

**INTERNATIONAL TROPICAL TIMBER ORGANIZATION
(ITTO)**

**PD 289/04 Rev.1 (F) "MANAGEMENT OF THE EMERALD TRIANGLE PROTECTED FORESTS
COMPLEX TO PROMOTE COOPERATION FOR TRANSBOUNDARY BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION
BETWEEN THAILAND, CAMBODIA AND LAOS (PHASE II)"**



REPORT OF A FINAL EVALUATION

Report Prepared for ITTO

by

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ABBREVIATIONS

ACLEDA	Association of Cambodian Local Economic Development Agencies
CALM	Conservation Areas through Landscape Management
FA	Forestry Administration (Cambodia)
GIS	Geographic Information System
HQs	Headquarters
ITTA	International Tropical Timber Agreement
ITTO	International Tropical Timber Organization
LCF	Local community fora
Logframe	Logical framework matrix
ME	Monitoring and Evaluation
MES	Monitoring and Evaluation System
NGO	Non-Government Organization
PSC	Project Steering Committee
PVPF	Preah Vihear Protected Forest
RFD	Royal Forest Department (Thailand)
SLA	Sustainable Livelihoods Approach
TBC	Transboundary Biodiversity conservation
TBCA	Transboundary Biodiversity Conservation Area
TORs	Terms of reference
USD	United States Dollar.

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PART I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1 INTRODUCTION

The mission for the evaluation of ITTO Project PD 289/04 Rev.1 (F) “Management of the Emerald Triangle Protected Forests Complex to promote cooperation for transboundary biodiversity conservation between Thailand, Cambodia and Laos (Phase II)” took place from 18 March to 2 April 2010. It started in Thailand (18 – 22 March), continued in Laos (23 – 25 March) and ended in Cambodia (25 March – 2 April 2010). The focus of the Evaluation was based on its Terms of Reference, and the evaluation criteria are those defined in the ITTO manual for Project Monitoring, Review, Reporting and Evaluation”. In addition to summarizing the analysis carried out by the Evaluator to appreciate the objectives and strategies of the project, the process followed in its identification, its design, this report provide an assessment of its results, experiences and lessons learnt, and makes recommendations on the future course of action.

The Evaluator wishes to express his sincere gratitude to the Executing Agencies and the Teams of the Project for the kind assistance that they provided during his stay in Thailand, Laos and Cambodia.

2 EVALUATION SCOPE, FOCUS AND APPROACH

The purpose of the evaluation is to guide on all factors relevant for the efficient and successful completion of the project in accordance with the rules and procedures of ITTO, including any necessary follow-up actions based on the experiences of the project implementation, to draw lessons and key project elements that can be used to improve similar projects in the future. The scope of the evaluation included the work taking place between 1 March 2008 (starting date) and March 2010, in Thailand and Cambodia. Fieldwork and discussions focused on currently ongoing operations. The field visits were limited to sites that reflect community involvement in the Project and that provide a cross-section of the benefits they derive from this involvement. The TORs called for the Evaluator to:

(a) Analyze and assess for:

- The overall role and contribution of the project in light of sectoral policies, development programmes, priorities and requirements to improve biodiversity conservation in the countries concerned.
- The current status of biodiversity conservation within the project’s area of influence, the effectiveness of the project’s implementation and its effectiveness and impacts in promoting the conservation of biodiversity in transboundary tropical forests.
- The effectiveness of dissemination of project results.
- The overall post-project situation in the project sites.
- The unexpected effects and impacts, either harmful or beneficial, and the reasons for their occurrences.
- The cost efficiency in the implementation of the project, including the technical, financial and managerial aspects.
- Follow-up actions for the successful completion of the project.
- The identification of any issues or problems that should be taken into account in designing and implementing similar projects in the future.

(b) Make recommendations on:

- the efficient and successful completion of the project in accordance with the rules and procedures of ITTO
- The needs for similar projects in the future aiming at improving biodiversity conservation in transboundary tropical forests in the Emerald Triangle Protected Forests Complex.
- The objectives of such similar projects and any innovative approaches/designs
- Appropriate target groups, e.g. countries, governments, organizations, forestry sector, local communities, etc.
- The organizational arrangements of the project.
- Follow-up and evaluation practices.
- Supplemental, alternative activities, processes, procedures, and/or follow-up programmers in the field of biodiversity conservation in transboundary tropical forests, if appropriate.

3 PROJECT FACTS

The project is the second phase of the ITTO project PD 15/00 Rev. 2 (F) 'Management of the Pha Team Protected Complex to promote transboundary biodiversity conservation between Thailand, Cambodia and Laos (Phase 1)'. In Phase I which was implemented in Thailand, a number of valuable surveys and studies on socio-economic aspects, forest and wildlife ecology were conducted. The core elements of the second phase are the implementation of activities set forth in the management plans on Thailand side, and to apply lessons learnt during Phase I in Cambodia and Laos. The overall objective of this second phase of the project remains the conservation of transboundary biodiversity in the Emerald Triangle Protected Forests Complex, an area that is situated between Thailand, Cambodia and Laos. Specific objectives set forth in the project document are as follows:

- Strengthen cooperation between Thailand, Cambodia and Laos on transboundary biodiversity conservation
- Enhance protection and monitoring of biological resources along the tri-national borders.
- Strengthen the involvement of local communities and stakeholders in sustainable uses.

The expected situation after the completion of the project phase was the secured transboundary biodiversity conservation area that facilitates migration and long-term survival of large mammals in the region concerned, a situation to be accomplished through the following:

- (1) There will be a sound understanding and cooperation among the three countries for transboundary biodiversity conservation at the local and national levels.
- (2) Livelihood of local communities will be improved and they will be more aware of transboundary biodiversity conservation issues and participate in integrated conservation and development activities.
- (3) Systematic baseline data on ecology especially wide-range species along the tri-national border and socio-economic are available and shared by the three countries
- (4) Park rangers of protected areas will be trained and gain more knowledge on protected area management
- (5) Necessary tools for effective patrolling will be provided to park officials.

The project is implemented by the Royal Forest Department (RFD), which is the main implementing agency working in close collaboration with the Cambodian Forestry Administration.

4 FINDINGS, LESSONS LEARNT

4.1 Findings

The Project has not reached its first Specific objective “Strengthen Cooperation between Thailand, Cambodia and Laos for Biodiversity Conservation in respective TBCA” which was central in its design. The achievement of the respective outputs is less than what was planned. This is due to the non-participation of Laos and to the border conflict between Thailand and Cambodia since 2008 which created a context that is not conducive to any strategic dialogue between the three parties as far as pursuing TBC goals in the Emerald Triangle is concerned. It should also be added that for Cambodia, the Project started with the diversification of activities other than those preparing the ground for TBC as no prior scoping study was conducted. The Evaluation also recognizes that while Laos has not participated, cooperation between Thailand and Cambodia has strengthened.

Similarly, the non participation of Laos in the Project and the difficult politico-diplomatic and security context due to the border conflict between Thailand and Cambodia did not allow the Project to achieve its 2nd Specific Objective “Enhance protection measures and monitoring of the biological resources along tri-national borders”. Though the Project Document had mentioned that there was a risk for the Project to face these problems, no mitigation measures were proposed in form of re-adjustment of the objectives and implementation approaches of the Project. Therefore, in relation to Logframe indicators, no concrete results under Specific Objective 2 were achieved, although activities such as patrols and monitoring of biological resources did take place.

With regard to the 3rd Specific Objective “Strengthen the involvement of local communities and stakeholders to ensure sustainable uses and management of natural resources inside PAs and in the buffer zones”, the Project scored more achievement. With the Thai Component, the Project was effective in supporting its beneficiaries to expand their source of income using the Revolving Fund formula. In many cases the beneficiary groups contributed above expectation towards the successes of the messages on protecting biodiversity in Pha Taem National Park, for example by returning the orchids to the forests. Coupled with the close collaboration of lower levels of RFD, these achievements have a potential to enhance biodiversity conservation in respective areas. However the system of using revolving fund cannot be seen as sustainable as there is no clear road map for sustainable rural funding involving in the medium the rural credit institutions.

In Cambodia, the Project initiated development activities in support of food security and water supply. “Although there has been an effort to raise awareness on conservation among the local communities through meetings, the activities conducted so far, besides being in their initial stages, they do not provide convincing evidence on the link with biodiversity conservation.” The intervention in its current form cannot be sustainable as it seems to depend too much on external funding. Although the fruit plants distribution, rice bank, poultry and water well activities introduced by the Project are part of the local farming systems and correspond to local needs, they appear to be stand-alone interventions of a very limited scale. Hence the achievements in

initiating activities ensuring sustainable management and use of natural resources remain incomplete. The Component lacks a road map defining what is to be achieved with the SLA and how this approach links with biodiversity conservation.

4.2 Lessons Learnt

The main lessons learnt are as follows:

- ✓ To design this kind of project, more attention is needed to the understanding of the development and conservation contexts, and to develop the social ownership of the initiative.
- ✓ For implementation design, it is important to consider that sufficient time is needed for social processes to root down and for developing adequate approaches and their ownership by the beneficiaries and partners. For this reason a minimum duration of 3 years should have been planned.
- ✓ Implementation of sustainable livelihoods activities in the framework of a conservation project requires a broad range of skills that may not be present within the project teams. Strategic partnerships should be developed to devolve local community development activities to the NGOs and other actors such as rural banking institutions.
- ✓ It is very important for Project Teams to be based in the Project area in order to be able to make frequent contacts with communities and local partners and thus ensure relevance of the activities.
- ✓ Income generation needs to be addressed as a community or family business enterprise and not as a project activity. Hence the importance for projects to facilitate the link of community business to the rural banking institutions and to specialized local development NGOs for advisory services. Lack of this link led to 'projectization', with a relatively high proportion of personnel and consultants expenses.
- ✓ Support to livelihoods activities should be channeled through specialized local NGOs as medium and long-term partners of the Executing Agencies, using a focused village planning of natural resource use and conservation, and corresponding business plans. More attention should be paid to building capacity of beneficiary communities in the use of the tools of village natural resource plans and business plans, market identification for their productions and organization for market access, products quality control, accounts management, and registering as community enterprises.
- ✓ All countries concerned by a TBC initiative should manifest in the clearest way that they share the vision and they want to take part in its implementation.
- ✓ The quality of indicators of the Logframe should be improved and an MES should be designed to allow drawing information from bottom-up.
- ✓ With regard to the implementation of the support to community development activities, a lesson learnt from the difficulties of justifying them in relation to conservation objectives is that the interventions should respond to the following criteria:
 - Substantial contribution to forest protection and biodiversity conservation.

- Substantial contribution to livelihoods improvement for the poor communities.
- Results can be sustained without outside subsidies and are replicable.

5 CONCLUSIONS Y RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusions

The Project was evaluated two months before its completion. It resulted very difficult to fully assess its effectiveness in promoting TBC between Thailand, Cambodia and Laos, and achieving livelihoods improvement through its local community development interventions. The reason is that the logframe indicators are defined more as process criteria than as result oriented and measurable targets.

The achievement of outputs relating to specific objectives 1 and 2 was incomplete, due to several reasons. First the design of the Project did not clarify the overall targets to be reached or the targets to be reached by each component. It did not describe relevant and “real” key assumptions to be met for the success of the Project in reaching its specific objectives, and it did not give sufficient weight to the risk that Laos PDR would not join the TBC initiative in the Emerald Triangle.” Second, the livelihood strategy chosen for community development activities, though it is consistent with beneficiaries priority needs, did not follow the SLA framework as it is known and practiced. The way the livelihoods interventions are chosen and executed, outside such a framework, gives the impression of a dispersion of effort in activities that could otherwise support the conservation endeavor. Third, the Project did not do enough to expose the beneficiaries to new ideas of organizing themselves, of finding ways of funding their activities in the future, of producing more and improving marketing of the productions. Fourth, for Cambodia, the deployment of human resources to implement the Project, which is in conformity with what was planned in the Project Document, is not optimal for the actual tasks at field level. Most if not all the members of the Management Team are consecrating only part of their working time to the Project. They are based in Phnom Penh, rather than having offices in the Project area. There is no separation from Project Director position who could be based in FA in Phnom Penh to ensure the link with decision making level and liaison with ITTO, and the Project Manager who should be based in Preah Vihear and should head and coordinate the Project Team for the day to day activities. The distance between staff based in Phnom Penh and the Project area means that planning and working together as a team in the Project area and working with local development partners is not adequately taking place, and visits to villages are not frequent enough. It further means that component managers are not fully playing their role as facilitators of the development visioning process, which requires mediating national interest and local needs.

The Project made an effort to engage with local communities through its support to livelihoods improvement activities, and had more achievements in local community development. In Thailand an interesting start to promote ecotourism and rural credit in form of revolving funds has been made, and justification with regard to forest resource conservation is always provided. All this work needs up-scaling and consolidation in a 3rd Phase. However the revolving fund practice is hard to justify in a country where rural banking institutions are well developed. Community development activities have been entirely executed by the project’s Team, although with considerable support from lower levels of the local RFD services. As a result, these services have not fully developed the capacity to take over from the project. Hence by not engaging sufficiently with local development and environment NGOs and rural banking institutions, the Project missed an opportunity of developing foundations for sustainability of most of its livelihoods improvement results.

In Cambodia, in spite of the Project's effort to engage with local communities, the most of the current livelihoods activities in relation to conservation objectives need a stronger justification. The interventions undertaken need consolidation so that natural resource users can deal with management issues and increase their income. There is still a gap in truly empowering communities to plan and implement their income generating activities due to lack of a clear approach for community engagement. This gap is not only due to poor quality of baseline data and no analysis to scope the livelihood interventions, but to methodological problems as well. Implementation strategy has not developed partnerships for multidisciplinary community development. No rural funding mechanism was included in the implementation of livelihoods activities. While insufficient rice production in Preah Vihear is a prime poverty indicator; the Project has not proposed a strategy to increase rice production and has limited its support to the construction of a rice bank. This is not a question of Project's own resources that are obviously limited, but of seeking partnership with specialized development actors. Support to poultry certainly has a high potential to contribute to income but requires technological input and assistance that the project staff cannot offer (health, feeding, marketing).

Based on the assessment made, this Evaluation is of the opinion that most of the measures for sustainability outlined in the Project Document will perform as far as the management of buffer zones is concerned. It was noted however that the extension of the model to other border protected areas has not yet taken place as planned. As for Cambodia, the sustainability measures were probably hastily designed. Most of them, besides lacking indicators for their monitoring, have not been implemented. Therefore the project is not yet performing as far as laying the foundation for sustainability of its results in Preah Vihear Protected Area is concerned. In this regard, it should be noted that following the request of the PSC in November 2009, sustainability measures were revised and the revision could help in designing the 3rd Phase.

Can TBC in the Emerald Triangle be described as a failure or a success? TBPA's are opportunities for improving biodiversity conservation in border areas, consolidating international cooperation to this effect and providing alternative means of livelihoods to border communities. The project has had an initial success in adding value with regard to these goals, although the results that have been achieved in reaching objectives 1 and 2 are by and large below what was planned. However, the need to cooperate for TBC in the Emerald Triangle is recognized by the governments of both countries. Indeed in spite of the difficult political and diplomatic context between Thailand and Cambodia described in this report, the project Teams of both countries have been able to meet and exchange. There is an opportunity of building on this spirit for the 3rd Phase to prepare a project proposal with realistic objectives. In this perspective, it will be essential to reassess the key TBC issues in the new environmental, political and socio-economic context in order to provide a factual basis for the formulation of a new proposal.

On a scale of TBC from "low cooperation" characterized by lack of mechanisms for institutional cooperation between parties, to "advanced cooperation" characterized by a high degree of institutional organization and financial autonomy of the TBC initiative, TBC in the Emerald Triangle is about a quarter of the way towards advanced cooperation because it got a boost, first by a joint project implementation agreement, second by a joint PSC and third by the setting up of joint task forces within regular meetings.

5.2 Recommendations

The Evaluation finds that the Project has laid the foundation for TBC between Thailand and Cambodia. It should move into a final phasing out in order to strengthen the technical transboundary conservation aspects despite the problems raised in this report regarding the participation of Laos and the border conflict between Thailand and Cambodia. However, the 3rd Phase Project should adapt its implementation approaches to take into account the challenges of the 2nd Phase, in particular, to meet the circumstances of Laos not joining and to be more relevant to the need of peace at the border between both countries.

The Evaluation recommends continuation of the Project and the design of a 3rd and final Phase of 3 years duration, with particular attention to the following specific recommendations:

To the Executing Agencies

- (1) Revise the Project objectives to make them clear and realistic. Revise the external environment of the Project in order to make an adequate analysis of the risks for achieving these objectives.
- (2) Plan for a project duration of 3 years that should be sufficient for a successful implementation of social development processes.
- (3) Make sure that indicators in the Logframe allow measuring the progress of the Project and demonstrating its results.
- (4) In the preparation of the next phase, make sure that the chain of results, i.e. the logic of the Logframe, is adequately tested. In particular:
 - ✓ Make sure that indicators for the specific objective describe the expected outcomes in form of real development changes;
 - ✓ Include among the indicators those that best capture development changes;
 - ✓ Where necessary, provide baselines and milestones to allow progress to be measured;
 - ✓ Provide an adequate description of key assumption particularly with regards to the specific objective.
- (5) For Thailand, plan a sustainability (i.e. phasing out) phase, with an exit strategy based on the development of the capacities of beneficiaries to maintain the results after the termination of the Project. For Cambodia, the next phase should also serve for establishing the baseline and scaling up.
- (6) For Cambodia, there is need of conducting baseline environmental and socio-economic studies in the next Phase, and provide a stronger link between livelihoods interventions and biodiversity conservation.
- (7) For both components, institutionalize the SLA; requires hiring national SLA experts as part of the project teams.
- (8) Ask beneficiaries contribution in funding community development activities in order to ensure stronger ownership and sustainability.
- (9) Plan activities to build capacity of beneficiary communities in developing natural resources management taking into account the conservation needs.

To both Governments of Thailand and Cambodia

- (1) Both governments should set-up clear institutional mechanisms to promote TBC in the Emerald Triangle.
- (2) Seek strategic partnerships with the civil society, rural banking institutions and the private sector to implement community development activities. In particular, involve in the activities of the Project those NGOs that have a potential of providing support and advisory services to local community natural resource-based enterprises. This requires developing accountability systems such as contracts, M&E systems, and contracts-plans.
- (3) Involve lower levels of RFD for Thailand and FA for Cambodia; this requires:
 - ✓ Training local staff in relevant management, participatory and SLA skills;
 - ✓ Changing the ways of working and work culture, from focus on low enforcement to co-management;
 - ✓ Deploy an adequate number of appropriate staff including the Project Manager at the Protected areas level, keeping only the Project Directors in HQs;
 - ✓ A livelihood specialist who will liaise with Banking institutions and the Civil Society.

To the Government of Cambodia

- (1) Seek ways of integrating the ITTO Project in the Preah Vihear FA in order to avoid a parallel effort to the CALM Project. The overall project effort and approach should be to support provincial and local services to manage the PVPF integrating the TBC and community development dimensions.
- (2) The Project Team should have their office in the Preah Vihear, and Project staff should be 100% on Project activities or conservation activities in the PVPF.
- (3) The design of the 3rd Phase should avoid dangers of sliding towards development activities that are not integrated in the conservation objectives. It should place an emphasis on building the capacity of lower level FA services to carry out conservation work and related community development activities that are essential for engaging with them in conservation endeavor.
- (4) With regard to future local community development activities, collaborate with specialized NGOs, rural banking institutions, agricultural services them in partnership.

To ITTO

- (1) Although TBC does not have to be based on formal agreements, ITTO should encourage participating countries to agree on mechanisms, formal or informal, to ensure adequate governance of the cooperation, effectiveness of biodiversity conservation, strong ownership of the initiative and sustainability of the results.
- (2) Without standards for TBC, it is difficult to assess how projects are performing in developing TBC processes. Based on its past experience with TBC projects, ITTO should provide such standards, showing the minimum requirements of TBC proposals that countries should meet for funding.
- (3) For lesson learning, further facilitate contacts with Laos in order to understand the factors that did not allow its involvement in the Project.

- (4) Develop conditions that should exist in the projects contexts so that the use of revolving funds to support local development activities may be allowed. One these could be that projects should not provide revolving funds if there is no proof that there are no other ways through for ex. rural banking institutions.
- (5) Revise mechanisms for project monitoring and reporting to ensure that projects make use of indicators of the logframe to report on progress.
- (6) Project Teams should view the Logframe as a living document that needs to be revised with approval of the PSC and ITTO Secretariat if necessary based on expert analysis.

PART II. MAIN TEXT

1. INTRODUCTION

The mission for the evaluation of ITTO Project PD 289/04 Rev.1 (F) “Management of the Emerald Triangle Protected Forests Complex to promote cooperation for transboundary biodiversity conservation between Thailand, Cambodia and Laos (Phase II)” took place from 18 March to 2 April 2010. It started in Thailand (18 – 22 March), continued in Laos (23 – 25 March) and ended in Cambodia (25 March – 2 April 2010). The focus of the Evaluation was based on its Terms of Reference, and the evaluation criteria are those defined in the ITTO manual for Project Monitoring, Review, Reporting and Evaluation”. In addition to summarizing the analysis carried out by the Evaluator to appreciate the objectives and strategies of the project, the process followed in its identification, its design, this report provide an assessment of its results, experiences and lessons learnt, and makes recommendations on the future course of action.

The Evaluator wishes to express his sincere gratitude to the Executing Agencies and the Teams of the Project for the kind assistance that they provided during his stay in Thailand, Laos and Cambodia.

2. EVALUATION, FOCUS AND APPROACH

2.1 Purpose of the Evaluation

The purpose of the evaluation is to guide on all factors relevant for the efficient and successful completion of the project in accordance with the rules and procedures of ITTO, including any necessary follow-up actions based on the experiences of the project implementation, to draw lessons and key project elements that can be used to improve similar projects in the future.

2.2 Scope and Focus of the Evaluation

The scope of the evaluation included the work taking place between 1 March 2008 (starting date) and March 2010, in Thailand and Cambodia. Fieldwork and discussions focused on currently ongoing operations. The field visits were limited to sites that reflect community involvement in the Project and that provide a cross-section of the benefits they derive from this involvement. The TORs called for the Evaluator to:

(c) Analyze and assess for:

- The overall role and contribution of the project in light of sectoral policies, development programmes, priorities and requirements to improve biodiversity conservation in the countries concerned.
- The current status of biodiversity conservation within the project’s area of influence, the effectiveness of the project’s implementation and its effectiveness and impacts in promoting the conservation of biodiversity in transboundary tropical forests.
- The effectiveness of dissemination of project results.
- The overall post-project situation in the project sites.
- The unexpected effects and impacts, either harmful or beneficial, and the reasons for their occurrences.
- The cost efficiency in the implementation of the project, including the technical, financial and managerial aspects.

- Follow-up actions for the successful completion of the project.
- The identification of any issues or problems that should be taken into account in designing and implementing similar projects in the future.

(d) Make recommendations on:

- the efficient and successful completion of the project in accordance with the rules and procedures of ITTO
- The needs for similar projects in the future aiming at improving biodiversity conservation in transboundary tropical forests in the Emerald Triangle Protected Forests Complex.
- The objectives of such similar projects and any innovative approaches/designs
- Appropriate target groups, e.g. countries, governments, organizations, forestry sector, local communities, etc.
- The organizational arrangements of the project.
- Follow-up and evaluation practices.
- Supplemental, alternative activities, processes, procedures, and/or follow-up programmers in the field of biodiversity conservation in transboundary tropical forests, if appropriate.

2.3 The Evaluator

This Evaluation was carried out by Dr. James K. Gasana (Switzerland), consultant in natural resources management and management of international development. His current activities are, among others, in the areas of the analysis of the political economy of natural resource management applied to projects and programmes, and to country evaluation of development cooperation programmes.

2.4 Approach and Methods

The Evaluation followed the Terms of Reference which are provided in Annex I. It included consultations with appropriate authority in RFD for Thailand and FA for Cambodia, and maintaining close cooperation with the concerned staff of the Executing Agencies in Thailand (Royal Forest Department), Cambodia (Forest Administration), and Laos (Department of Forestry). The evaluation undertook desk reviews of Project documentation. The fieldwork included site visits, interviews with Project staff, and with community and key Project partners. For quality assurance, the provisional findings were presented and commented in a Validation Workshop held in Siem Riep on 2 April 2010. There was active participation of Project Teams and primary stakeholders in respective countries to draw out the experiences and lessons.

The Evaluation reviewed the formulation of the Project in order to identify the impact of its design in meeting its objectives. It examined the efficiency of implementation with the aim of understanding how organizational aspects and the operational and managerial structures impacted the implementation of activities. The bulk of the attention was on the effectiveness in achieving the outputs and specific objectives of the Project. This was done by examining the extent to which the indicators for the outputs and specific objectives are being met, i.e. by comparing the achievements against the indicators in the Logframe. Other considerations of the evaluation are assessing the impacts and sustainability.

3. PROJECT FACTS

The project is the second phase of the ITTO project PD 15/00 Rev. 2 (F) 'Management of the Pha Taem Protected Complex to promote transboundary biodiversity conservation between Thailand, Cambodia and Laos (Phase 1)'. In Phase I which was implemented in Thailand, a number of valuable surveys and studies on socio-economic aspects, forest and wildlife ecology were conducted. The results confirmed the assumption that big wildlife species (such as wild elephants, banteng and tigers) seasonally migrate across the international border of the three cooperating countries, thus proving the need to further reinforce landscape conservation in the area. It was believed that biodiversity conservation activities carried out in close cooperation with the local communities will be the key to sustain biodiversity conservation. After the first phase both the long-term management plans and mid-term work plans for the trans-boundary protected areas were available in Thailand. The core elements of the second phase of the transboundary project are the implementation of activities set forth in the management plans on Thailand side, and to apply lessons learnt during Phase I in Cambodia and Laos. The overall objective of this second phase of the project remains the conservation of transboundary biodiversity in the Emerald Triangle Protected Forests Complex, an area that is situated between Thailand, Cambodia and Laos. Specific objectives set forth in the project document are given in the Table below.

Specific objectives of the Project and respective outputs

Objective	Expected outputs
Objective 1: Strengthen cooperation between Thailand, Cambodia and Laos on transboundary biodiversity conservation	<i>1.1. A management structure for cooperation at all levels is adopted and operational</i>
	<i>1.2. Transboundary biodiversity conservation activities among the three countries are strengthened</i>
Objective 2: Enhance protection and monitoring of biological resources along the tri-national borders	<i>2.1 Human resource capacity in biodiversity conservation and management have been trained</i>
	<i>2.2 Research on wide range-species conducted and data collected</i>
	<i>2.3 Law enforcement and protection measures have been strengthened</i>
Objective 3: Strengthen the involvement of local communities and stakeholders in sustainable uses	<i>3.1 Local community fora and networks are established and further strengthened</i>
	<i>3.2 Integrated conservation and development programs carried out by means of the pilot activity fund</i>
	<i>3.3 Nature-based tourism activities established and further expanded</i>

The expected situation after the completion of the project phase was the secured trans-boundary biodiversity conservation area that facilitates migration and long-term survival of large mammals in the region concerned, a situation to be accomplished through the following:

- (6) There will be a sound understanding and cooperation among the three countries for trans-boundary biodiversity conservation at the local and national levels.

- (7) Livelihood of local communities will be improved and they will be more aware of trans-boundary biodiversity conservation issues and participate in integrated conservation and development activities.
- (8) Systematic baseline data on ecology especially wide-range species along the tri-national border and socio-economic are available and shared by the three countries
- (9) Park rangers of protected areas will be trained and gain more knowledge on protected area management
- (10) Necessary tools for effective patrolling will be provided to park officials.

The project is implemented by the Royal Forest Department (RFD), which is the main implementing agency working in close collaboration with the Cambodian Forestry Administration.

4. FINDINGS, LESSONS LEARNT

4.1 Process of Project Formulation and Implementation

ITTO Project PD 289/04 Rev. 1 (F) evolved from project PD 15/00 Rev. 2 (F) “Management of the Phatam Protected Forests Complex to Promote Cooperation for Transboundary Conservation between Thailand, Cambodia and Laos (Phase 1)”. The proposal was jointly submitted to ITTO by governments of Thailand and Cambodia. The Project Agreement was signed between ITTO and the Governments of Thailand and Cambodia. The process followed for the formulation of the project has been adequate at higher levels of the administrations of both countries, and it adequately involved the Project Steering Committee of the first Phase. However the Project Document does not show clearly the mechanisms deployed to involve various stakeholders in formulating the project. In particular, it does not provide sufficient information on how the consultations with primary stakeholders have been conducted. It is therefore difficult to get a basic understanding of the nature of expectations of each category of stakeholders. As it will be shown below, it appears that the scope and complexity of the challenges of TBC, particularly the participation of Laos, were not systematically identified nor given sufficient.

4.2 Appropriateness of Project Design

The justification of the Project derives from the fact that the long-term survival of the wide-range wildlife species such as the Asian elephant, banteng, and tiger in the Emerald Triangle requires better cooperation between Thailand, Cambodia and Laos to conserve and ensure the protection of these species in their respective transboundary habitats. The problem of weak cooperation and governments’ commitment in this regard is real and remains. The design of the Project was such that the three countries will join their efforts to ensure that joint activities for transboundary biodiversity conservation in the Emerald Triangle are initiated with the support of ITTO.

Overall, the Project Document was designed to be consistent with ITTO format requirement, except that it defined three specific objectives instead of one. Although the strategies and approach are consistent with the current best practices in ITTO as far as TBC is concerned, the design did not argue why each project component management is not totally integrated within the local services of the Executing Agency.

Almost 100% project staff in Cambodia component are part time and have other tasks in the FA. They are paid salary supplements for their part time occupation with project tasks. The practice of the FA is to assign staff as counterparts to projects or development partners and for these to pay supplementary honoraria. In the context of the ITTO Project, such a practice should not lay the foundation to projectization which is not conducive to sustainability.

Through the analysis of the Project Document and discussion with the Project Teams, it was identified that:

- (1) The definition of three Specific objectives diluted the focus of the Project, and made each one and all together distant from the Development objective.
- (2) The first Specific objective is not achievable by the effort of Project Teams alone; it required a stronger definition of key assumptions to be met at higher decision-making levels.
- (3) A realistic assessment of the likelihood for Laos to join or not to join the initiative was needed, and this should have been adequately reflected in the description of the key assumptions.
- (4) All the indicators in the 2nd column of the Logframe are generic and not measurable, making the evaluation of Project results a very difficult task. In particular, the indicators in the upper quadrants of the Logframe were not selected to allow orienting the Project towards results and measuring progress and change, instead of merely reporting on activities execution. Furthermore, they are not closely linked to biodiversity conservation and livelihoods outcomes and impacts.
- (5) The Logframe did not provide sufficient elements to monitor progress towards achieving outputs and development results.

More broadly, the Logframe does not show what the strong focus of the project is, and does not allow ensuring that it is results oriented. This lack of focus and the weakness of the definition of indicators did not allow establishing a credible linkage between the outcome that the project seeks to reach in transboundary conservation, and the resources used, the activities implemented and the outputs delivered.

As it will come out in the presentation of the findings, design problems had a negative impact on the implementation of the Project. In particular, they limited the achievements in establishing firm basis for transboundary conservation, which is the critical purpose of the Project.

Due to the problems in the Logframe, the Project Document did not provide a good basis for implementing the Project and ensuring that its objectives are achieved. None of those involved in the execution of Project activities suggested its revision. However, the PSC recommended to the Executing Agencies to improve the indicators and to elaborate Monitoring Systems. The revision of the Logframe which was made did not present a significant improvement, and the Executing Agencies never used it for reporting. No follow-up was given with regard to the recommendation of the PSC to elaborate Monitoring Systems.

An important design issue is the lack of presentation of how the Sustainable Livelihood Approach (SLA) was to be implemented by the Project in relation to Specific Objective 3 which became the actual Project focus in the implementation stage. With the lack of a clear SLA frame for community activities, the Cambodia component in particular could not adopt a clear strategy of how to provide support to food insecure households in the target area, through intensification of their own food production in order to meet their subsistence needs and increase their income. This is not a question of Project's own resources that are obviously limited, but of seeking partnerships with specialized development actors. Furthermore, the Project document did not

define in the strategy how to equip beneficiary communities with natural resource management and use planning capacities so that they can plan, implement and monitor results of activities that would enable them to uplift their living standards.

4.3 Relevance

4.3.1 In the context of ITTO

The Project is a second phase of previous project implemented by Thailand with ITTO funding. As was the case with Phase 1, the project is relevant with ITTO's successive Action Plans as far as promotion of TBC is concerned. Indeed the Emerald Triangle Project aims to coordinating the efforts of Thailand, Cambodia and Laos for the reduction of the loss of biodiversity associated with illegal activities and control of land use changes in that the areas concerned. The Project activities aim at managing the protected areas that comprise key transboundary wildlife habitats, at supporting participating countries to put in place and consolidate TBC mechanisms.

4.3.2 Relevance to national policies and strategies

The project is relevant to the policies and strategies of Thailand, Cambodia and Laos as far as biodiversity conservation is concerned. Thailand has established a complex of protected areas near its border with Cambodia and Laos. On its side, Cambodia manages the Preah Vihear Forest as a Protected Forest. However, Laos has not yet undertaken the establishment of protected forests near the border with Thailand. As it will be shown, most TBC activities could not be carried out due to the non-participation of Laos and the border conflict between Thailand and Cambodia since 2008. The question is whether the Project is still relevant in the sense that it can promote TBC in the Emerald Triangle. Obviously some of the activities originally planned for the medium and long-term vision of TBC cannot be implemented in an adverse political environment. Teams of both participating countries have survived the border tension, proving the Project's relevance to the need to reduce tension on the ground. Therefore in order to continue to be relevant as a TBC project in a political and diplomatic difficult context, it may be useful to consider reshaping itself from a community development operation inside the protected areas that it has been forced to become into an operation that can actively contribute to peace building.

4.3.3 Relevance to the needs of primary beneficiaries

The life of rural communities in the vicinity of the Emerald Triangle has been exposed to the consequences of the decision on creating protected areas. Depending on situations, this may reduce, limit or regulate their access to forest areas and may impact negatively on the availability of food sources from forests for the products that are traditionally part of the diets of rural communities. This is one of the prices that in similar cases communities pay when TBPA are established due to loss of land and access to natural resources. It is for this reason that the Project is relevant to the needs of the primary beneficiaries because in its design it has given them a role to play and planned benefits to be provided.

4.4 Project Implementation

4.4.1 Institutional framework

After two phases limited progress has been achieved in establishing a structure for TBC, with a clear political status. While some elements of this condition may be attributed to the participation of only Thailand in Phase I of the project, it nevertheless constitutes a bottleneck in the achievements of the Project, and presents a dilemma for the sustainability of the effort that was invested. The Project document does not define a politically recognized structure to oversee the cooperation for transboundary conservation. The PSC cannot play this role nor can the technical Joint Task Forces. As a result the technical teams spent a great deal of time on a task which is outside their control, trying to get Laos join the initiative.

4.4.2 Stakeholders participation in Project implementation

In both Thailand and Cambodia, the stakeholders in the higher levels of the line departments have been involved in the life of the Project. In lower levels, the Project is not fully integrated in the provincial services of RFD in Thailand and FA in Cambodia. For Thailand it should be noted that there is a great collaboration with provincial and local levels of RFD. In both countries no strategic or service providing role has been given to organizations of the civil society or private sector. Although the local communities participate in the project activities as beneficiaries of development activities, they are not represented in any kind of decision-making process. It should also be noted that security and foreign affairs services are not represented in the PSC.

4.4.3 Efficiency of Project Implementation

(a) Organization and management

In Cambodia, the Project implements a wide diversity of community development activities not having an obvious link to conservation, although this link could be established. The interventions were built from scratch without a prior scoping livelihoods study. Their implementation is carried out by a team of foresters, sufficient in numbers and with experiences in rural development work, but not necessarily having the profiles required for community development tasks. The management of different components of the Project is highly centralized in the Capital, which trends towards “projectization” due to the fact that the Executing Agency has not integrated lower levels of the FA and developed collaborations with the Civil society, the Private sector and other development actors.

With regard to governance of the project, as mentioned above there is no mechanism of ensuring representation and meaningful participation of primary beneficiaries in project steering or consultative committees. There is no special effort made to work with national or local development or environmental NGOs in conservation and rural development activities.

(b) Intervention methods

As it will be shown further, the central focus is on community development, and the Project Document mentioned sustainable livelihoods as the intervention method in this regard. However, SLA analysis and planning process are not practiced in the implementation of project activities. Beneficiary communities are not empowered to generate valuable information for tackling land, natural resource and livelihoods issues. They are not empowered to use the SLA tools for natural resource related problem analysis and management. Participation is largely reduced to formation of community committees. The Project Document has not provided guidance on participatory resource use planning at village level and as result the Project did not support the development of village resource use plans aiming at reducing the impact of buffer zone development activities on conservation.

(c) Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and Evaluation (ME) has been one of the weakest areas of the Project work in both Thailand and Cambodia components. Right at the start, the Logframe needed improvements to allow the Project managers to monitor progress. There was no baseline data to allow assessing how development progress is being achieved. To date, there is such baseline data on the habitat status is still incomplete. Obviously the emphasis on community development work needed baseline data from livelihoods studies in order to allow monitoring development results. This situation has preoccupied the PSC which, in the course of the second year, requested the Project to improve the indicators of the Logframe and elaborate a Monitoring and Evaluation System (MES). Now, close to the end of the current phase, the Project still has no MES and it cannot really demonstrate the real changes and impacts resulting or likely to result from its activities. Clearly the Executing Agencies should have carried out reviews of the Logframe early in the start of the current phase in order to assess the appropriateness of the indicators and respective targets, and propose a revision to the PSC if justifiable.

For lack of an internal MES in its components, the Project did not have a mechanism of assessing and presenting its implementation challenges, in particular the non participation of Laos PDR to the TBC initiative and the impact of the border conflict between Thailand and Cambodia. MES remains therefore a critical issue to be addressed in the process of elaborating the next Phase. The Executing Agencies should make sure that baselines are established and progress can be measured.

(d) Cost efficiency

It was shown above that the weaknesses in the formulation of the project affected its achievements. Although the essential aspects of TBC related specific objectives were not achieved it will be described further, the overall budget of the Project was not readjusted to community development interventions. Hence the budget allocated to funding livelihoods activities remains relatively low for a project that in reality focused more community development. As of the end of January 2010, it was 3.8% of total spent budget for Thailand Component and 3.03% for Cambodia Component. In comparison, the percentage of expenses on personnel and consultants was 65.27% for Thailand component and 48.28% for Cambodia component. These figures suggest some possible cost inefficiencies of the Project given its modest achievements of the planned outputs and specific objectives.

On the operational side, it is obvious that more could have been achieved quantitatively and qualitatively if the subsidiarity principle had been followed and more field activities had been implemented by lower levels of RFD and FA respectively. In Cambodia, with the Project Team members operating in bases located far from the PVPF, there are considerable diseconomies due to management and supervision at long distance and negative impacts on the quantity and quality of achievements for a given cost level. In such conditions, it is evident that the ratio between quantity and quality of achievements versus cost of activity implementation would have been higher if provincial and local FA levels had been given more responsibility in the implementation of the Project's conservation activities and if local NGOs had been involved as partners in community development activities..

4.4.4 Achievement of the main assumptions

The Project document had recognized that the success of the Project depends on the continued commitment and political will of the three countries, local people and stakeholders. It had further recognized among the risks of the non-participation of Laos PDR and of military tension along the tri-national border. However it did not assess their relative probability of occurring and did not provide any mitigating factor or measures. Yet assumptions referring to these risks could have clearly allowed to assess which minimal conditions needed to exist for the successful achievement of the objectives of the Project.

Today it appears that the external environment in which the Project is working is less than conducive to achieving its objectives. The non-participation of Laos to join the initiative subtracted a key party to the cooperation for transboundary conservation. Besides the informal effort at technical levels mostly in meeting occasions, there was no apparent concrete formal effort from higher levels of both countries to get the interest of Laos to join.

It was therefore critical that the project design clarifies key assumptions on the external environment, or reduces its ambition on what can be reached by defining objectives that are realistic for working in a challenging external context. Specific objectives 1 and 2 remain ambitious given that they depend on Laos joining the initiative and on a less conflictive situation at the border between Cambodia and Thailand. This will need adequate attention in the elaboration of the next phase.

4.5 Effectiveness

4.5.1 Effectiveness in achieving the outputs

Output 1.1 “A Management structure for cooperation at local and national levels for TBCA adopted and operated by three countries”

Indicators: (1) PSC and National Coordination Committee established; (2) Appropriate staff for project deployed.

The Project Document stated that the Project will be implemented by RFD in Thailand, FA in Cambodia and DF in Laos, and assigned a key role to the PSC. It provided for the creation of National Coordination Committees (see indicator 1), Joint Task Force and Working Groups. It did not provide the terms of reference or the composition of the National Coordination Committee, the Joint Task Force and the Working Groups. With the exception of the Laos component, the key elements of the management structure were set-up in accordance with the intent of the Project Document. In general, the project management and administration go smoothly for both Thailand and Cambodia components. However, the Evaluation could not find any evidence on the concrete role played by the Joint Task Force and Working Groups as far the results of the Project are concerned. In Thailand, a National Coordination Committee comprising members from the Royal Forest Department and the National Park, Wildlife and Plant conservation Department was established.

With regard staff deployment, Thailand complied with what was planned in the Project Document. For the Cambodia component, it should be underlined that all the members of the Management Team are part-time staff, which raises a potential problem of sustainability. Even though the degree of commitment of the staff of FA is very high, the project personnel is having other time-consuming administrative duties which do not leave them enough time to perform all the Project technical and community development activities. The technical staff at the local

levels is not adequately integrated in the Project and has not received adequate training to allow them integrate the results of the Project when it will come to its end.

Output 1.2 “TBCA activities among the three countries implemented”

Indicator: Meeting of participating stakeholders.

The Evaluation considers this indicator to be very weak as it does not allow appreciating how the Project was effective in implementing TBCA activities in the three countries. Trans-boundary coordination activities among the three countries were not achieved as planned due to the non participation of Laos in the Project and to the border conflict between Thailand and Cambodia. While in Thailand there was an effort in strengthening human resources capacity in biodiversity conservation, no systematic training was organized in Cambodia. It should be noted however that the Joint Task Force meetings were held among project staff at the occasion of the PSC Meeting events. These meetings allowed the results of the project to be presented in a harmonized manner and to prepare the information to be disseminated. The Participants agreed to continue informal communication with Laos, to hold tri-national working group meetings, to conduct separate patrolling and stakeholder meetings and sharing relevant information.

Output 2.1 “Human resource capacity in biodiversity conservation and management strengthened”

Indicator: Number of training courses and participants.

As it can be deduced from the above indicator, the Project Document did not specify the targets to be met under Output 2.1. In Thailand, the Project organized trainings and workshops for PA staff and local people on domestication of edible wild species and insect, and plant propagation as indicated in Table 2. In Cambodia no comparable training activity took place.

Under this output, the Project had to prepare and publish a Management Plan of Preah Vihear Forest. The Evaluator learnt that a Draft existed and would be presented in the Validation Workshop in which his preliminary observations were discussed. The presentation of the Draft Plan did not take place and the evaluator did not receive a copy of the Draft. This activity can therefore be considered as still under implementation.

Table 2: Training courses organized in relation to Output 2.1 by the Project in Thailand

Workshop Topic	Target group	Number of participants
Edible species and insect	PAs staff	20
Edible species and insect	Local people	35
Plant propagation	PAs staff	20
Plant propagation	Local people	35
Nursery techniques	Local people	15
TOTAL		125

Output 2.2 “Law enforcement and protection measures strengthened”

Indicators: (1) Illegal cases decreased; (2) Number of species and frequency of occurrence of key wildlife species.

As it can be seen, the definition of the indicators is ambiguous and vague. The Logframe did not provide the baseline for the illegal cases or benchmarks to measure progress. The Evaluation did not find any evidence that these indicators have ever been used in monitoring or reporting the achievements. It is therefore impossible to use them to assess the effectiveness of the project as far as Output 2.2 is concerned. With regard to Law enforcement, it should be mentioned that there was exchange of information between Thailand and Cambodia on wildlife habitat. Maps were produced and reported in the Third PSC Meeting (see Map on next page). In Thailand, the Project organized training and workshops for PA staff, border patrol, local people on GIS, and on Wildlife and Area Demarcation (see Table 3).

Table 3: Training courses organized in relation to Output 2.2 by the Project in Thailand

Workshop Topic	Target group	Number of participants
GIS	PAs staff & Border Patrol	25
GIS	Local people	30
Wildlife	PAs staff & Border Patrol	25
Wildlife	Local people	30
Demarcation	PAs staff	30
Demarcation	Local people	30
TOTAL		170

Output 2.3 “Research Program on wide-ranging species and ecological baseline data at the proposed corridor carried out and published”

Indicators: (1) Joint research program planned and implemented; (2) A completed baseline data at the proposed corridor.

No joint research activity was undertaken and no joint TBC research program was elaborated. With regard to baseline data, consultants on GIS, Wildlife, Botany and Ecology were contracted in the Thailand Component but their reports were not yet officially submitted to the project. No activity was undertaken under the Cambodian Component. The reason given by the Component management is that such activities would have duplicated complementary initiatives of the CALM project.

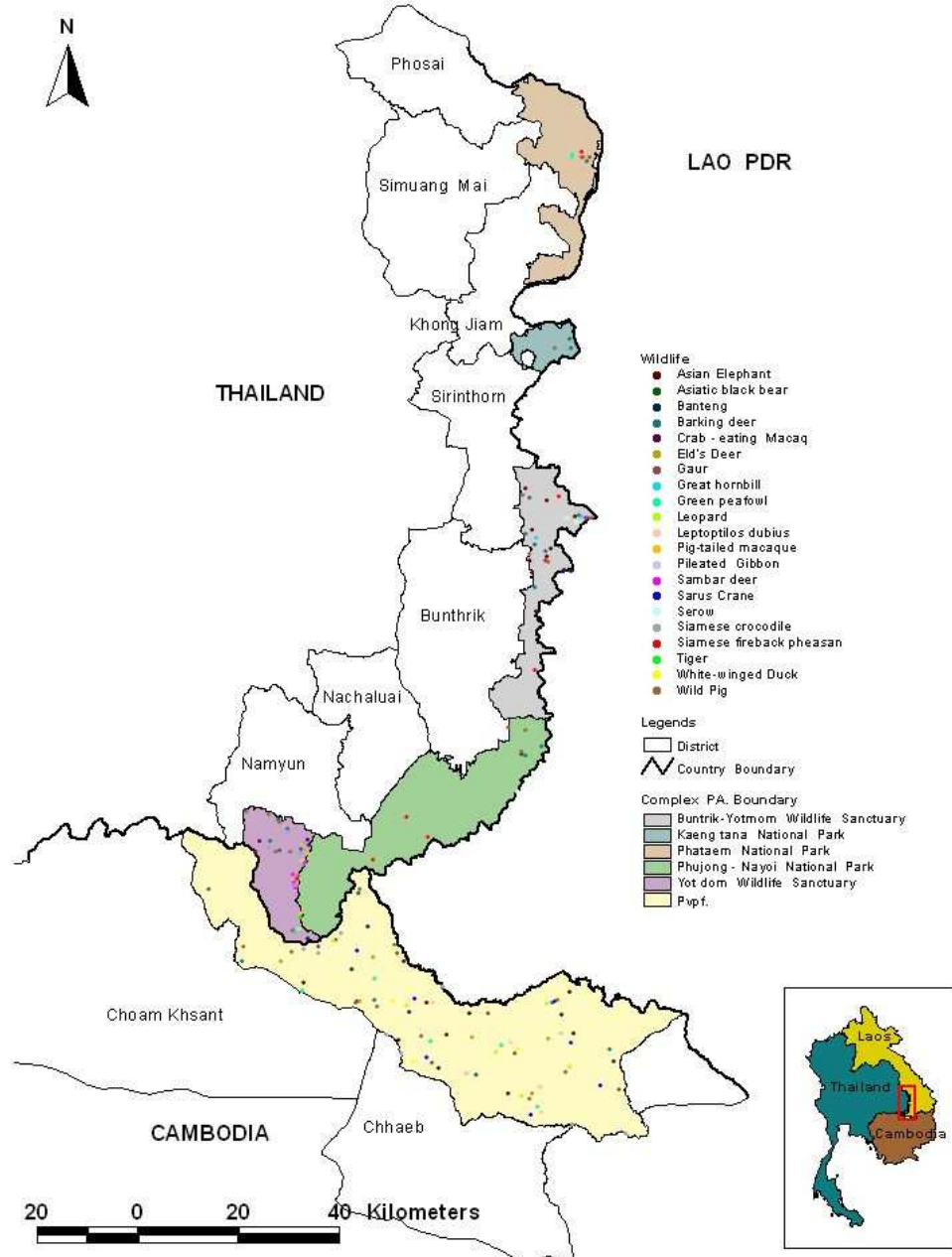
Output 3.1 “Local community fora established and strengthened in selected communities in Pas and in the buffer zones”

Indicators: Number of community network and member established in target sites

The Project Document did not specify the target to be met under Output 3.1, nor did it describe the quality and functions of the community network. In the understanding of the Evaluator, the local community fora (LCF) should be vehicles for empowerment and adoption of new technologies by the participating members. They should build on the existing farmer groupings

MAP showing the location of protected areas in the Emerald Triangle

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as well as NGO efforts and be used to spearhead empowerment that would enable communities to take control of the development activities supported by the Project, including the identification of community income generating activities, planning development activities, coordinating support and advisory services, and monitoring performance and evaluating themselves and service providers. For the fora to be vehicles for empowerment and adoption of new

technologies, participatory planning must be the approach for local development. In the implementation of Output 3.1, the Executing Agencies have operated below this description of LCF. The Evaluation did not find any reporting on the establishment or strengthening of LCFs as an effect of project activities. However, in the activities implemented in Thailand as shown in Table 3, there are those that are aimed at building the capacity of communities through training and study tours.

Table 3: Areas of Project intervention in support of local communities, Thailand Component

Areas of support	Expected outcome	Number of villages	Population concerned
Conservation	Increased community's role in forest protection	16	250
Home-stay & Ecotourism	Increased income	12	180
Handicraft	Increased income	6	200
Wild orchids domestication	Biodiversity conservation and Increased income	4	75
Herbs and medicine plants	Improved health and nutrition	6	150
Community revolving fund	Increased capacity to fund community enterprise	6	350
Domestication of crab as food source	Improved nutrition	3	50
Organic fertilizer	Reduced use of chemicals	8	80
Bamboo for local production	Increased income; forest protection	5	150
TOTAL		66	1485

Output 3.2 “Integrated conservation and development programs carried out in the Emerald Triangle’s buffer zone through pilot activity fund”

Indicator: Number of community-based conservation activities implemented in target sites.

The Project Document did not provide targets for this output. It did not define how the Project will collaborate with the civil society and other actors such as the banking institutions to implement this out which has become the center piece of the Project. Yet a number of NGOs and other rural development actors operate in or near the Project areas, some of them focusing on community mobilization for sustainable resource management and use, or organizational development including legal registration of community production groups.

Sustainable livelihood is mentioned in the Project document and is part of the discourse among the project staff. However the Sustainable Livelihoods Approach (SLA) framework is not

followed. Although assessments of community social, economic and environmental contexts are conducted in Thailand, they do not lead to the development of community action plan or to business plans as a basis of planning and monitoring the community development achievements. Generally there is no differentiation of groups in the communities. Based on existing social structures and social organizing activities conducted by other partners, the project conducted conservation awareness activities.

Collaborating with the civil society could enhance the integration of conservation and development. Although there is good neighborliness with development and environmental NGOs (the NGO Nature Care in Thailand is providing training to communities in Ecotourism), no approach to strategic partnership has been developed yet. There was no attempt to subcontract and support NGOs to implement Project activities of their specialization as a good practice of the principle of avoiding projectization. Among the staff who oversee community development activities none have got profiles that correspond to the problems that are handled: no SLA specialists, no Banking seconded staff who could help elaborate proposal for community members.

By component, the achievements can be summarized as follows:

(a) Thailand component

In Thailand, the Project only had distant collaboration, not based on strategic partnership modalities.

For the implementation of this out in the Thailand, the Project 6 selected villages (from 36 villages) called “model communities” in which it supports production activities and ecotourism development. The selection criteria include:

- Interest to work with the project;
- Indigenous knowledge on sustainable management of natural resources (ex. Raising insects);
- Potential of community based ecotourism;
- Experience of work with government agencies;
- Need to diversify non-forest based activities (ex. How to stop cutting bamboo from protected forests by producing it on the farm for raw material supply).

The beneficiaries were supported in various income generating activities that contribute to conservation. The formula used is that of the Revolving Fund. In the beneficiary villages the following activities were supported:

- *Ban Pha Chan: Home-stay and eco-tourism;*
- *Ban Tha Long: Home-stay and eco-tourism;*
- *Ban Suan Son: Agro forestry-Food Bank;*
- *Ban Nong Rua: Handicraft from bamboo;*
- *Ban Non Soong: Wild Orchid Tissue;*
- *Ban Ta Yoy: Wild Orchid Tissue Culture.*

There is no clear approach of how generalization and scaling up of the experiences is envisaged. There is no approach of linking communities to the rural Banking System or to link this system to community development as partners, in the perspective of establishing a more

sustainable funding system than the revolving fund. Although villages are supported to network (for ex. there is a clustering of villages practicing ecotourism), the aim and the outcomes expected from the networking remain unclear.

In the field visits, the Evaluator observed considerable achievement in beneficiary communities. The earlier support was given to orchid production which started in Phase 1. The beneficiaries are controlling the production which is based mostly on traditional propagation methods. As they coordinate as a group for access to market, there no problem of marketing. However there was a halt in technological innovation that the project had initiated in the first phase consisting in propagation by tissue culture. This is due to lack of training and of equipment. In Non Song Village, the project assisted to reduce dependency from collection of wild orchid in the National Park (Pujong Na Yoyu). It provided a revolving fund which was used to build a nursery. In Ta Toy Village (one group – 24 members) there was collection in the forest and buying from Laos; ITTO provided a revolving fund which was used to improve the laboratory for tissue culture, training members, propagation, returning orchids to the forest, meetings.

The results that were recorded with the support to ecotourism are among the most interesting. One of the beneficiary groups is a group of the Bru tribe which has special local knowledge on the management of natural resources. They are trained by an NGO for the development of an ecotourism articulated around the weaving activity. However the project has not facilitated the process of elaboration an action and business plan for the village as a way of approaching development change process.

In Pachan Village which has 564 inhabitants, the community forest (2000 ha of which 100 ha are used for total conservation) is used for Ecotourism as a biodiversity learning center. The main attraction is the cliffs on the Mekong River, stones, vegetation, and ancient burial sites. The village has realized revenues of 120'000 Bahts. Visitors come to see how the community forest can provide benefits and reduce dependency on extraction of forest products. The objective is to carry out an inventory of fauna and flora so that visitors can be informed. This case is an example of the lack of a coherent approach for community development support as the project is not providing assistance for Action Planning or business planning.

The Project has also registered success in support to users of bamboo as a raw material for handcrafts. In the villages practicing bamboo based handcraft, the raw material is still extracted from the forests in protected areas. Collection is also made in Laos. In order to reduce pressure this pressure, the project supports production of raw material in the villages. It provided support to the weaving group of Nong Rua village (646 inhabitants) in order to reduce the dependence on protected forest. This support in form of a revolving fun of 5000 Bahts benefited 31 families who are involved in weaving activities. They used that amount to buy raw material (4000 Bahts) and to plant bamboo (1000 Bahts). Before the members were selling individually and earning less, but now they work as a group and their bargaining power has increased. There is no Project's added value as far as technology for bamboo resource management is concerned.

For the agroforestry activity, no results of the project support are observable yet due to the late start. The support of the project to Swan Son Village has started only in 2009.

(b) Cambodia component

In Cambodia, despite the resource endowment in Preah Vihear, rural poverty is widespread because communities live in relative isolation, particularly in the rainy season, due to the state of the roads. The livelihoods are mostly based on rainfed rice production and tree resin

extraction. The increased military presence due to the border conflict is bringing road improvement that development efforts did not bring before. With establishment of military families in permanent houses, a new population pressure on natural resources is building up.

As far as support to improved livelihoods is concerned, the project has provided support to activities relating to improved food security, water wells, and poultry and fruit trees planting. The results are summarized in Table 4. The cost of **20,937.07** USD given by the management of the Project is higher than the official cost at the end January 2010 in the financial report. Although these activities are conducted at a very low scale, they have given satisfaction to the beneficiary villages of Chaes, Robonh and Chhunh. This was confirmed in the interviews that the Evaluator conducted with beneficiary villages representatives.

As far as rice production is concerned, no support is provided to increase productivity. Instead, instead the beneficiaries have established a practice of borrowing rice from the rice bank and returning after the harvest a quantity that is 25% higher in about 6 months as compared to 3% per year of the interest rate practiced by the rural banking institution ACLEDA, which is present in the region.

With respect to Agriculture and poultry, the project obviously undertook activities that it cannot manage because there is no technological added value, and the issues of husbandry and marketing are not addressed. With respect to fruit production, the activity is conducted at a too low scale to have an impact.

Output 3.3 “Nature-based tourism activities established and expanded”

Indicators: (1) Potential ecotourism sites identified; (2) Package tour developed.

In the Thailand Component, a survey was conducted along the Mekong River and 30 areas were identified as having a potential for culture adventure and nature based tourism. A nature based tourism map was produced. In the Cambodia Component, two potential sites have been identified and mapped. The sites are part of the PVPF that have Special Natural Landscape and have been established for recreation and eco-tourism. They comprise areas with high potential value for ecotourism activities such as hiking, wildlife watching, village stays, guest houses, eco-lodges and tent camps. The ruins of seventeen temples have been identified and mapped.

Table 4: Summary of community activity development and budget cost, Cambodia Component

Activities	Villages						Items	Cost US\$
	Chaes	Robonh	Chhunh	Mlou Prey1	Mlou Pey2	Dang Plet		
Rice bank	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	3,360.74
Chicken	30	60	30	-	-	-	175 chicken	704.05
Fruit trees	800	1000	700	-	-	-	2500 trees	764.48
Water wells	1	4	2	-	-	-	7 wells	6,300.00
Village Credit	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	1,000
School repairs,	-	1	1	-	-	-	2 schools	990.00
schools tables		15					15 tables	525
Cow bank	-	9	4	-	-	-	13 cows	3,250
Schools kids notebooks, programme books, pens	1 set	1 set	1 set			1 set	4 sets	175
Chalk board	-	2	1	-	-	-	3	135
Exchange study visit	5	4	2	-	-	-	11 persons	635.47
community meetings	120	95	98	50	30	30	423 persons	3,097.33
Total								20,937.07

4.5.2 Effectiveness in Achieving the Specific Objectives

4.5.2.1 Specific Objective 1 “Strengthen Cooperation between Thailand, Cambodia and Laos for Biodiversity Conservation in respective TBCA”

The Project has not reached this objective which was central in its design. As it was shown above the achievements of the respective outputs are too far below what was planned. This is due to the non-participation of Laos and to the border conflict between Thailand and Cambodia since 2008 which created a context that is not conducive to any strategic dialogue between the three parties as far as pursuing TBC goals in the Emerald Triangle is concerned. It should also be added that for Cambodia, the Project started with the diversification of activities other than those preparing the ground for TBC as no prior scoping study was conducted.

4.5.2.2 Specific Objective 2 “Enhance protection measures and monitoring of the biological resources along tri-national borders”

The non participation of Laos in the Project and the difficult politico-diplomatic and security context due to the border conflict between Thailand and Cambodia did not allow the Project to enhance protection measures and monitoring of biological resources along the tri-national border as planned. Though the Project Document had mentioned that there was a risk for the Project to face these problems, no mitigation measures were proposed in form of re-adjustment of the objectives and implementation approaches of the Project. For this reason no concrete results under Specific Objective 2 were achieved.

4.5.2.3 Specific Objective 3 “Strengthen the involvement of local communities and stakeholders to ensure sustainable uses and management of natural resources inside PAs and in the buffer zones”

With regard to the Thai Component, the Project was effective in supporting its beneficiaries to expand their source of income using the Revolving Fund formula. In many cases the beneficiary groups contributed above expectation towards the successes of the messages on protecting biodiversity in Pha Taem National Park, for example by returning the orchids to the forests. Coupled with the close collaboration of lower levels of RFD, these achievements have a potential to enhance biodiversity conservation in respective areas. However the system of using revolving fund cannot be seen as sustainable as there is no clear road map for sustainable rural funding involving in the medium the rural credit institutions.

In Cambodia, the Project initiated development activities in support of food security and water supply. Although there has been an effort to raise conservation among the local communities through meetings, the activities conducted so far do not provide convincing evidence on the link with biodiversity conservation. The intervention in its current form cannot be sustainable as it seems to depend too much on external funding. Although the fruit plants distribution, rice bank, poultry and water well activities introduced by the Project are part of the local farming systems and correspond to local needs, they appear to be stand-alone interventions of a very limited scale. Hence the achievements in initiating activities ensuring sustainable management and use of natural resources remain meager. The Component lacks a road map defining what is to be achieved with the SLA and how this approach links with biodiversity conservation.

4.6 Impacts

It is still early to assess the specific impact of the 2nd Phase of the Project. However, its results can be assessed in relation to the expected situation at its completion as it was described in the Project document. It was expected that at the end of the Project:

- There will be a sound understanding and cooperation among the three countries for trans-boundary biodiversity conservation at the local and national levels.
- Livelihood of local communities will be improved and they will be more aware of trans-boundary biodiversity conservation issues and participate in integrated conservation and development activities.
- Systematic baseline data on ecology especially wide-range species along the tri-national border and socio-economic are available and shared by the three countries

- Park rangers of protected areas will be trained and gain more knowledge on protected area management
- Necessary tools for effective patrolling will be provided to park officials

The following assessment can be made:

With regard to cooperation among the three countries: no progress was achieved for the reasons already described above.

With regard to livelihood of local communities: In Thailand, the project worked with most beneficiaries (6 villages) for less than one year to one year. There is no sign of project influence to other villages where the project had no direct activities. However the Project addressed indirectly the vulnerability context of the beneficiaries by strengthening their group and individual capacity to improve their income. In Cambodia, though the direct beneficiaries express satisfaction with the activities of the project, particularly the construction of water wells, the rice bank and poultry, their scale is still too low to have an impact on community lives and conservation values.

Systematic baseline data of wide-range species: While there are data from Phase I on Thailand side, Phase II did not plan baseline studies on Cambodia side.

Training of park rangers: While training took place as planned in Thailand, no park ranger training was organized by the Project in Cambodia. Even for Thailand there is no data showing what was the effect of the training on the work of the beneficiaries.

Necessary tools for effective patrolling: Patrolling is carried out by national teams in respective areas. The tools for regular exchange of information from patrolling are not yet in place.

4.7 Sustainability and Replicability

Sustainability being the most critical success criterion of any project, it should be constantly focused on from the design stage to implementation. As far as the community development activities of the Project are concerned, such a focus remains largely undeveloped. It was for example noted for Cambodia that there was no beneficiaries' participation to the cost of investments where support was given for water wells and rice banks. This raises the question on the sustainability of the results and the potential for the scaling-up of the operations in the future.

Within the Project Document one finds an ample text describing how sustainability of the Project was envisaged. In Thailand, it was planned that protected area staff will gain knowledge and experience in order to maintain the activities. This was largely achieved and RFD staff at the regional and site levels are cooperating with Project Management to implement to make use of the lessons from the Project. It was also planned that communities and stakeholders will build local capacity for buffer zone management and income generation. This was also largely achieved but only at a scale of 6 communities. The experience still needs scaling-up and the mechanisms for sustainable rural credit need to be established for funding income generating activities.

In Cambodia, it was planned that CALM Project will ensure that many components of the ITTO Project will have funding for five years beyond the end of the current Phase. It was further

planned that the ITTO Project will build the capacity of the government staff at the national and local levels to maintain Project ownership, and build cross-institutional coordination amongst relevant government agencies. Today it can be observed that while contacts between the ITTO Project and CALM are good and there is good technical exchange, there has not been any formal elaboration and adoption of a concise road map of how to integrate the ITTO Project components within CALM in the future. Concerning building capacity of government staff, the Project has not undertaken concrete activities to fully involve the local level FA staff in its activities and to build their capacities.

4.8 Lessons Learnt

4.8.1 Project formulation

To design this kind of project, more attention is needed to the understanding of the development and conservation contexts, and to develop the social ownership of the initiative. For implementation design, it is important to consider that sufficient time is needed for social processes to root down and for developing adequate approaches and their ownership by the beneficiaries and partners. For this reason a minimum duration of 3 years should have been planned. There is also need to design a more flexible and open system of collaboration with primary stakeholders instead of limiting support to only model villages. The design should also have planned a wider participation of stakeholders in the project. Currently the stakeholders with a clear role are the state levels of line government departments, with an exceptional role played by WCS in Cambodia.

4.8.2 Project management

Implementation of sustainable livelihoods activities in the framework of a conservation project requires a broad range of skills that may not be present within the project teams. Strategic partnerships should be developed to devolve local community development activities to the NGOs and other actors such as rural banking institutions.

It is very important for Project Teams to be based in the Project area in order to be able to make frequent contacts with communities and local partners and thus ensure relevance of the activities. This would allow the Project to provide an optimal support to natural resource related activities that benefit communities by increasing income and food security. A permanent presence in the Project area would allow the staff to have a better knowledge of the local conditions and to make a good use of the SLA framework.

Income generation needs to be addressed as a community or family business enterprise and not as a project activity. Hence the importance for projects to facilitate the link of community business to the rural banking institutions and to specialized local development NGOs for advisory services. Lack of this link led to 'projectization', with a relatively high proportion of personnel and consultants expenses. In Cambodia, the Project's results in the post-project situation could be unsustainable if adequate measures to increase the involvement of lower FA levels and partners of the civil society and private sector are not taken. Indeed the government may not provide all the required support to take-over from ITTO's finance, as the project has not been properly integrated in the administrative structure of the FA.

In the perspective of the preparation of a 3rd Phase of the Project, a sound governance of the project would require community development activities to be executed in collaboration with other relevant strategic partners, including civil society, farmer organizations and rural banking

institutions. There should be adequate co-financing in the form of loans or grants by these strategic partners.

4.8.3 Project approach

Given the multidimensionality of the work involved in TBC, the Project needs to develop robust integrative approaches for sustainable development in border areas in order to reach conservation objectives. One of such approaches that the Project used is SLA, which is trans-disciplinary and is implemented in the borderland between policy and practices. The Project should have taken this aspect into account by following as closely as possible the SLA good practices and undertaking the processes of streamlining experiences into conservation and development policies.

4.8.4 Community development

The project in both components has implemented several community development activities at the cost focus on TBC and analytical clarity of livelihoods situation with regard to conservation. For Cambodia in particular, the links between rural livelihoods interventions and conservation as implemented in this phase are unclear. They tend to be unfocused and executed in “bits-and-pieces” here and there, without a village planning and progress monitoring system. In both countries there are important unaddressed issues such as village development planning, enterprise development, rural credit, partnership with civil society. An important lesson learnt in this regard is that future support to livelihoods activities should be channeled through specialized local NGOs as medium and long-term partners of the Executing Agencies, using a focused village planning of natural resource use and conservation, and corresponding business plans. More attention should be paid to building capacity of beneficiary communities in the use of the tools of village natural resource plans and business plans, market identification for their productions and organization for market access, products quality control, accounts management, and registering as community enterprises.

4.8.5 Project implementation and monitoring

The Project achievements suffered from the non participation of Laos in the implementation Phase. The major weakness has been the of a facilitation approach to get Laos on board. A lesson learnt from this is that all countries concerned by a TBC initiative should manifest in the clearest way that they share the vision and they want to take part in its implementation. A related observation is that the asymmetrical implementation of the 1st Phase of the Project, i.e. before Cambodia joined, led to asymmetrical achievements of the 2nd Phase when results achieved by Thailand are compared to those achieved by Cambodia. The lesson learnt is that further cooperation between two countries through a single project document requires Cambodia to plan a scoping activity in the 3rd Phase in order to have baseline information that is compatible with that of Thailand in the environmental, social and economic aspects of the TBC context.

With the implementation of Phase 2, the Project demonstrated a positive outcome by fostering the ownership of its TBC strategy within government agencies at national level. With the exception Thailand at a certain extent, it has not been effective in integrating all field activities in lower levels of RFD and FA structures. The lesson learnt is that local levels of both Executing Agencies should manage all the Project activities on the ground. The HQs should only be in charge of backstopping, international TBC aspects, disbursing ITTO funds to Project Managers, and relations with ITTO.

The real picture of TBC and community development interventions outcomes cannot be captured because the implementation did not rely on logframe indicators as these were not well defined. An important lesson learnt is that in the 3rd Phase the quality of indicators should be improved and an MES should be designed to allow drawing information from bottom-up. With regard to the monitoring of the achievement of each specific objective, there should be at least one outcome/impact indicator addressing the results in TBC and one addressing those in community livelihoods improvement.

With regard to the implementation of the support to community development activities, a lesson learnt from the difficulties of justifying them in relation to conservation objectives is that the interventions should respond to the following criteria:

- Substantial contribution to forest protection and biodiversity conservation.
- Substantial contribution to livelihoods improvement for the poor communities.
- Results can be sustained without outside subsidies and are replicable.

5. CONCLUSIONS Y RECOMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusions

The Project was evaluated two months before its completion. It resulted very difficult to fully assess its effectiveness in promoting TBC between Thailand, Cambodia and Laos, and achieving livelihoods improvement through its local community development interventions. The reason is that the logframe indicators are defined more as process criteria than as result oriented and measurable targets.

The achievement of outputs relating to specific objectives 1 and 2 was incomplete, due to several reasons. First the design of the Project did not clarify the overall targets to be reached or the targets to be reached by each component. It did not describe relevant and “real” key assumptions to be met for the success of the Project in reaching its specific objectives, and it did not give sufficient weight to the risk that Laos PDR would not join the TBC initiative in the Emerald Triangle.” Second, the livelihood strategy chosen for community development activities, though it is consistent with beneficiaries priority needs, did not follow the SLA framework as it is known and practiced. The way the livelihoods interventions are chosen and executed, outside such a framework, gives the impression of a dispersion of effort in activities that could otherwise support the conservation endeavor. Third, the Project did not do enough to expose the beneficiaries to new ideas of organizing themselves, of finding ways of funding their activities in the future, of producing more and improving marketing of the productions. Fourth, for Cambodia, the deployment of human resources to implement the Project, which is in conformity with what was planned in the Project Document, is not optimal for the actual tasks at field level. Most if not all the members of the Management Team are consecrating only part of their working time to the Project. They are based in Phnom Penh, rather than having offices in the Project area. There is no separation from Project Director position who could be based in FA in Phnom Penh to ensure the link with decision making level and liaison with ITTO, and the Project Manager who should be based in Preah Vihear and should head and coordinate the Project Team for the day to day activities. The distance between staff based in Phnom Penh and the Project area means that planning and working together as a team in the Project area and working with local development partners is not adequately taking place, and visits to villages are not frequent enough. It further means that component managers are not fully

playing their role as facilitators of the development visioning process, which requires mediating national interest and local needs.

The Project made an effort to engage with local communities through its support to livelihoods improvement activities, and had more achievements in local community development. In Thailand an interesting start to promote ecotourism and rural credit in form of revolving funds has been made, and justification with regard to forest resource conservation is always provided. All this work needs up-scaling and consolidation in a 3rd Phase. However the revolving fund practice is hard to justify in a country where rural banking institutions are well developed. Community development activities have been entirely executed by the project's Team, although with considerable support from lower levels of the local RFD services. As a result, these services have not fully developed the capacity to take over from the project. Hence by not engaging sufficiently with local development and environment NGOs and rural banking institutions, the Project missed an opportunity of developing foundations for sustainability of most of its livelihoods improvement results.

In Cambodia, in spite of the Project's effort to engage with local communities, the most of the current livelihoods activities in relation to conservation objectives need a stronger justification. The interventions undertaken need consolidation so that natural resource users can deal with management issues and increase their income. There is still a gap in truly empowering communities to plan and implement their income generating activities due to lack of a clear approach for community engagement. This gap is not only due to poor quality of baseline data and no analysis to scope the livelihood interventions, but to methodological problems as well. Implementation strategy has not developed partnerships for multidisciplinary community development. No rural funding mechanism was included in the implementation of livelihoods activities. While insufficient rice production in Preah Vihear is a prime poverty indicator; the Project has not proposed a strategy to increase rice production and has limited its support to the construction of a rice bank. This is not a question of Project's own resources that are obviously limited, but of seeking partnership with specialized development actors. Support to poultry certainly has a high potential to contribute to income but requires technological input and assistance that the project staff cannot offer (health, feeding, marketing).

Based on the assessment made, this Evaluation is of the opinion that most of the measures for sustainability outlined in the Project Document will perform as far as the management of buffer zones is concerned. It was noted however that the extension of the model to other border protected areas has not yet taken place as planned. As for Cambodia, the sustainability measures were probably hastily designed. Most of them, besides lacking indicators for their monitoring, have not been implemented. Therefore the project is not yet performing as far as laying the foundation for sustainability of its results in Preah Vihear Protected Area is concerned. In this regard, it should be noted that following the request of the PSC in November 2009, sustainability measures were revised and the revision could help in designing the 3rd Phase.

Can TBC in the Emerald Triangle be described as a failure or a success? TBPA's are opportunities for improving biodiversity conservation in border areas, consolidating international cooperation to this effect and providing alternative means of livelihoods to border communities. The project has had an initial success in adding value with regard to these goals, although the results that have been achieved in reaching objectives 1 and 2 are by and large below what was planned. However, the need to cooperate for TBC in the Emerald Triangle is recognized by the governments of both countries. Indeed in spite of the difficult political and diplomatic context between Thailand and Cambodia described in this report, the project Teams of both countries

have been able to meet and exchange. There is an opportunity of building on this spirit for the 3rd Phase to prepare a project proposal with realistic objectives. In this perspective, it will be essential to reassess the key TBC issues in the new environmental, political and socio-economic context in order to provide a factual basis for the formulation of a new proposal.

On a scale of TBC from “low cooperation” characterized by lack of mechanisms for institutional cooperation between parties, to “advanced cooperation” characterized by a high degree of institutional organization and financial autonomy of the TBC initiative, TBC in the Emerald Triangle is about a quarter of the way towards advanced cooperation because it got a boost, first by a joint project implementation agreement, second by a joint PSC and third by the setting up of joint task forces within regular meetings.

5.2 Recommendations

The Evaluation finds that the Project has laid the foundation for TBC between Thailand and Cambodia. It should move into a final phasing out in order to strengthen the technical transboundary conservation aspects despite the problems raised in this report regarding the participation of Laos and the border conflict between Thailand and Cambodia. However, the 3rd Phase Project should adapt its implementation approaches to take into account the challenges of the 2nd Phase, in particular, to meet the circumstances of Laos not joining and to be more relevant to the need of peace at the border between both countries.

The Evaluation recommends continuation of the Project and the design of a 3rd and final Phase of 3 years duration, with particular attention to the following specific recommendations:

To the Executing Agencies

- (10) Revise the Project objectives to make them clear and realistic. Revise the external environment of the Project in order to make an adequate analysis of the risks for achieving these objectives.
- (11) Plan for a project duration of 3 years that should be sufficient for a successful implementation of social development processes.
- (12) Make sure that indicators in the Logframe allow measuring the progress of the Project and demonstrating its results.
- (13) In the preparation of the next phase, make sure that the chain of results, i.e. the logic of the Logframe, is adequately tested. In particular:
 - ✓ Make sure that indicators for the specific objective describe the expected outcomes in form of real development changes;
 - ✓ Include among the indicators those that best capture development changes;
 - ✓ Where necessary, provide baselines and milestones to allow progress to be measured;
 - ✓ Provide an adequate description of key assumption particularly with regards to the specific objective.
- (14) For Thailand, plan a sustainability (i.e. phasing out) phase, with an exit strategy based on the development of the capacities of beneficiaries to maintain the results after the termination of the Project. For Cambodia, the next phase should also serve for establishing the baseline and scaling up.

- (15) For Cambodia, there is need of conducting baseline environmental and socio-economic studies in the next Phase, and provide a stronger link between livelihoods interventions and biodiversity conservation.
- (16) For both components, institutionalize the SLA; requires hiring national SLA experts as part of the project teams.
- (17) Ask beneficiaries contribution in funding community development activities in order to ensure stronger ownership and sustainability.
- (18) Plan activities to build capacity of beneficiary communities in developing natural resources management taking into account the conservation needs.

To both Governments of Thailand and Cambodia

- (4) Both governments should set-up clear institutional mechanisms to promote TBC in the Emerald Triangle.
- (5) Seek strategic partnerships with the civil society, rural banking institutions and the private sector to implement community development activities. In particular, involve in the activities of the Project those NGOs that have a potential of providing support and advisory services to local community natural resource-based enterprises. This requires developing accountability systems such as contracts, M&E systems, and contracts-plans.
- (6) Involve lower levels of RFD for Thailand and FA for Cambodia; this requires:
 - ✓ Training local staff in relevant management, participatory and SLA skills;
 - ✓ Changing the ways of working and work culture, from focus on low enforcement to co-management;
 - ✓ Deploy an adequate number of appropriate staff including the Project Manager at the Protected areas level, keeping only the Project Directors in HQs;
 - ✓ A livelihood specialist who will liaise with Banking institutions and the Civil Society.

To the Government of Cambodia

- (5) Address the issue of project staffing and payroll, as ITTO may not be involved in funding salary supplements of the FA as this is unsustainable.
- (6) Seek ways of integrating the ITTO Project in the Preah Vihear FA in order to avoid a parallel effort to the CALM Project. The overall project effort and approach should be to support provincial and local services to manage the PVPF integrating the TBC and community development dimensions.
- (7) The Project Team should have their office in the Preah Vihear, and Project staff should be 100% on Project activities or conservation activities in the PVPF.
- (8) The design of the 3rd Phase should avoid dangers of sliding towards development activities that are not integrated in the conservation objectives. It should place an emphasis on building the capacity of lower level FA services to carry out conservation work and related community development activities that are essential for engaging with them in conservation endeavor.

- (9) With regard to future local community development activities, collaborate with specialized NGOs, rural banking institutions, agricultural services them in partnership.

To ITTO

- (7) Although TBC does not have to be based on formal agreements, ITTO should encourage participating countries to agree on mechanisms, formal or informal, to ensure adequate governance of the cooperation, effectiveness of biodiversity conservation, strong ownership of the initiative and sustainability of the results.
- (8) Without standards for TBC, it is difficult to assess how projects are performing in developing TBC processes. Based on its past experience with TBC projects, ITTO should provide such standards, showing the minimum requirements of TBC proposals that countries should meet for funding.
- (9) For lesson learning, further facilitate contacts with Laos in order to understand the factors that did not allow its involvement in the Project.
- (10) Develop conditions that should exist in the projects contexts so that the use of revolving funds to support local development activities may be allowed. One these could be that projects should not provide revolving funds if there is no proof that there are no other ways through for ex. rural banking institutions.
- (11) Revise mechanisms for project monitoring and reporting to ensure that projects make use of indicators of the logframe to report on progress.
- (12) Project Teams should view the Logframe as a living document that needs to be revised with approval of the PSC and ITTO Secretariat if necessary based on expert analysis.

ANNEX 1: LIST OF MAIN DOCUMENTS CONSULTED

- Richard E. Salter and Nga Prom, 2009. Mid-term Evaluation of the CALM (Conservation Areas through Landscape Management in the Northern Plains of Cambodia) Project. Project ID: PIMS 2177
- Decha Wiwatwitaya, 2010. Ecological Consultant: Forest Insects. Powerpoint presentation. Forestry Research Center Faculty of Forestry, K.U.
- ITTO 2004. PD 289/04 Rev.1 (F). Management of the Emerald Triangle Protected Forests Complex to Promote Cooperation for Transboundary Biodiversity Conservation between Thailand, Cambodia and Laos (Phase II).
- Governments of Cambodia and Thailand. Various Minutes of PSC Meetings of PD 289/04/04 Rev. 1 (F).
- PD 289/04 Rev. 1 (F). Project Achievements-Cambodia Component. Ppt presentations in the Validation Workshop, Siem Riem, 2010.
- PD 289/04 Rev. 1 (F). Achievements Thailand Component. Ppt presentations in the Validation Workshop, Siem Riem, 2010.
- PD 289/04 Rev. 1 (F) Progress Reports to ITTO.
- Yongyut Trisurat, 2010. Bridging Pha Taem Complex (Phase I) to the Emerald Triangle Protected Forests Complex (Phase II) to Promote Cooperation for Trans-boundary Biodiversity Conservation. Powerpoint Presentation. *Faculty of Forestry, Kasetsart Universit.*

ANNEX 2: EVALUATION PROGRAM IN THAILAND, LAOS AND CAMBODIA

Wednesday 17 March 2010

- Arrival in Bangkok.

Thursday 18 March 2010

- Courtesy visit of the Assistant Director General and Project Director, Royal Forest Department, Thailand.
- Courtesy meeting with the Director General of the Royal Forest Department, Thailand.
- Meeting with Project Staff and Consultants chaired by the Assistant Deputy Director.

Friday 19 March 2010

Flight to Ubon Ratchathani and arrival in Phataem National Park.

Saturday 20 March 2010

- Workshop of Project Staff and stakeholders chaired by the Assistant Director General and Project Manager.
- Discussion of the objectives of the Final Project Evaluation and discussion of the Project achievements with consultants and representatives of primary stakeholders.
- Visit to Pachan and Talong villages to see implementation of Ecotourism activities.

Sunday 21 March 2010

- Visit to Swan Son Village to see agroforestry activities.
- Visit to Nong Rua Village to see activities of a weaving group.
- Visit to Non Song and Ta Toy Villages to see orchid production.
- Meeting in Ubon Ratchathani to discuss the overall achievements with the Project Manager.

Monday 22 March 2010

- Flight to Bangkok.

Tuesday 23 March 2010

- Flight to Vientiane accompanied by a Thai Delegation composed of M. Suchat Kalyawongsa and Mr. Janesak Wichawutipong, Deputy Project Director/Coordinator.

Wednesday 24 March 2010

Meeting with Mr. Savanh Chanthakoummane, Deputy Director of Forest Resource Conservation, and Mr. Bounsouane Phongphichit, Deputy Director of Planning Cooperation and Investment Division, Department of Forestry, Vientiane, Lao PDR.

Thursday 25 March 2010

- Arrival in Phnom Penh, Cambodia.
- Meeting with Mr. Hunter Wailer, Technical Advisor, Forestry Administration
- Meeting with the Mr. Chheang Dany, Project Manager, Forestry Administration, and Ms. Lim Sopheap, Project Team member.

Friday 26 March 2010

- Meeting with Mr. Chheang Dany, Project Manager.
- Meeting with M. Men Phymean, Director, Department of Wildlife and Biodiversity, Forestry Administration, Cambodia.

- Visit of Wildlife Conservation Society Office in Phnom Penh and discussion on CALM Project with M. Tan Setha, Project Manager of CALM Project, and Dr. Hugo Rainy, Technical Advisor.

Saturday 27 March 2010

- Travel to Preah Vihear
- Meeting with the staff of the Preah Vihear Cantonment Forest Administration, and Ms. Sopheap, Project Team member, FA, Phnom Penh.

Sunday 28 March 2010

- Travel to Preah Vihear Protected Area, Chun Station
- Meeting with villagers of Chease and Robun villages and Chun sub-village.
- Visit to Chun sub-village.

Monday 29 March 2010

- Visit to Chease Village
- Travel to Siem Riep.

Tuesday 30 March 2010

- Meeting with M. Hort Sothea, senior Officer of the Department of Wildlife and Biodiversity (Forest Administration) in charge of community outreach coordination in the ITTO Project.

Wednesday 31 March 2010

- Preparation for the Validation Workshop
- Meeting with Meeting with M. Men Phymean, Director, Department of Wildlife and Biodiversity, Forestry Administration, Cambodia.
- Arrival of Project management team in Siem Riep.

Thursday 1 April 2010

- Meeting with Mr. Chheang Dany, Project Manager, and other Project Team Members to review the achievements based on the Logframe indicators.
- Preparation for the Validation Workshop.

Friday 2 April 2010

- Presentation of the preliminary Evaluation findings in the Validation Workshop
- Travel to Bangkok (transit).

Saturday 3 April 2010

Return to Switzerland (arrival 4 April 2010).