



21 Session of the COMMITTEE ON FORESTRY

STRATEGIC EVALUATION OF FAO's ROLE AND WORK IN FORESTRY

Report of the OED External Evaluation Team (EET)

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I. METHODOLOGY

➔ **Evaluation framework**

- ➔ Focus on SOE and 6 Organizational Results
- ➔ Normative and operational work
- ➔ Institutional arrangements
- ➔ Partnerships

➔ **“Evidence-based” findings and conclusions**

- ➔ Included also an assessment of macro-trends in forestry

➔ **Thorough methodological framework (OED)**

- ➔ Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Impact and Sustainability
- ➔ Organization of work



II. SELECTED FINDINGS (1)

STRATEGY AND GOVERNING ARRANGEMENTS

- ⇒ SOE and organizational results difficult to translate into actions
- ⇒ Program less strategic, fragmented and rather demand (resources) driven
 - emphasis affected by voluntary contributions (not FO specific)
- ⇒ COFO relevant for FO priority setting, ... but actions often defined beyond COFO (from “wish list” to “cherry picking”), see 62-79

CAPACITIES AND OUTREACH

- ⇒ Qualified professional staff, but often working in isolation
- ⇒ Potential to improve working relationships at all levels
- ⇒ Potential to improve two-way flow communication and knowledge exchange



II. SELECTED FINDINGS (2)

THEMATIC WORKING AREAS

➔ **Global policy and processes**

- ➔ Weak global forest policy arrangements... but FAO visible
- ➔ New players set new agendas and processes
- ➔ Potential to shape regional level policies not fully tapped

➔ **National forest policy and forest governance**

- ➔ Generally well focused in terms of policy issues
- ➔ Major donor programs drive work (NFP Facility, ACP-FLEGT)
- ➔ Field programmes often scattered, *ad hoc*, not prioritized and disconnected from the global agenda
- ➔ Lack of long-term vision in many country programs (opportunity driven mandates and projects)



II. SELECTED FINDINGS (3)

THEMATIC WORKING AREAS

➔ **Forest Resources Assessment**

- ➔ Effective and efficient delivery (FRA, NFMA, MRV Carbon), but need to improve in (data) quality and transparency

➔ **Forest Resources Management**

- ➔ Last remaining “Knowledge baskets” (biophysical, social) ..but spread too thin, under-resourced and often isolated

➔ **Forest Products and Economics**

- ➔ Global forest statistics performing well through good partnerships, low visibility in forest industries and economics



II. SELECTED FINDINGS (4)

THEMATIC WORKING AREAS

➔ Cross-cutting themes

- ➔ Watershed management, agro-forestry, peri-urban forestry → important cross-sectoral fields, but understaffed and insufficiently resourced
- ➔ Climate change → well resourced (in REDD+/MRV) but more holistic cross-unit approach and leadership needed
- ➔ Social inclusion → forest in poverty alleviation prominent in the work agenda, social groups that may most require assistance generally not targeted
- ➔ Gender aspects not explicitly and systematically included in operational and normative work.



III. CONCLUSIONS (1)

LINKING STRATEGY TO IMPLEMENTATION

- ⇒ SOE and organizational results reflect a forest-centric approach (does not help to break silo mentality)
- ⇒ SOE not sufficiently linked to a core FAO comparative advantage, cross-sectoral work/landscape approach
- ⇒ More focus needed on regional approaches and strategic support at country level
- ⇒ FAO being more strategic and effective in:
 - ⇒ its leadership role in dealing holistically with forests in the international forest regime;
 - ⇒ strengthening its role and responsibilities in the assessment and monitoring of forests; and
 - ⇒ developing the broader role of forests in climate change adaptation and REDD+



III. CONCLUSIONS (2)

OPTIMIZING FAO's UNIQUE MANDATE

- ⇒ Uniqueness of FAO **Forestry Programme** itself, through:
 - ⇒ Its inclusive governance structure (COFO, RCs, RFCs, ...)
 - ⇒ Its resources and information service (FRA, SOFO, FORSTAT...)
 - ⇒ Its technical capacities and know-how (policy, SFM)
 - ⇒ Its presence at global level, in regions and countries
- ⇒ Under **one roof is the expertise** to deal with most land uses and related water and other natural resources management challenges and opportunities
- ⇒ Expertise and capacity to address **landscape management**, in particular deforestation and agricultural/livestock/ bioenergy production



III. CONCLUSIONS (3)

PRIORITIZING WORK, COLLABORATING WITH OTHERS

- ➔ **Convening power** is still there, needs to be set into perspective: Better communication of FAO's unique position and strategic orientation is key
- ➔ FAO needs to accept that it **cannot do everything** and there are new and other institutions (and partners) that can do the job. FAO should
 - ➔ Lead in some areas (where it can over more than others)
 - ➔ Work jointly with others in some areas
 - ➔ Leave some areas for others to do.
 - ➔ E.g. Areas with high potential to collaborate with others: Forest Resources Management and Forest Products and Economics



IV. THE WAY FORWARD (1)

MAJOR RECOMMENDATIONS TO FAO

- ⇒ Adopt a holistic approach to forests and tree outside forests to directly contribute to meeting all the strategic objectives of FAO and its members
 - ⇒ Focus on the overall role of FAO (food security, poverty alleviation, sustainable use of NR – the MDGs)
- ⇒ In close partnership with others, be more proactive and strategic in positioning forests and forestry in the global change agenda
 - ⇒ A global leadership role in forests & forestry is needed more than ever; and FAO is a logical entity to fill such a role, in partnership with other key entities.
- ⇒ Strengthen modalities for linking knowledge and expertise on forestry across the organization, including global, regional and national levels
 - ⇒ Address efficiency and effectiveness to deal with forests and land-use within the organization and with countries and priority partners.



IV. THE WAY FORWARD (2)

COFO MEMBERS AND FAO TO RECOGNIZE...

- ➔ FAO's unique position to deal with sustainable land and other natural resources management and use **overall**, including where forests are a central component
- ➔ FAO's comparative advantage in being both a **technical and a policy organization** (and the only one in forestry)
- ➔ FAO's **need and ambition** to be strategic rather than opportunity driven (the former is needed to remain relevant)
- ➔ FAO's need for **a more rational base for regular funding** (not becoming an implementing agency for various interests with resources)



V. SUMMING IT UP

- ➡ **The FAO Forestry Programme is alive and well.**
- ➡ **But it can contribute much more** in terms of helping member countries deal with the forest-related land and other natural resources challenges and opportunities facing them in their quest for improved food security, poverty reduction and environmental sustainability.
- ➡ **To realize these greater contributions**, FAO as a whole, Members, and Donors need to think and act more holistically and synergistically and focus on those forest-related programmes that (1) best can contribute to all basic goals of FAO and its members, and (2) take advantage of FAO's unique comparative advantages.

THANK YOU!