: facilitator, educator, messenger, funder,
Make a communication strategy to inform and engage partners in the process and support their feedback mechanisms	Communities are primary stakeholders but were not really part of the process and not represented in the steering committee	Understand the formal political processes and peculiarities and use the informal opportunities in the system
The need for clear process milestones	The content of the process is decided by partners	Make others feel important, recognize their contributions, do not claim any credits, but
	Good relations with EC and donors helps with the behind the scenes work	

		be prepared to take the blame

Annex 11. Codification of multi-stakeholder dialogues in formal governance processes

Learning about multi-stakeholder dialogues in formal governance processes starts by codifying the process. During the interviews in Viet Nam it appeared that only a few people were aware of the various steps in the process. The tentative reconstruction below maybe seen as a building brick to analyze the situation for further planning of the role of IUCN in the FLEGT consultation process.

Tentative reconstruction of the formal FLEGT process in Viet Nam until today	
2004	First introduction of FLEGT to MARD by EC Delegation.
2007	EC notices IUCN's work on FLEGT in Viet Nam and established contact.
2008	International NGOs criticize illegal timber trade to Vietnamese wood processing industry; questions are raised.
2008	EC notifies MARD of 2003 EU call for proposals on FLEGT and the projects of that call that are carried out in Viet Nam by NGOs.
2008	In various informal demarches EC promotes FLEGT to MARD from policy perspective; IUCN does the same from civil society perspective.
2008 April	EC and MARD co-chair a round table meeting, prepared by IUCN with translations of FLEGT briefing notes and facilitated by IUCN. The round table introduced FLEGT to representatives of MARD, MoIT, PM Office and Government Office, private sector and civil society and explored first responses.
2008 May	EC organizes study tour for MARD officials to Brussels to be better informed on FLEGT.
2008 July	First informal meeting EC-MARD to further explain and discuss issues and perspectives brought up in the roundtable.
2008 Oct.	Second informal meeting EC-MARD during 'Public-Private Dialogue organized by IUCN in partnership with SNV, WWF in Ho Chi Minh City. The Dialogue aimed to introduce FLEGT to a wider audience of representatives from government, private sector and civil society. Members of the Brussels FLEGT team participated and held introductions.
2008 Nov.	First formal meeting between EC (and representatives from EU embassies) and MARD reaches agreement on a technical working group on FLEGT (EC and member states The Netherlands, Finland, Germany; MARD, MoIT, MPI). The list of names of representatives is at this moment still to be confirmed. A cross sector scoping mission to map the various complexities, aspects and inputs (monitoring, enforcement, legal reform, costs etc) that have to be addressed in a roadmap to be formulated by the technical working group.
2009	EC and MARD identify and nominate each a consultant for the scoping mission
2009 July	Consultants and a small MARD delegation travel to London, Oxford and Brussels to get better informed about FLEGT.
2009 August	IUCN 3 day training workshop on FLEGT for private sector, prepared in dialogue with MARD and other stakeholders.
2009 Sept.?	Scoping mission starts?

Annex 12. Video proposal on lessons learnt for Ghana

Bringing the voices to the table
Lessons learned of the VPA MSD in Ghana
First ideas for a 6 minute video

Target audience
IUCN colleagues
Forestry community world wide
European Commission, Bilateral and Multilateral donors

Objectives
Show the added value of multi-stakeholder dialogue in forest governance, the lessons learned in Ghana and the role IUCN can play. For example choose from the following learning points:

What makes participation meaningful? The tipping point is the VPA MSD process was the tripartite meeting, organized by IUCN with EC after the second negotiation round in Ghana in 2007 when civil society brought to the attention of the EC that the consultation process as started since 2005 was far from satisfactory. The EC delegation in response gave a strong signal to its counterparts that for them the VPA must be based on serious consultations and support from national stakeholders. This external 'pressure' triggered the change in the government's attitude; it changed the Roadmap for the VPA and ToR for the consultations: IUCN became observer and civil society got a seat and later a second one on the steering committee. The government started to change its attitude towards civil society and its contributions and vice versa. Mutual recognition and respect became the basis for more meaningful interaction and participation in the process.

Who sits at the table? The second lesson learned is that representatives of all stakeholders should be engaged in a meaningful way and that the way to do so is to actively engage them in the selection of their representatives in the VPA process. In Ghana in the beginning the government selected the representation of civil society that did not really work. Similarly not all stakeholders were engaged: not the communities, who have an interest in positive change nor members of the elite, who have high stakes in business as usual with regard to illegal logging. This indicates that there are still challenges in Ghana to create the conditions for the implementation of the VPA and for improved governance.

What is the character and structure of a multi-stakeholder dialogue? The third lesson is that a successful MSD is not a logical, rational and purely science-based process of decision making, but a process of involvement of stakeholders in government decision making based on mutual learning, recognizing the different interests and perspectives. Its value is not in fast decision making, but in creating involvement needed to improve policies in such a way that a basis for the support for their implementation is created. In Ghana the tripartite dialogue took place in the VPA steering committee and was formally facilitated by the VPA coordinator. IUCN took a mediating role in the discussions. IUCN did not facilitate the FLEG or VPA process. The multi-stakeholder dialogue in the VPA steering committee was based on input from separate consultations. IUCN played a key role in facilitating these consultations. The formal VPA decisions were taken in the negotiation process between government and the EC. Private sector and civil society had an observer status during those negotiations.

What does facilitation of MSD really mean? A fourth lesson is that facilitating an MSD is not the same as facilitating round tables with different stakeholder groups. Most of the work is behind the scene translating positions of groups in the language of other groups to create better understanding and clarifying interests. Sometimes translation has to be done literally, e.g. for the communities. Access to information is key condition to participate. IUCN played a key role in making knowledge flow effectively between key players, including the EC. Facilitation also includes strengthening of capacities of stakeholder groups. This should not be based on training needs assessments, but on articulating

the demand for new knowledge and skills needed for the next step in the VPA process. This asks for a responsive approach and much flexibility to provide a variety of different types of support.

Desired result
Video with texts, visuals, interviews to be produced and disseminated on DVD and via internet (check with HQ Communications the technical qualifications needed). The messages are supported by a creative concept, e.g. an African drum or song and dance of communities in between time slots, that increase in volume as the video progresses.

Planning to be worked out by Guido and Wale on the basis of these milestones
1. Agreement on concept (first ideas) – Wale could add learning he thinks are key.
2. Contract with film maker (make sure she delivers DVD master and puts everything on internet IUCN site and on YouTube).
3. Draft script circulated and amended
4. Film maker and Wale do the filming and interviews. The texts here are from existing presentations and the evaluation and cannot be used, as the interviews are confidential. But Wale could ask people could you say something about…, for instance and then summarize the text.
5. Production of first rough cut – feedback
6. Final product on line.

First ideas for
“Bringing the voices to the table, Lessons learned of the VPA MSD in Ghana”
NB Use another title than the project title (SVBC is finished and actually the brand promises something a project can not deliver in 4 years)

INTRO
Visuals Ghana illegal logging, faces and logos representing the variety of stakeholders. Maybe give some facts and figures: yearly 4 times more tree cut than planted, each year the society loses 100 million dollar of illegal logging and trade, etc.

TEXT
The VPA process of Ghana is often cited as an example of successful multi-stakeholder participation in decision making.

Visuals of photos of the process
Quote from EC read aloud

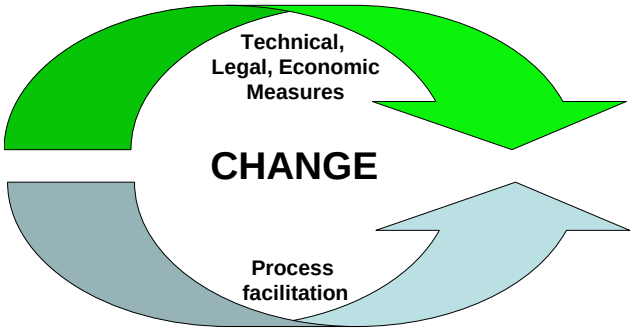
“The VPA consultation was successful. Civil society had space and a voice. The roadmap was flexible. IUCN was responsive to the demands of those participating in the consultations. IUCN worked well together with other organizations to use funds strategically. – Claire Brogan

TEXT (Visuals of people being interviewed)
A multi stakeholder process is not about rational decision making. Decisions develop from a gradual and mutual learning of all groups.

“Each stakeholder group in the process is beginning to learn new ways of accommodating and working with one another in the policy formulation and decision making arena. These off-shoot gains of the process are proving to be as important as the technical deliverables themselves.” Chris Beeko

“Even if the VPA is not signed, the process has been a positive development for Ghana since there has not been any such opportunity for all stakeholder groups to sit down and talk.” – Kyeretwie Opoku

“In a participatory process, the emphasis rather on network building, mutual learning and interest based negotiation” – Wale Adeleke



How does a multi-stakeholder dialogue relate to the policy process? In a democratic open society one always needs a form of MSD for major policy change affecting a whole sector of society. There many different forms, ranging from one- or two-way information campaigns to joint policy planning and formulation exercises. A well tailored and managed MSD always helps, but no MSD can take over role of the government. In a policy process the technical, legal and economic decisions are taken by the government. These decisions are so to say the different parts of the engine of the policy decision making. The MSD provides the oil that makes that engine work. In Ghana the process of governmental VPA decision making and negotiations was based on consultations with various groups of stakeholders. The main actors had limited knowledge in advance of the character of this process as a change process that needed a strategy based on inputs from key stakeholders. This was implicit learning by doing.
TEXT (visuals of people being interviewed)
The role of IUCN in the multi-stakeholder dialogue was to bridge the gaps between government, civil society and private sector. It meant being an educator, a messenger, a facilitator and a funder of meetings at the same timer.

“IUCN is international, no political agenda, knows how to deal both with government and NGOs and is proactive in its work on forestry. IUCN can work behind the scenes”. – Albert Katako

IUCN has credibility among government and civil society. Other organisations don't have this. An example is the writing of the booklets in partnership with many different organisations including Forestwatch. IUCN facilitated meetings between the different stakeholder groups on many occasion, knowing the different perspectives, clarifying positions during the dialogue. - Kyeretwie Opoku

My work was mostly behind the scenes communicator between stakeholders, clarifying positions softly pushing towards consensus. – Wale Adeleke

TEXT (If possible animation of the various steps and milestones that explain the process)
The process has various phases: networking; relationship building; information sharing; joint research; formulation of positions (communiqués); consensus building, negotiations.

Annex 13. Recommendations of the Internal Review and rapid assessment of their implementation

This annex summarizes the overall recommendations of the Internal Review and assesses to what extent they were adequately considered.

	Overall recommendation of the IR	Comment of the final evaluation	Appre-ciation
	There is an urgent need to extract and disseminate more information about the project. Messages and stories from the Project need to be produced and targeted to the specific interests of global stakeholders (…) More specifically these messages need to highlight how the project activities are indirectly addressing illegal logging and trade by directly dealing with forest governance and addressing poverty.	More information has been disseminated on the project, including through attractive and good quality folders. However many stakeholders still do not know exactly what the project is about.	+
	While there has been good work at the government and civil society levels, progress with the private sector needs to receive greater attention in terms of active engagement, particularly in Vietnam, Tanzania and Ghana.	The recommendation seems to have been adequately followed at least in some countries. In Viet Nam a new focus on wood processing lead to a higher consideration of the private sector.	+
	Over the coming months, all Regional and Country Programme Coordinators should ensure the involvement of SVBC Project staff in the development of IUCN's Intersessional Programme.	This was not checked by the evaluators, but it is assumed it is follow up upon.	?
	NPCs should continue to inform CP and RP staff about Project progress and issues on a regular basis (circulating monthly reports, Project products and briefings at staff meetings and other events) and engage actively in the preparation of the IP (2008 – 2012).	Circulating monthly reports and project products has been continued.	+
	(…) FLEG initiatives in many countries are creating additional expectations and demands on the Project. These demands need to be recognised and considered by NPC's and the relevant decisions about whether to respond to them or not need to be explicitly recorded within the Project's reporting and planning systems.	FLEG or FLEGT initiatives were effectively taken into account.	+
	Each country component of the SVBC Project should have clear written strategies that can be used to help them prioritise their work at the different levels (pilot site, district, national and higher).	These strategies were not found but they were not actively searched for by the evaluators.	?
	These Project strategies should be communicated to all relevant stakeholders and used to help manage expectations and demands that exceed the Project's capacity or are of a low priority.	See above	?
	The specific nature of this Project as a builder of social and political capital, and the scope of the	This was done to some extent for example in Sri Lanka.	+/-

	potential benefits of empowering stakeholders in forest management, needs to be better explained and understood at the local levels so that its ultimate relevance to livelihood development and natural resource management is appreciated, perhaps through the use of case studies where improved governance results in demonstrated improved livelihood benefits.		
	The support and appreciation for the Project's aims can be increased by addressing concrete and immediate forest governance issues and problems faced by local stakeholders so that the Project's relevance is more easily recognised. This can be achieved by using SVBC to leverage other activities in the forest governance area (e.g. the roundtable and East African process) (…) T	The project paid attention to local and concrete issues but the assessments aimed at identifying them were completed late. Immediate livelihood problems were also addressed for example in Sri Lanka, although this does not clarify the relevance of project's objectives. Country specific logframes can also be considered as a contribution to solving this problem (but they did not clearly confirm the relevance and adequacy of the overall logframe).	+
	Given the Project's design and the interests for immediate benefits, SVBC should continue to develop partnerships with other development agencies or initiatives, that are better equipped to bring these immediate benefits, to optimise participation in and support to the Project in the longer term.	SVBC paid attention to immediate benefits and partnerships although there is still a tension between the project objectives and urgent needs especially in countries where poverty is acute (e.g. DRC)	+
	Where they do not yet exist, specific LFAs (cascading) for each country component should be completed as a matter of some urgency.	This was done but not properly (the specific LFAs were not cascading).	+ +/-
	The TL needs to pay greater to directly supporting this planning and ensuring the preparation of high quality national level LFAs (cascading) that address all Project components.	The team leader supported the process.	+
	Following agreement on the LFA indicators for monitoring and evaluation, a detailed work plan should be produced for each country component, to prescribe how and when the indicators will be measured and analysed and how the baseline information will be systematically collected. The TL needs to also provide guidance on developing the indicators and the detailed M&E plans referred to above.	This was done in some cases, but more as a formal exercise and not as a practical project management tool.	?
	The Project life should be extended by six months to allow for full Project implementation.	Done	+
	Given that the quality of most reports is acceptable, they should be finalised without further delays and start to be used more widely in the Project's work.	The assessment reports were finalized late.	-
	Appropriate, multiple communications products need to be prepared using the assessment report contents for use with different audiences, according to LFAs produced for each country component.	Because of their late preparation assessment reports were not as fully used as expected. However communication products have been prepared. Their effectiveness is	+/-

		doubtful both they were late and did not really address key issues in perceptions, and misconceptions of primary audiences.	
	Intensify and accelerate targeted capacity building efforts in line with the detailed LFAs for each country component	Capacity building efforts have been intensified but their linkage to the country LFAs is unclear, the RECOFT study and advice did not provide enough guidance and/or the budget was not any more sufficient.	+/-
	Communication products are needed that describe and promote the value of local capacity building and strong local organisations for influencing decisions over the way forests are managed. The argument needs to be made that such capacity can be used to enhance local people's access to economic opportunities from forest management in the long term.	New communication products play this role of promoting the value of local capacity building and strong local organisations for influencing decisions over the way forests are managed, but have negative unintended side effects.	+
	There may be a need to enhance facilitation skills of Project staff and partners to handle negotiations and multi-stakeholder dialogues at different levels.	No follow-up was taken, the gaps in skill sets were somehow balanced by extra input and facilitation by the global project coordinator and other senior advisors.	-
	There is a need to document the approaches being taken and their impacts.	Codification of processes and lessons learned was insufficiently given attention to.	-
	It is recommended that IUCN consistently use the term 'FLEG' in relation to official forest governance processes while referring to 'forest governance' or to 'illegal logging and trade' as appropriate as the issues (rather than the processes) we are addressing.	This recommendation seems to be reasonably taken into account although some confusion still exist; in fact there exist for example in Brazil official forest governance processes that do not refer to FLEG as defined by donors.	+
	Experiences with different FLEG processes should be shared with and among the country components and engagement across regions could be encouraged where appropriate.	Some experience sharing was organized (including with countries that are not in the project).	+
	More data capture mechanisms are required (e.g. for routine data collection, event/ activity driven learning, and case study insights).	Although it cannot be demonstrated that no progress was made data capture mechanisms were still insufficient in the second half of the project period.	+/-
	Greater specificity is needed in what IUCN is trying to achieve in a number of places (including Brazil, Vietnam) and in what types of lessons learned the overall project is trying to capture (i.e. what is it we are trying to prove with this project?) to provide a basis for more systematic learning and adaptive management. The TL should provide a better defined framework for learning, based on consultations with internal and external stakeholders aimed at articulating with greater clarity the focus, major premise and potential value of this project.	This comment reflects the vagueness of the initial logical framework. Efforts were made to define the framework for learning but there are still question marks.	+/-

	It would be useful to consider what use could be made of information in the monthly and periodic reports to illustrate the evolution of governance reforms in a form that could be made available to external audiences.	Reports were used, but unfortunately they do not communicate other media should be used.	-
	SVBC should ensure that it continues to report informally to relevant authorities in each country, maintains good working relations, and sends copies of publications and relevant report to such authorities.	This has been follow-up upon. E.g. in Ghana and Vietnam government respondents indicated that in the beginning there were communication problems with IUCN, but later this was repaired. In Brazil the relations seemed to have been good from the start.	+
	Use should continue to be made of existing newsletters (e.g. World Bank newsletter on FLEG) as one means to communicate.	Done	+
	SVBC might want to initiate a Policy Brief Series of short pithy publications to demonstrate its work and progress. These could all follow a standard format. The assessments form one basis to initiate such a process.	A series of flyers has been prepared, but it is not clear whether they are the right response to the mid term review recommendation.	?
	LLS funds could be used to undertake additional communications work in the countries concerned.	LLS may have contributed to additional communication (but it should be noted that stakeholders are confused about the different IUCN actions).	+
	A dedicated field position is absent in Gh and Tz, so additional capacity is required to allow the NPC to better cover the range of project functions.	It is not clear how this has been handled.	?
	Care should be exercised in establishing advisory committees for the Project. Wherever possible, existing structures should be used to consult stakeholders about Project activities.	The evaluation team found that attention was paid to this issue, although some local stakeholders may feel they have not enough control on the project.	+
	The productivity of the NPCs could be improved significantly by the provision of secretarial & administrative and financial support (e.g. Sl, Bz, DRC, Tz, and Gh).	The NPCs received secretarial & administrative and financial support.	+
	TL to provide focussed TA on detailed planning for country components and M&E requirements.	Adequate planning and M&E are/were still missing.	-
	As well as additional capacity, there is a need for some project staff to more fully recognize that they are part of a larger IUCN team and programme and to better respect and follow IUCN internal procedures, which are necessary to allow everyone to play their roles in providing support to the project.	Given the long (physical and cultural) distances between local staff and the global IUCN institutions, this kind of problem is not so acute as could be expected. It is however hard to assess whether there were significant efforts and progress made in this direction.	+/-