



# Sustainable tropical forestry— nature-based solutions to global challenges

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# Tropical forests—vital for planetary wellbeing

- Forests cover **31% of the planet's land surface**, and are among the world's most productive land-based ecosystems:
  - Conserve soil and water
  - Filter the air we breathe, mitigates climate
  - Prevent land degradation and desertification
  - Host terrestrial biodiversity
  - Reduce the risk of floods, landslides, droughts and other disasters, among others
- Around **1.6 billion people** depend on forests for their subsistence.
- **Tropical forests represent 45%** of all forests (1.84 billion ha—22% in Latin America, 16% in Africa and 7% in South and Southeast Asia).
- **Over 70%** of global population in **extreme poverty** live in the tropics.
- **Recent IMF Report – economic imbalance globally sees 95 million living in acute poverty today.**

**CRITICAL TO SUPPORT SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF  
TROPICAL FORESTS!**



# Despite their importance deforestation and forest degradation continue ...



- The world lost an estimated 10 million hectares of forest (the size of the Republic of Korea) per year between 2015 and 2020.
- Most deforestation occurs in the tropics:
  - Competing land uses that produce higher/more rapid financial returns (agriculture, energy, mining and infrastructure).
  - Failure of market policies (don't reflect the full value of forests).
  - Illegal logging, fragmentation, woodfuel collection.
  - Climate change.



# Benefits of sustainable tropical forestry



- The sustainable harvesting, processing and trade of tropical timber and other forest products:
  - Supplies residential and commercial consumers worldwide,
  - Contributes to local and national economies, and
  - **Enhances value to tropical forests**—a key factor in **reducing forest conversion to other economic land uses**.
- When sustainably managed, tropical forests are:
  - **Healthy, productive** and **renewable** ecosystems.
  - Contribute to nature-based solutions.
  - The sustainable management of forests is of critical importance for most SDGs, in particular:



# The International Tropical Timber Organization's mission



- Promote the **sustainable management and conservation** of tropical forests.
- Promote the **expansion and diversification of trade** in tropical wood from sustainably managed and legally harvested forests.

The **International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO)** is **THE SOLE** inter-governmental organization focused entirely on tropical forest resources.







# ITTO's facts and figures

- An intergovernmental organization established in 1986 under auspices of UNCTAD.
- The International Tropical Timber Agreement, 2006—the current treaty under which ITTO operates,
- ITTO members under ITTA, 2006 - 75 members:
  - Producing (37) and Consuming (38)
  - Producing members:
    - Africa (14)
    - Asia & Pacific (10)
    - Latin America (13)
  - Covering over **80% of global tropical forests and account for 90% of trade in tropical forest products!**
- Headquarters – Yokohama, Japan.
- ITTO has funded more than 1200 projects/activities valued at USD 430 million, across the tropics—covering a wide spectrum of topics—enhancing the capacity of tropical countries to sustainable manage their forest resources.



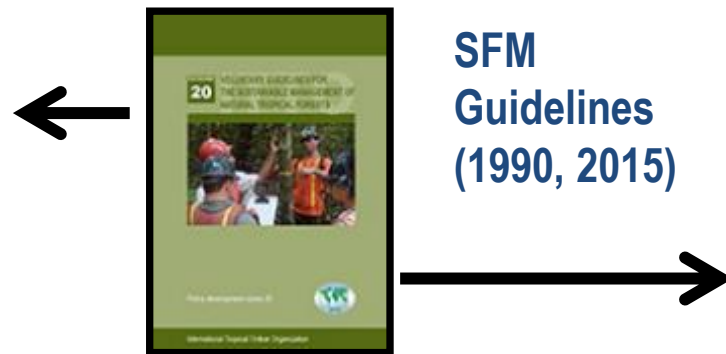
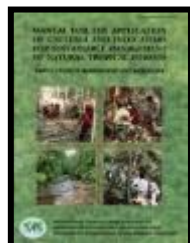


# Guidelines for sustainable forestry—ensure nature-based solution

([www.itto.int/guidelines](http://www.itto.int/guidelines))



**ITTO C&I**  
(1992, 1998, 2005, 2016)



**SFM  
Guidelines  
(1990, 2015)**

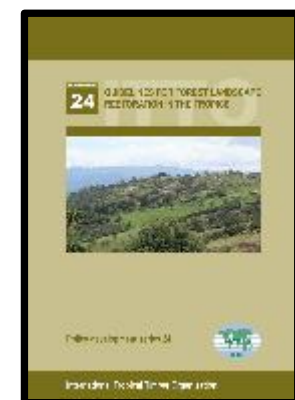
**Guidelines for the  
Management of Secondary  
Tropical Forests, Tropical  
Forest Restoration and the  
Rehabilitation of Degraded  
Forest Lands (2002)**



**Guidelines for Forest Landscape  
Restoration in the Tropics (2020)**



**Environmental  
and Social  
Management  
Guidelines  
(2020) and  
Gender  
Guidelines  
(2018)**



**Guidelines for  
Sustainable  
Management of  
Planted Tropical  
Forest (1993)**



**Guidelines for  
Conserving  
Biodiversity in  
Production  
Forests  
(1993, 2008)**



**Guidelines on Fire  
Management (1998)**





# ITTO Pilot Programme Lines



- Legal & Sustainable Supply Chains (LSSC)
- Conservation of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services
- Forest Landscape Restoration and Resilient Livelihoods
- Emerging Issues and Innovation





# LSSC and nature-based solutions



## Legal and sustainable supply chains:

- Promote the use of wood as the as the most environmentally friendly material of choice.
- Pursue economic growth.
- Address social needs.
- Advance environmental awareness.
- Tackle climate change.
- Advance the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its associated SDGs.
- Provide nature-based solutions (as illustrated in the examples that follow).



# Promoting teak sustainable supply chains in the Greater Mekong



- The first phase of the ITTO project was recently completed. The project contributed to:
  - The conservation of natural teak forests and their gene pools.
  - Increased incomes for forest communities and smallholders.
  - Improved wood processing and marketing; and
  - Enhanced regional collaboration and coordination in teak management.
- Implemented in Cambodia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar, Thailand and Viet Nam.
- Project publication *"Teak in the Mekong for a Sustainable Future"*:
  - Presents best practices for planting, managing, harvesting and processing teak and demonstrating legality and sustainability along supply chains.

[www.itto.int/news/2022/09/07/itto\\_launches\\_new\\_book\\_on\\_teak\\_in\\_the\\_mekong/](http://www.itto.int/news/2022/09/07/itto_launches_new_book_on_teak_in_the_mekong/)

*Phase II to commence soon*



# Timber tracking projects



- ITTO projects have established timber tracking systems in:
  - Cameroon,
  - Ecuador,
  - Guatemala,
  - Panama,
  - Philippines.
- The tracking projects have advance sustainable forest management and nature-based solutions by:
  - Strengthening the capacity of forest companies to control their flows of timber;
  - Improving efficiency across the supply chain;
  - Facilitating the monitoring and control of forest products by the authorities and combatting illegal logging;
  - Improving forest governance; and
  - Assuring the legality and sustainability of harvested timber.

*Recently a project in Guatemala released an app to calculate log volumes requiring only photographs and a few simple measurements. See:*

[www.itto.int/news/2023/06/09/itto\\_project\\_releases\\_app\\_for\\_calculating\\_timber\\_volumes\\_in\\_products\\_using\\_smartphones](http://www.itto.int/news/2023/06/09/itto_project_releases_app_for_calculating_timber_volumes_in_products_using_smartphones)

# Mangrove restoration, livelihoods and empowered women in Fiji—nature-based solutions



- An ITTO project completed in 2022: supported local communities and Fiji's government in restoring mangroves in the Rewa Delta (a poor area affected by climate change—sea level rising).
- Fiji has the third-largest area of mangroves in the Pacific, and communities depend on them for their subsistence—**resilience**.
- The project established sites for mangrove restoration and rehabilitation (including nurseries):
  - E.g., the Nasilai women's group planted 5000 mangrove seedlings along the foreshore.
- Empowered communities and stakeholders, improved decision-making on mangroves. Some communities banned the cutting of mangroves and women's involvement improved food security—**resilience**.
- Developed guidelines on mangrove use and management.
- Raise awareness of the importance of mangroves.
- Introduced **alternative livelihoods** which are benefiting households:
  - Apiaries (beehives),
  - Brackish water shrimp farming,
  - Fruit tree planting,
  - Piggery farms, etc.

The sustainable use of mangroves involving local communities is an effective management resource approach that **benefits people, the economy and the environment—inclusiveness**.

Watch videos and more: [www.itto.int/project/id/PD696](http://www.itto.int/project/id/PD696) 13-Rev.2-F.





# Nature-based solutions: FLR, agroforestry and charcoal (Côte d'Ivoire and Togo)



- ITTO supported the charcoal business ventures of women in Côte d'Ivoire and Togo to reconcile the short-term subsistence needs (food and woodfuel) with the medium- to long-term need to rehabilitate the forest:
  - women realized that the viability of charcoal production requires SFM—efforts to reforest and ensure the availability of the forest resource.
  - forests restored in the Ahua gazette forest (Côte d'Ivoire) and in Blitta and Lakes prefectures (Togo).
  - training provided in seedling production, nursery establishment, forest plantation establishment and maintenance, and agroforestry.
  - thanks to ITTO interventions in Côte d'Ivoire, MALEBI (a women's association) improved its charcoal production using metal furnaces and efficient, eco-friendly techniques. In Togo women have increased income through agroforestry while restored forests grow for charcoal production.
- High potential for replication and for piloting decarbonized charcoal—more support is needed!

# Educating forester's next generation for nature-based solutions



- ITTO released a new training module on legal and sustainable supply chains tailored for the Congo Basin. It covers:
  - Understanding “zero deforestation”;
  - Assessing legality and achieving accountability;
  - From legality to sustainability and
  - Markets and market access.
- It aims at expanding market access for tropical timber produced in the subregion and increasing the contributions of the sector to sustainable development, climate-change mitigation and other challenges.

Available at: [www.itto.int/resources/learning-materials](http://www.itto.int/resources/learning-materials).



# LLSC online course—an ITTO contribution on global forest education



- ITTO June 2021—launched a free online learning course on legal, sustainable timber supply chains (LSSC).
- **INCLUSIVE**—open to all—CONNECTS with resilience of tropical forest ecosystems.
- Four modules:
  - Sustainable forest management, reduced impact logging and forest landscape restoration,
  - Timber legality assessment,
  - Meeting legality requirements for ensuring sustainable outcomes, and
  - Marketing for expanding, maintaining and forest businesses.
- The course highlights sustainable use of forest resources—**ESSENTIAL** for protecting biodiversity and maximizing the contributions of forests as nature-based solutions to climate change.
- Raising awareness of sustainable production and consumption—shared responsibility of ALL stakeholders.



# Forest education beyond foresters—much needed for building nature-based solutions



- ITTO and partners—global assessment on forest education, completed in October 2022:
  - Forest education is essential for safeguarding natural resources.
  - The assessment addresses education and training related to forests, trees outside forests and other wooded land and covers all levels of formal education: primary, secondary, technical and vocational education and training, universities and colleges.
  - There's an urgent need for well-trained forest workers, entrepreneurs, practitioners, researchers, professionals and policymakers and a well-informed public to maximize the contribution of forests to the SDGs.
  - Forest education should:
    - be locally relevant
    - be inclusive/accessible and
    - take into account digital divides, language barriers and gender and racial/ethnic balance.
- Uptake forest education—key role for governments, universities and educational institutions.

Download the report at [www.itto.int/other\\_technical\\_reports](http://www.itto.int/other_technical_reports).



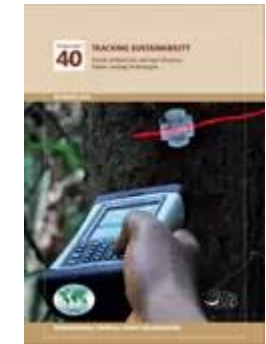


# Long-standing work on market access, traceability, certification, etc.



- Technical reports conducted on:
  - The impact of timber procurement policies
  - Uses and impacts of criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management
  - Review of electronic and semi-electronic timber tracking technologies
  - Assessment of major developments in technical and environmental standards in selected major international timber markets
  - Analysis of global trends impacting on the relative competitiveness of tropical wood products
  - The pros and cons of timber procurement policies
  - Developing forest certification
  - Many more ...
- Updates on issues related to tropical timber market access and certification are presented at ITTC sessions.

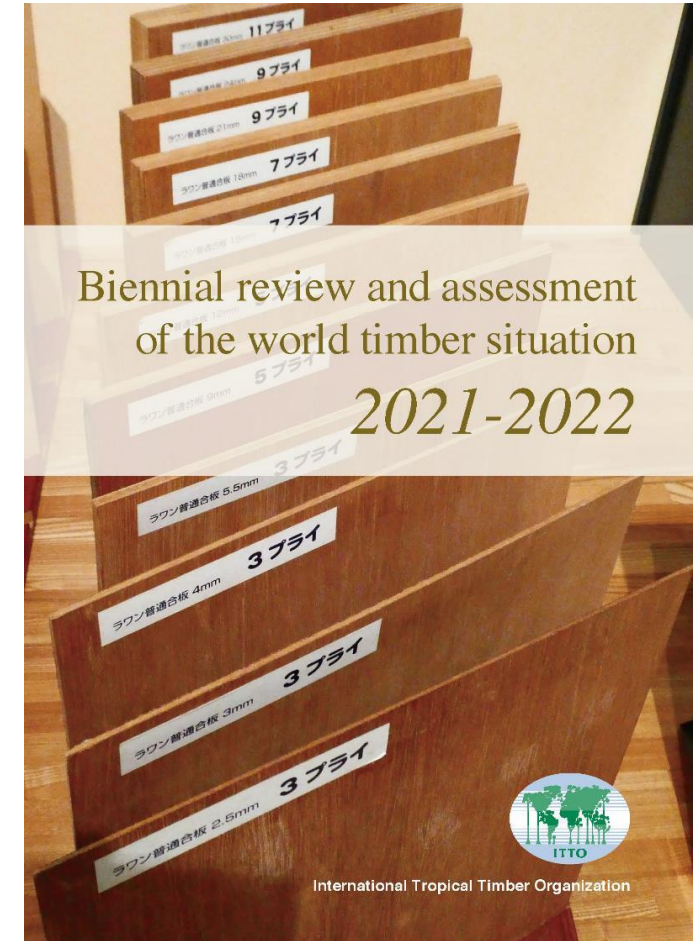
[www.itto.int/technical\\_report/](http://www.itto.int/technical_report/)



# ITTO's continuous updates on timber markets



- ITTO's *Tropical Timber Market Report* ([www.itto.int/mis/](http://www.itto.int/mis/)) – provides market trends and trade news from around the world, as well as indicative prices for over 400 tropical timber and added-value products. Published every two weeks.
- *Biennial Review and Assessment of the World Timber Situation* ([www.itto.int/annual\\_review](http://www.itto.int/annual_review)) – the most reliable international statistics on the production and trade of primary and secondary processed wood products in 73 countries worldwide. Latest edition released in September 2023, highlights:
  - Exports by ITTO producer countries of secondary processed wood products (SPWPs) soared, reaching USD 36.5 billion in 2022, up by nearly 40% compared with 2020 (USD 26 billion). A large part of this trade (USD 12 billion) comprised wooden furniture exported from Viet Nam to the United States of America.
  - Trade in tropical wood products was more resilient in 2021 than had been anticipated in 2020 at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly the trade in SPWPs.
  - World tropical log exports increased slightly in 2021, to 12 million m<sup>3</sup>, after reaching their lowest volume (11.5 million m<sup>3</sup>) in ITTO's records in 2020.
  - ITTO producer country exports of SPWPs (USD 36.5 billion) were three times higher in 2022 than their exports of tropical primary products (USD 12.1 billion). Major importers of SPWPs are the USA, European Union countries (Germany, France and the Netherlands), the United Kingdom, Japan and Australia.





# ITTO's continuous updates on timber markets (continuation)



- Global Timber Index ([www.itto.int/gti](http://www.itto.int/gti)) – published monthly, facilitates the exchange of information/data on timber trade - promotes collaboration for building legal and sustainable forest product supply chains:
  - Seven pilot countries: Brazil, the Congo, Indonesia, Gabon, Malaysia, Mexico and China, and 160 enterprises are participating in the initial phase.
  - Global Legal and Sustainable Timber Forum 2023, 21–22 November 2023, Macao SAR, China ([www.itto.int/events](http://www.itto.int/events)).
- ITTO Annual Market Discussions:
  - The 2022 edition explored the potential of carbon markets for tropical forests.
  - Theme for 2023 “Tropical Timber Industry: Challenges and Opportunities from Changing Priorities” (November).

# Sustainable Wood for a Sustainable World (SW4SW)—a CPF Joint Initiative that promotes nature-based solutions – ITTO= one of LEAD Agencies



[www.fao.org/forestry/sustainable-wood/en](http://www.fao.org/forestry/sustainable-wood/en)





# Forest financing facilitation—incentives for SFM in the tropics



- ***“Fiscal and Non-fiscal Incentives for Sustainable Forest Management”***—provides recommendations for designing incentives that can make a difference in the adoption of SFM practices in the tropics.
  - Case studies in: Brazil, Cambodia, the Congo, Côte d’Ivoire, Myanmar, Peru, Thailand and Viet Nam
- ***“Tropical Timber 2050”***—analyzes potential scenarios, examines previous economic/non-economic shocks to estimate the likely time required for the sector to recover to pre-pandemic levels.
- ***“Not only timber”***—encourages innovative and sustainable business development involving NTFPs.
- With ITTO support, Climate Investment Funds and the World Bank published ***“Designing Fiscal Instruments for Sustainable Forestry”*** in April 2021.

[www.itto.int/technical\\_report/](http://www.itto.int/technical_report/)

[www.itto.int/other\\_technical\\_reports/](http://www.itto.int/other_technical_reports/)



# In conclusion ...



- The sustainable management of tropical forests, forest-based enterprises and international tropical timber trade **add value to tropical forests** and **contribute significantly to inclusiveness and resilience** while improving economies and livelihoods.
- Sustainable tropical forestry contributes to almost all the SDGs.
- **Further investments** in sustainable tropical forestry and forest enterprises are needed for promoting **inclusive and resilient solutions** that produce positive outcomes for people and the environment in a circular economy.
- **Multi-stakeholder involvement and gender parity are critical—empower decision-making = social, environmental and economic benefits = achievement of the 2030 Agenda.**
- **Tropical Forests functions - Carbon sequester and storage – USE of wood products provide Carbon storage for the life of any product – mitigates climate challenges!**



# DO WORK WITH US!

## ITTC59 13-17 Nov 2023, Pattaya, Thailand!



**LSSC online  
course**



**ITTO Policy  
Series**



**ITTO Technical  
Series**



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