

Sustainable Collaborative Forest Management: Meeting the Challenges of Decentralization in Bulungan Model Forest (Indonesia)

Final Report

PD 39/00 Rev.3 (F)

I. Introduction

The project was approved and funded by the Council at its Thirty-second Session in May 2002. The agreement regulating the project implementation was signed in August 2002 and the first disbursement of funds was made on 27 January 2003.

II. Project Objectives

The project was the second phase of a long-term research strategy whose final objective is to achieve long-term forest management for multiple uses integrating social, economic, environmental and silvicultural aspects. The specific objectives of the project were: i) to improve District (Kabupaten) coordination of forest management in the model forest through improved stakeholder participation, conflict management, development of land use plans and monitoring; and ii) to implement sustainable forest management (SFM) in the PT Inhutani II Malinau concession through enhanced harvesting practices, stakeholder coordination, preparation of management plans and monitoring.

III. Project Strategy and Activities

The overall strategy adopted in implementing the project in order to meet the objectives set out in the project document can be summarized as follows:

- At the district level, FORDA and CIFOR worked to provide information, tools and mechanisms to enable stakeholders to have a shared vision for improved decisions on sustainable land allocation and use. As the project had been dealing with land use planning for the entire District, collection of information on existing values and dependency among different stakeholders had also been expanded accordingly. The role of communities at this level was to provide input to the planning process and review, and together with other stakeholders propose management options to discuss their possible impacts. An education and awareness program was developed to explain FORDA and CIFOR's activities to local partners and to determine how to disseminate results more effectively. The core output of these activities was the integrated spatial land use plan for the Malinau District, not confined only to the Bulungan Research Forest (BRF) area;

- At the local level, the district land use plan was implemented in conjunction with a more detailed understanding of the local stakeholders and bio-physical context. The project had to closely work with the peoples living in many villages within the Malinau watershed. The RIL work was to be expanded in order to improve the capacity of the forest managers, communities and local government through training. The training was coordinated by FORDA/CIFOR with the assistance of other such institutions as the Tropical Forest Foundation (TFF) and local university. The result was an increased capacity of the forest managers to take account of biodiversity, community-based forest management and improved silvicultural systems;
- At both district and local levels, it was necessary to improve the understanding of what people value, as well as to manage competition, improve institutions and encourage the adoption of improved practices. A study was conducted to identify impediments to the adoption of recommended practices and to outline methods to encourage people to take up these practices. The study also determined the costs and beneficiaries of improved practices and compared them to experience of other tropical forests.
- CIFOR had employed a field manager to oversee the operational implementation of SFM practices and a Project Coordinator to whom all staff and consultants were accountable.

Project Achievements and Outputs

All planned outputs of the project have been achieved and contributed to the achievement of the specific objectives and objective of the project. The achievements can be summarized as follows:

- Output 1.1: Assessment of stakeholders' values and livelihood options as inputs to the district land use plan had been completed. Values of biodiversity to local people had been identified and promoted and various livelihood options had been explored and promoted through training. Several trainings on the use of wood waste for charcoal, production of wood vinegar, wood carving, handcrafting and mushroom cultivation had been conducted. Fish farming, scent wood (gaharu) cultivation and inoculation had also been introduced to the Punan and other indigenous communities;
- Output 1.2: Recommendations to District officials, forest managers and community leaders about approaches for improving stakeholder participation and conflict solution in land use decisions had been provided. Policy briefs on various topics covering forest concession allocation at District level, customary community and forest, local autonomy land use and process of land use planning, community participation in spatial land use planning, impacts of local autonomy on forest and community, carbon trading, social forestry, transfer of debt for forest sustainability, classification of conservation areas, forest conservation permit, Government Regulations Nos. 34/2002 and 35/2002 and conflict in forestry before and after the reformation era were made available and distributed to relevant stakeholders;
- Output 1.3: An integrated spatial land use plan by District authorities for the model forest. This output was expanded to cover not only the model forest but the entire District area and was achieved by improving and updating the land use plan approved and adopted in 2001. The GIS working group established by the District government 2001 played critical role in this undertaking.

Achievement of above outputs had led to the achievement of Specific Objective 1.

- Output 2.1: Forest managers, both concessionaires and communities trained in Reduced Impact Logging (RIL) and associated practices.

RIL training involving representatives of timber companies, district officials and local communities had been conducted and impacts of RIL and conventional practices on soil erosion and aquatic fauna were assessed. Results of these trainings and assessment had been published and widely disseminated.

- Output 2.2: Integrated SFM plans encompassing the social, technical and environmental issues and implementation of improved harvesting practices based on a watershed unit area.

No forest concession management plan was produced because PT Inhutani II was unable to continue its operations in Malinau due to the changes in the policy of both the central and local governments on forest concession allocation. However, preparatory works had been carried out prior to the revocation of the concession license including collection of socio-economic and bio-physical data on the concession area and mapping activities.

- Output 2.3: Constraints to adoption of practices that promote SFM identified.

A research paper on constraints of RIL adoption had been published as an invited paper to the ITTO_MOF regional workshop on “RIL Implementation in Indonesia with Reference to Asia Pacific Region: Review and Experiences”, a provincial workshop on “Towards Good Forest Governance: Enhancing implementation of SFM through forest certification and RIL” had been held in Balikpapan jointly organized with MOF, WWF and Tropenbos, and a book entitled “Reduced Impact Logging: Concepts and Implementation in Indonesia” had been jointly produced and published in Bahasa in collaboration with CIFOR, Wana Aksara, PT Roda Mas and Tropical Forest Foundation.

As Output 2 was not fully achieved, so was Specific Objective 2.

V. Target Beneficiaries Involvement

A wide range of stakeholders at the national, provincial and local levels had been actively involved in various discussions and consultations that led to the publication and dissemination of the various technical documents, policy papers and books that are beneficial to the stakeholders. The peoples living in and around the forest have particularly benefited through information sharing, trainings on livelihood alternatives and workshops on the various aspects of forest management while the community at large has greatly benefited through the media distribution of information, community group discussions, seminars, workshops and trainings. The number of media hits publishing information on the various activities of the project was steadily increasing during the duration of the project.

VI. Lessons Learnt

Among the important lessons learnt from the implementation of this project are:

- There existed differences in view and perception on SFM amongst stakeholders at the national, provincial and local levels that need reconciling through proper consultative process;
- In some instances, policy on logging operations at national and District levels were in disharmony and created confusion;
- Role of the provincial government in land use planning process was not clearly defined and made the process more complicated at times when it attempted to introduce or include its own interests into the plan;
- The role of the Project Steering Committee had been significant in directing the project operations;
- It would have been more useful to start disseminating results of the project during the course of the project without waiting for its completion to widen awareness of stakeholders on the activities of the Project relating to decentralization process; and
- It was observed that the District officials that initially were lacking interest in SFM could be changed and motivated through the discussions even more through the trainings.

VII. Dissemination of Results

The results of the project had been disseminated nation wide through the workshops, meetings, trainings and stakeholder consultations organized during the course of the project and through publication and dissemination of the various technical documents, policy papers, reports and books. The Completion Report and Technical Reports and other technical documents are available from the Executing Agency and Secretariat upon request.

VIII. Recommendations Related to Future Work

- Specific objective of future project should deal with actual problems facing the district focusing on addressing the challenges and issues on decentralization, good forest governance and improved environment condition;
- Malinau is a newly formed District with rich forest resources; it urgently needs assistance in forest resource allocation decision-making in order to avoid inefficient allocation as experienced by neighboring Districts and in raising commitment among forest concessionaires to implementing SFM practices;
- The deeper the involvement of District officials in the implementation of a project the better the chance to sustaining the project;
- In designing management structure of the project it is not sufficient to only take into account the technical aspect of the project but also the local political settings if the project is to gain political support;

- The PSC should not only evaluate progress in implementation and provide direction to project management but also must evaluate any technical documents produced by scientists and consultants to help ensure quality reporting;
- The District government should develop and implement programs to strengthen the capacities of FMUs to implement RIL practices in line with relevant national government policy, rules and regulations; and
- MOF counterpart staff involved in the project should be maintained and should continue to perform tasks related to the strengthening and smoothing the decentralization process to sustain the gains made in implementation.