



Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
United Nations

## Office of Evaluation

### FAO Finland Forestry Programme - GCP/GLO/194/MUL

*Management response to the final evaluation report*

# Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

## Office of Evaluation (OED)

This report is available in electronic format at: <http://www.fao.org/evaluation>

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## **Management response and follow-up report on the final evaluation of the FAO Finland Forestry Programme - GCP/GLO/194/MUL**

### **Overall response to the evaluation**

The Agreement between the Government of Finland and FAO was signed in March 2009 with an initial budget of 14 million euros for four years. Following FAO's request, Finland granted the Programme additional funding of 1.25 million euros and an extension until the end of 2014. After the results of the Final Evaluation (FE) were published, the Programme was granted an additional one year extension with a budget of 1 million euros. Thus the original four year Programme was extended to last six years in total with an overall budget of 16.25 million euros.

The FE was initiated in 2014 and finalized in May 2015, is generally positive and Management found it constructive and useful.

As pointed out by the FE, the Programme is complex and probably overambitious. Regardless of that, the Programme has managed to significantly strengthen the capacity of the pilot countries to collect, analyse and use multipurpose forest information for planning and implementation of Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) and on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries (REDD), as recognized by the FE.

Although the FE captures well most of the main achievements of the Programme, it seems to underestimate the impact of the technical support and forest information system development work which has taken place mainly at FAO headquarters. The Open Foris Initiative, which was officially released during the evaluation, has been instrumental in improving pilot countries' capacity to conduct forest inventories, socioeconomic surveys and related analysis. After the official launch of the Initiative at the 2014 IUFRO World Conference, the tools have been used to support capacity building in more than 30 countries. The development of these tools, and provision of related technical support, has been a fundamental component in increasing the Programme's delivering efficiency in the countries.

Finally, we agree with the observation that although it is too early to assess the long-term impact of the Programme, the pilot countries show good progress in reporting on their forest resources and their use. To assure that this progress results in improved sustainability of forest management requires a long-term commitment of both the donors and the pilot country governments.

Management response and follow-up report on the final evaluation of the FAO Finland Forestry Programme - GCP/GLO/194/MUL					Date
Evaluation Recommendation (a)	Management response (b) <b>Accepted</b> , partially accepted or <b>rejected</b>	Management plan			
		Actions to be taken, and/or comments about partial acceptance or rejection (c)	Responsible unit (d)	Timeframe (e)	Further funding required (Y or N) (f)
<b>Recommendation 1 to FAO and the Government of Finland</b>  A second phase is highly recommended to consolidate the partner countries projects' achievements and strengthen their capacities in analysing the huge quantities of National Forest Inventories (NFI) data for their use in policy-making and development planning processes.	<b>Accepted</b>	FAO Forestry foresaw the need for Phase II of the Programme in 2014 and submitted related concept note to the Government of Finland. Due to the lack of funds the proposal was not accepted, but in 2015 the current phase of the Programme was granted a one-year extension with an additional funding of 1 million euros. The extension phase will focus on maintenance and further development of Open Foris Initiative and on targeted support on analysis and use of NFI data in the original five pilot countries. The preparation of the proposal for the Phase II will be initiated in 2015.	FOM	Third Quarter of 2015	Y
<b>Recommendation 2 to FAO on improving Programme and project designs</b>  It is recommended that when designing projects aiming at policy, institutional and forest management practices, FAO should formulate realistic outcomes that should lead to the attainment of impacts.	<b>Accepted</b>	After the formulation of the Programme's project document FAO has established new Strategic Objectives (SOs) and developed clear output indicators for all SOs in collaboration with M&E experts. In June 2015, an overview of and guidance on development of output indicators for each SO was published to support work planning for 2016-2017.  These guidelines, and the recently revised Project Cycle which facilitates alignment of the project outcomes with the SOs, will be used in the formulation of the Phase II proposal.	FAO	Ongoing	N
<b>Recommendation 3 to FAO on gender mainstreaming</b>  FAO/Programme management should deliberately strengthen gender mainstreaming in project design to	<b>Accepted</b>	The UN System-Wide Action Plan (SWAP) on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women was endorsed in October 2006, as a means of accelerating gender equality and women's empowerment within the policies and programmes of the UN system. FAO's policy on gender equality was published in 2013 with a goal of achieving	FAO	Ongoing	N

reflect its commitment to gender equity and the priorities of the beneficiary countries.		<p>equality between men and women in sustainable agricultural production and rural development for the elimination of hunger and poverty.</p> <p>The Programme has contributed to the gender mainstreaming by promoting and supporting collection of gender disaggregated data in the pilot countries. In Zambia, the analysis of the socioeconomic household data was supported by an Associate Professional Gender Officer to have a clear focus on gender and especially women. In addition, the Programme has consistently promoted the participation of women in the capacity building activities. This approach will be continued and strengthened in FAO Forestry's forthcoming projects and programmes.</p>			
<p><b>Recommendation 4 to FAO and partner countries</b></p> <p>It is recommended that FAO's programme management and partner countries should start discussions about institutional and financial sustainability at the stage of project design.</p>	Accepted	<p>FAO Forestry recognizes the diverse challenges of institutionalization in the pilot countries. However, our impression is that rather than being a financial issue, the problems in sustaining the monitoring systems are more often related to insufficient technical capacity or lack of political commitment to sustain these processes. As the country specific institutionalization bottlenecks can often be recognized only during the implementation or post-project setting, formulation of an evidence-based sustainability strategy at the design stage is challenging.</p> <p>Nevertheless, FAO Forestry agrees with this recommendation and will emphasize the importance of initiating sustainability related discussions at early stages of project design with the aim of allowing the projects and their delivery mechanisms to assure countries' ability to continue with the core activities also after the project.</p>	FOM and partner countries	Ongoing	N