

Intensification of Teak Forestry (Côte d'Ivoire)

Final report summary

PD 24/98 Rev.2 (F)

I. Introduction

The 3-year project was approved by the Council at its Twenty-fifth Session in November 1998 in Yokohama, Japan, and full financing was pledged at the same Session by the Governments of Switzerland, Japan and the USA. The Agreement regulating the implementation of the project was signed on 17th May 1999 and the first installment of funds was released on 17th June 1999. During the Thirtieth and Thirty-third Sessions, the Committee granted two extensions of the project duration until 31 December 2004, without additional ITTO funds, based on an official request including proper justification, a detailed workplan and a budget. In addition, three successive project extensions have been granted by the ITTO Secretariat until July 2008, without additional funds, based on official requests including the proper justification, detailed work plans and budgets. Thus, the project implementation had formally lasted 109 months instead of 36, as initially designed by SODEFOR. It is important to add that after a stoppage of activities from September 2002 to June 2005, due to the civil war which broke out in Cote d'Ivoire, the project activities had to resume in July 2005 in secured new sites for further project extensions without additional ITTO funds. The project activities have been relocated in the secured new sites within the Séguié and Mopri Gazetted Forests, presenting similar ecological conditions as the previous project sites located in the region of Bouaké.

II. Project Objective

The project aimed at strengthening SODEFOR's capacity to restore parts of the degraded forest through intensifying forestry plantations. Specifically, it intended the following: 1) to modernize forestry and to attempt to reverse the existing production ratio to be in favor of industrial timber through the silviculture improvement of existing plots; 2) to establish new plots from remaining old stumps remaining after clear felling through appropriate silvicultural practices with the goal of rehabilitating plots after clear-felling.

III. Project Achievements and Outputs

The project implementation started in June 1999 in the region of Bouaké. The civil war, which broke out in September 2002, had disturbed the implementation of this project with the destruction of experimental plots established in order to contribute to achieve the first specific objective. The data

collected and assessed regarding these experimental plots were lost, as project computers were stolen during the looting of the project office in the city of Bouaké. Therefore, only the outputs of the project second specific objective had been achieved and could be summarized as follows:

- Project technicians had been trained by qualified professionals from the National Agriculture;
- Research Centre of Cote d'Ivoire on silvicultural treatment techniques useful for the implementation of this project;
- 78 plots had been established in the Séguié Gazetted Forest within selected teak stands in order to undertake various silvicultural treatments (42 for trials on management of teak stands after clear-felling and 36 for trials on rehabilitation of teak stands by means of stump-shoots);
- 5 plots had been established in the Mopri Gazetted Forest within selected teak stands in order to carry out various trials on the freeing and securing growth of stump-shoots for the rehabilitation of teak stands;
- All plots established within teak stands were monitored to collect data on girth, height and stems shape for each tree; and
- Database created with the results of the above-mentioned trials for the selection of best suckers thrown out from stumps and the determination of adequate post-harvesting methods leading to a more intensive teak silviculture with shorter cycle.

The outcomes of the project had been disseminated through the workshops and meetings held in Cote d'Ivoire. The Completion Report and Technical Documents can be made available by the Executing Agency and Secretariat, upon a written request.

IV. Lessons Learnt and sustainability

a) Lessons learnt

The Executing Agency (SODEFOR) had learned a number of important lessons during the project implementation period including the following:

- The training of the project technicians at the beginning of the project implementation by the specialists in silviculture treatment techniques was an asset for its smooth implementation in the field;
- The crucial importance of keeping a back-up of the database in a secure place could avoid losing the data and information regarding the results from the experimental plots destroyed during the civil war which broke out in September 2002; and
- The flexibility and understanding of the project Executing Agency and ITTO Secretariat contributed to the successful transfer of the project implementation to new sites located in the Séguié and Mopri Gazetted Forests.

b) Sustainability

The value of teak logs and processed products, which is increasing the international timber markets, could be considered as a key factor contributing to ensure the sustainability of main outcomes after the project completion by the Executing Agency (SODEFOR) through its inner organization and financial

means. Thus the monitoring of experimental plots established in teak stands could be internalized in the annual workplan of SODEFOR and the protection of the Séguié and Mopri Gazetted Forests could also contribute to secure the experimental plots of teak stands established in those gazetted forests.

V. Concluding Remarks

The completion, technical and financial audit reports for the project have been submitted to the ITTO Secretariat. In its 43rd Session of November 2009, the Committee on Reforestation and Forest Management declared the project completed.