

# Development of the Rubberwood Industry in Côte d'Ivoire (Phase I)

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## Final Report

PPD 11/99 Rev.1 (I)

This pre-project aims to relieve the pressure on the natural forests of Côte d'Ivoire by promoting the development of a rubberwood industry. The pre-project has the following specific objectives:

- (i) Improvement of knowledge on existing resources (planted potential, annual logging potential and prospects) with a view to encouraging investment in this sector;
- (ii) Technological and commercial development of rubberwood;
- (iii) Promotion of rubberwood utilization through workshops, exhibitions, publications and audio visual props; and
- (iv) Formulation of a pilot project for the regional development of the rubberwood industry in Africa.

To initiate the pre-project activities, a workshop was convened with the participation of all interested parties in order to discuss pre-project objectives, strategy and activities and to get support for their implementation. The strategy adopted by the pre-project was to identify and engage consultants/experts to carry out studies and present reports in relation elements (i), (ii) and (iv) mentioned above. In this connection, a local consultant was engaged to collect data on existing rubberwood resources; an international consultant from Canada (TECSULT) was engaged to develop the technological and commercial aspects of rubberwood industry in the context of Côte d'Ivoire, and his study was complemented by information provided by the Agriculture Research National Center (INRA); the international consultant assisted the Executing Agency in the formulation of a project proposal to be submitted to ITTO as a follow-up to pre-project activities, and finally, with regard to element (iii) furniture made of rubberwood was produced by the INRA and exhibited during the final workshop organized under the project.

The various interested parties were involved in the all stages of pre-project implementation. In particular, rural communities involved in rubberwood plantation establishment were visited and informed about pre-project objectives and activities as well as the private wood industry sector, and their views were integrated in the development of pre-project activities. Of note is the final workshop organized in December 2003 to discuss the results of the pre-project which attracted over 60 participants including wood industry representatives, and representatives from the communities and other Ministries interested by the development of the rubberwood industry.

The major pre-project outputs and achievements include:

- A thorough information of interested parties on the potential of a rubberwood industry in Côte d'Ivoire;
- A report including data on existing rubberwood resources and their potential to support a sustainable rubberwood industry;
- A report on the technological development of rubberwood industry;
- A report on the economic and financial analysis of the rubberwood sector;
- Rubberwood furniture and other rubberwood products exhibited during the final workshop during which pre-project results and achievements were discussed;
- A project proposal to be submitted to ITTO on the development of rubberwood industry in Côte d'Ivoire.

The initial duration of the pre-project was 12 months, but the country suffered successive civil unrests that hampered its smooth implementation, bringing the actual duration to 46 months. The Executing Agency has now submitted the final reports and a project proposal to follow-up on pre-project activities.