BENCHMARKING STUDIES OF:
BRAZIL, COLOMBIA, ECUADOR AND PERU

PERU: BRENT STIRTON GETTY IMAGES

BENCHMARKING STUDIES OF:
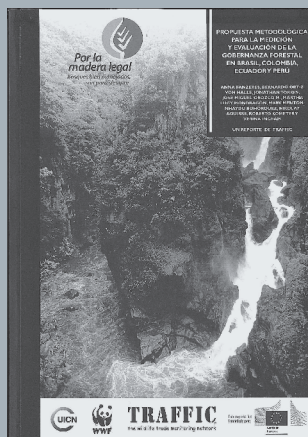### BRAZIL, COLOMBIA, ECUADOR AND PERU

This briefing document is based on the benchmarking report, titled: *"Propuesta Metodológica para la Medición y Evaluación de la Gobernanza Forestal en Brasil, Colombia, Ecuador y Perú."*[1] This report presents the system designed and implemented to measure the current status of forest governance in four countries: Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru. This system can be used to create a benchmark for future measurements, and to identify gaps and improvements in forest governance in the region and each country.

APPROACH

The benchmarking model was designed through a participatory process and included inputs from national and international experts. Several forest governance models were assessed, and together with the expert input a resulting "FAO/PROFOR+" model was developed which established the methodology and indicators for assessing and monitoring forest governance. The model has three pillars:

(1)   Policy, legal, institutional and regulatory frameworks
(2)   Planning and decision-making processes
(3)   Implementation, enforcement and compliance

[1]For further information the report can be found in Spanish on the following link: http://flegt.info/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/gobernanzacompleto.pdf

	Very deficient	Deficient	Reasonable	Good	Very good
Pillar 1 Policy, legal, institutional and regulatory frameworks		Brazil Colombia Ecuador Peru			
Pillar 2 Planning and decision-making processes		Brazil Colombia Ecuador	Peru		
Pillar 3 Implementation, enforcement and compliance		Brazil Colombia Ecuador Peru			

Table 1. National and regional benchmarking of forest governance.

The "FAO/PROFOR+" model was used as the framework for description, diagnosis, follow-up, evaluation and preparation of reports on the status of forest governance in each country. The model was designed to be applied by government decision-makers, as well as stakeholders in the private sector and civil society. Indicators were elaborated at the country level. These national models were shared and validated with groups of representatives of public, private forestry sector, NGOs and indigenous groups. Inputs were supplemented with data obtained by consulting experts' (academics, NGOs, governments) and a review of published information in each country. This resulted in a final framework of components, subcomponents and indicators and an initial benchmark of forest governance for each country.

- A component is an essential element of a pillar. The Framework includes five components each under Pillar 1 and Pillar 3 and three components under Pillar 2.
- A subcomponent is an identifiable element of a governance component and an important aspect of forest governance by which a component may be assessed.
- An indicator is a quantitative, qualitative or descriptive attribute that, if measured or monitored periodically, could indicate the direction of change in a governance subcomponent.

The model for:

- Brazil has 11 components and 62 indicators
- Colombia has 13 components and 72 indicators
- Ecuador has 13 components and 42 indicators
- Peru has 12 components and 34 indicators.

These differences reflect differing national priorities such as a focus on indigenous and local community interests in Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru. A five-scale scoring system was developed to assess performance of each indicator, ranging from very deficient (1) to very good (5). The scores were amalgamated on three levels: per indicator, component and pillar.

A baseline measurement was established during the national workshops. This aimed to test the benchmarking system and calibrate the indicators. The results is the initial perception of experts, stakeholders and data that could be collected in the workshops—giving a preliminary indication of the current situation of forest governance in each country.

By taking the average scores of components for each pillar, a benchmark is provided for each country, shown in Table 1. Combined together these provide an indication of reasonable progress towards good forest governance on a regional level, albeit with a number of deficiencies. These

concern particularly inconsistences in the national, political and legal frameworks and arbitrary or low levels of application and enforcement.

OUTPUTS OF THE INITIAL BENCHMARKS AT REGIONAL AND NATIONAL LEVEL

Based on the test measurements conducted by TRAFFIC, in all countries studied a number of limitations and shortcomings in forest governance were observed in the legal frameworks, in the participatory processes in decision-making, implementation and compliance of laws. Related challenges are highlighted:

- The structural lack of government control and enforcement, especially in remote areas.
- Deficiencies in titling, land tenure and failure to recognize the land rights of communities and indigenous peoples.
- The increasing demand for agricultural and/or extractive products with subsidies for agribusiness and policies to support the extractive sector, exacerbating the conflicting demands for land and increase deforestation and forest degradation.
- The inequality in terms of power and access to information between government, the private sector, communities and indigenous peoples.
- Failures in the quality and availability of data on forestry and forest crime.
- The corruption and widespread informal business practice, creating an institutional and sectorial culture that prevents governance.

At the same time, the highlights of some progress in the region are:

- Reviews of legal and regulatory frameworks that seek to adapt to the realities of forestry and simplify bureaucratic processes to formalize forest management.
- Increased transparency of government institutions towards the availability of information on the forestry sector. Although they have not reached 100%, they have improved.
- Increased efforts to ensure the participation of civil society. Although not all processes have achieved targets for effective participation,

progress has been made in opening up opportunities for participation.

Climate change (and consequently, increased droughts and floods that this brings), the globalization of markets and the growing demand for raw materials from forests, agricultural or extractive sectors, complicate further efforts to improve forest governance. Finding the right solutions requires a thorough assessment of the current situation, in which these external and internal factors are taken into account.

To date, many of the initiatives for forest governance have supported enforcement and control mechanisms, but have not yet been successful in ensuring good forest governance in the region. Corruption and impunity within the sector create high barriers to reduce illegal logging and the enforcement of existing laws. In view of the inability of the government to enforce the law in support of good forest governance, Suárez (2014) argues that successful solutions rely on a combination of regulatory mechanisms, market-oriented mechanisms and self-organized schemes. Given the inter-sectorial nature of both challenges and proposed solutions, it becomes imperative to develop and implement a multi-sectorial monitoring system of forest governance that incorporates various aspects of this, in order to identify priorities for intervention and assess the impacts of these interventions toward the goal of improving forest governance.

During the development of the methodological framework for measuring forest governance and the test measurement, several national experts were consulted. They identified monitoring as an important tool to improve forest governance in the long-term. The participatory process to adapt the FAO/PROFOR methodology to national realities (FAO/PROFOR+) and application of the test measurements confirmed the importance of these steps in the development of a monitoring system that can be useful in the long term.

BRAZIL

In Brazil, the benchmarking process was linked to the "Sustainable Tropical Timber Roundtable", which was conceived to renew the debate on forest governance and focus not just on the national level - which previous initiatives (i.e. WRI and IIED) have focused upon - but also to a subnational level in federal states and municipalities, and to actions by the private sector and NGOs. This meant that indicators were made more relevant to both national and subnational processes and benchmarks and issues requiring attention and intervention. Generally, forest governance was scored as being between deficient and reasonable. The policy, legal, institutional and regulatory frameworks were assessed as comprehensive, but with inconsistencies and bureaucratic hurdles at federal and state level, and lacking a national forestry policy. One major reason is land tenure insecurity. Public forest management falls short of legal and sustainable timber production measures and the fiscal system requires revision to make competition from illegal logging less attractive. Although planning processes and decision making provide place for public participation in formulation and implementation of state initiatives, in practice implementation is lacking or inconsistent. Despite the presence of many rules and standards, in practice their implementation, monitoring and enforcement was seen as deficient, partly due to low staff capacity.

COLOMBIA

For Colombia, the general preliminary perception of forest governance was rated as between deficient and reasonable. About half of the indicators were scored as very deficient and deficient. In the pillars of policy, legal, institutional and regulatory, and of implementation, application and enforcement, financial incentives, economic instruments, benefit sharing and stakeholder participation were seen as most deficient. About a third of the indicators were rated as reasonable, highlighting that there has been progress but room for improvement remains. Deficiencies were seen in the administration of land tenure and property

rights. It was recognised that the internal armed conflict severely affects forest areas and is a major challenge to good forest governance.

ECUADOR

For Ecuador, forest governance was rated overall as reasonable, with processes in place to guide and lead good forest governance and in implementation. This was seen as attributable to the forest governance model, which explicitly involves the public, key stakeholders and institutions in forest resource management. However, areas of deficiency were in the social and technical design of harvesting regulations. Despite the forest control system which tackles forest crime, evidence was found of shortcomings in crime detection, with no early warning system in place; and a lack of traceability of log back to stump. In implementation and application, significant progress was noted in the recognition of indigenous peoples' rights and their participation in governance processes.

PERU

In Peru, overall forest governance was rated as reasonable. For the indicators on processes, planning and decision making suggest encouraging trends towards good governance. However, there is limited effectiveness, progress and/or performance on the legal, political, institutional and regulatory frameworks and on implementation, enforcement and compliance.

Recommendations for the public sector, seen as the leading users of the model, and for private sector and civil society organizations include:

- In each country, further refinements of the indicators, both at local and national level should be conducted according to the changing situations. This will require further data collection (including satellite imaging on possible illegal timber, and greater transparency in information flow from the institutions).
- A strategy focused on achieving a larger and permanent participation of stakeholders in all countries, especially representatives of

indigenous and marginalised forest dependent communities, small farmers, and academics, and coordinated by the relevant public sector agencies (from local to federal and state level), should be implemented. Measurements should combine stakeholder perceptions and independently verifiable sources of information on the indicators, from both literature and field based monitoring.

- Policy and decision makers in the forest sector – jointly and in agreement with other stakeholders such as public, private (business associations/federations) and civil society actors (NGOs, communities, farmers and academia) – should formally adopt the methodology and indicators. This would give credibility to the benchmarking and subsequent actions.

- Raising awareness and adoption process of the indicators and benchmarking tool should be conducted to increase dialogue and debates, and raise political awareness of forest governance locally, regionally and nationally. A focus on increasing incentives for sustainable forest management and increasing disincentives for illegal and unsustainable practices is recommended.

- Although the importance of the participation of government institutions is invaluable, monitoring requires the leadership of an independent entity to ensure the validity of results and to reduce biases in measurements.

- The dissemination of the results to a wider audience (public, private sector and civil society) provides an opportunity to apply the lessons of the monitoring processes to improve governance. Creating a *roadmap* provides a mechanism to identify the next steps that will achieve the necessary changes to address weaknesses and gaps in the current forest governance, structures, systems and procedures.

The project *"Supporting the implementation of the European Union´s FLEGT (Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade) Action Plan in South America: catalysing initiatives to control and verify the origin of timber in trade and support related improvements in forest governance"* is financed by the European Union and led by TRAFFIC, in collaboration with WWF Colombia and IUCN South America. It aims to support the implementation of the European Union's Action Plan for FLEGT in South America.
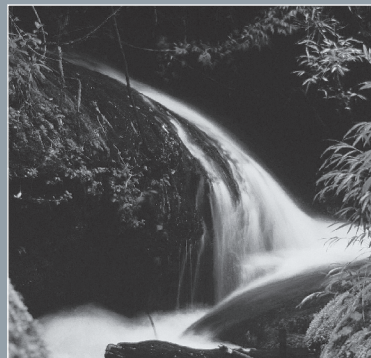

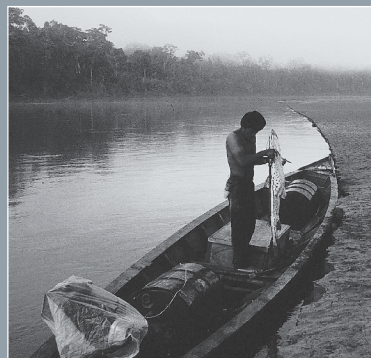BRAZIL

EDWARD PARKER / WWF-CANON

COLOMBIA

DIEGO M. GARCES / WWF-CANON

ECUADOR

JUAN PRATGINESTOS / WWF-CANON

PERU

ANDRÉ BARTSCHI / WWF-CANON

TRAFFIC BRIEFING PAPER

TRAFFIC, the wildlife trade monitoring network,
is the leading non-governmental organization
working globally on trade in wild animals and
plants in the context of both biodiversity
conservation and sustainable development.

For further information contact:
TRAFFIC
219a Huntingdon Road
Cambridge
CB3 0DL

Telephone: (44) 1223 277427
Fax: (44) 1223 277237
E-mail: traffic@traffic.org
Websites: www.traffic.org
www.flegt.info

This document has been produced with the financial
assistance of the European Union. The contents of
this document are the sole responsibility of
TRAFFIC and can under no circumstances be
regarded as reflecting the position of the
European Union.

This project is financed by the European Commission /
Este projecto está financiado por la Comisión Europea