



Environment and climate change

Forest policy and sustainable forest management

The challenge

Forests secure people's livelihoods; they are a source of income and a land reserve. Some 1.6 billion people are dependent on forests for their subsistence. For the world's 350 million people who live in extreme poverty, forests provide a safety net essential to their survival. Forests are also of global importance for the climate, and they harbour more than two-thirds of terrestrial biodiversity.

Despite this, around 13 million hectares of forest are destroyed by human activities every year. Forests must give way to competing land uses that yield higher profits in the short term, or they are exploited destructively in conflict regions. Apart from that, government institutions in many countries are too weak to prevent corruption and illegal activities. The rapid rise in the global demand for biofuels, wood and other forest products increases the risk of over-exploitation and further degradation of the world's forests.

Our approach

We support our partners in introducing sustainable forest management as an intersectoral development strategy and in positioning forest-related interests in the national, regional and international context.

Our services

In addition to providing technical advice, we work to improve the policy framework, identify sustainable ways forward and mediate a balanced approach in all forestry-related matters. We provide services in the following areas:

- **Forest governance:** We provide advice to institutions on the local, national and international level to improve the policy framework and support our partners in practical implementation. Successful and sustainable policy must consider all stakeholder interests. In our projects, we therefore promote the participation of all stakeholder groups and fair benefit-sharing between them. On behalf of the German Government and our

partners, we contribute to and are involved in all relevant international forest policy processes, for example the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF), negotiations on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+) under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), forest-relevant issues within the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) (the European Union process for combating illegal timber trade) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) Committee on Forestry.

- **Sustainable forest management:** Forests are caught up in conflicts over economic, ecological and social demands. The integration of forest protection and use in accordance with the principles of sustainable forest management is therefore essential to ensure the long-term conservation of all ecosystem services. Our repertoire comprises a variety of tools which are applied specifically to each case, for example improving forest legislation and the respective regulatory statutes, developing land-use and forest management plans, zoning and allocating forest area, facilitating community forest management and forest certification, establishing public-private partnerships, improving value creation, and developing financing strategies and/or methods to economically evaluate ecosystem services.
- **Forests and climate change:** Forests play an important role in reducing CO₂ emissions, regulating the water balance and adapting to climate change. On behalf of the German Government, we take part in the international climate negotiations. We offer sound knowledge on the REDD+ process and, in collaboration with our partners, develop national strategies to create the necessary framework conditions for participating in REDD+ and for implementing pilot projects. To strengthen the resilience of ecosystems and the people living within them, we integrate adaptation measures into our projects.



The benefits

Conservation and sustainable use of forests help to reduce poverty, achieve food and income security, maintain biological diversity and tourism potential, reduce CO₂ emissions, secure important environmental services, adapt to climate change and regulate water flows. Sustainable forest management creates employment in production and processing and helps to meet the growing global demand for timber and timber products.

An example from the field

Natural forests account for more than 80 per cent of the 11.5 million hectares of Viet Nam's forests. Although these forests are of paramount importance in protecting watersheds and mitigating the effects of climate change, Viet Nam has lacked practical concepts for the sustainable management of natural forests until now.

Viet Nam's National Forestry Development Strategy aims to create conditions that are conducive to the sustainable management of forest resources by 2020 and to establish timber processing industries that are competitive on international markets. The current conditions in the sector, however, do not support the targeted industrial growth and investment necessary for creating long-term employment opportunities.

The Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH, acting on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), supports the Vietnamese Government in promoting sustainable forest management through a multi-level approach.

The appropriate political and legal environment is currently being established at national level. Targeted training and institutional development measures are building capacities at national and provincial level. A forest policy network helps to promote the implementation of the National Forestry Development Strategy in the provinces.

GIZ has developed the conceptual basis for the sustainable management of natural forests and forest certification, and helps forest enterprises in five pilot provinces in implementing such approaches. A training centre, advisory services for timber-processing businesses, and cooperation with organisations in the timber industry have laid the foundations for an improved valuation of forest products.

Contact

Herbert Christ

E herbert.christ@giz.de

T +49 61 96 79-1282

I <http://www.giz.de/expertise/html/2559.html>

Published by

Deutsche Gesellschaft für
Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

Registered Offices:
Bonn and Eschborn, Germany

Dag-Hammarskjöld-Weg 1-5
65760 Eschborn
T +49 61 96 79-0
F +49 61 96 79-11 15
E info@giz.de
I www.giz.de