

Programme Evaluation Series

[04/2022](#)

Evaluation of the FAO-EU forest law enforcement, governance and trade programme

Phase III

Project codes: **GCP/GLO/600/MUL** and
GCP/GLO/397/EC

Follow-up report

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<p>Recommendation 1.</p> <p><i>To FAO, EC, FCDO and SIDA</i></p> <p>Develop a strategy based on taking away (institutional, fiscal, technical, political) barriers to scale the results of the FLEGT Programme to increase impact. In line with this, the development of a new global programme could be considered (Conclusions 1, 2, 6).</p> <p>As concluded by this evaluation, the programme's results are significant but distributed over many themes and geographic areas. There is not much impact yet in forest governance at the national level of improved timber legality at the national and international level. To do this, any programme that builds on the FAO-EU FLEGT programme results or activities, should target scaling and consolidation. Apart from the foreseen programme funded by AFD in eight VPA countries (which continues with a similar modality of support to various partners through small grants), national level projects are required that focus on taking away (institutional, fiscal, technical, political) barriers for scaling. This can be part of a broader vision of reducing deforestation. Rather than "spreading out thin", FLEGT partners should consider targeting specific countries where impact is more likely and leave other countries. Any new programme related to the FLEGT-VPA process should be linking its intervention to national TOC and roadmaps (when</p>	Accepted	<p>FAO agrees that the experience to date confirms there are substantial benefit to linking forest sector support to tangible trade incentives and disincentives. FAO will continue to work closely with forward-looking consumer countries and/or trading blocks, recognizing their responsibility to drive legal and sustainable trade and will propose trade-related incentives to responsible producer countries.</p> <p>At the institutional level, these objectives align well with FAO's new Strategic Framework for 2022-2031 which seeks to transform to more efficient, inclusive, resilient and sustainable agri-food systems for better production, better nutrition, a better environment, and a better life.</p> <p>FAO is committed to developing new work programmes within this strategic framework to support legal and sustainable value chains for commodities that contribute to deforestation and forest degradation, in alignment with partner priorities, including ongoing FAO-EU Strategic Dialogues on</p>	<p>The recommend strategy is embedded in the FAO Forestry Programme's work that aims to generate transformational impacts that benefit forests and forest-dependent people through three interlinked thematic priorities related to the protection, restoration and sustainable use of forest resources.</p> <p>Based on the recommendations provided by the 26th Committee on Forestry, FAO work in these areas supports countries with technical expertise to strengthen policies, inclusive financial mechanisms, access to markets, transparency, and legal and institutional arrangements to halt deforestation, promote ecosystem restoration and enhance legal and sustainable wood production and trade.</p> <p>These combined approaches are expected to contribute to removing the (institutional, fiscal, technical, political) barriers to scale up results and impacts of the FAO-EU FLEGT Programme and integrate them into a broader strategy - that goes beyond the forestry sector - to reduce deforestation.</p> <p>Indeed, recognising the multiple linkages between agriculture and forestry - including the underlying drivers of deforestation – FAO promotes greater policy coherence between these two sectors, including</p>	Advancing	

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<p>these are well developed, together with other donors programmes).</p> <p>In line with this recommendation, FAO in conversation the FLEGT partners, should consider developing a new global programme building on lessons and strengths of the FAO-EU FLEGT programme. This programme should focus on scaling the positive results to a broader vision of reducing deforestation and apply FLEGT III's expertise to promote legal and deforestation-free commodities trade, in collaboration with other FAO initiatives.</p>		<p>climate change and sustainable value chains.</p> <p>With legality as the foundation for demonstrating sustainability, support can be extended to national efforts to assure and promote the production of deforestation-free agricultural commodities and/or jurisdiction/landscape level enforcement and monitoring of legal and deforestation-free commodities production and trade. New global programme design will incorporate lessons learnt from not only the FAO-EU FLEGT Programme but also other related FAO-led initiatives including work beyond the forestry division. Inputs are particularly relevant from the areas of climate change mitigation, governance and trade, MSMEs and community producers, and forest landscape restoration.</p> <p>The concept for a new global programme specifically targeting forest governance and wood value chains has been drafted and is being further developed through discussion within FAO and with potential partners.</p>	<p>through integrated land use planning, landscape approaches, secured access to land, support to MSMEs, as well as the development of inclusive verification and certification systems for wood and other commodities in response to due diligence requirements and procurement policies.</p> <p>In this context, the forthcoming FAO-OECD Business Handbook for Deforestation and Due Diligence in Agricultural Supply Chains can contribute to strengthen due diligence, traceability, and other sustainability assurance instruments and be linked to EU Regulation on commodities and products associated with deforestation and forest degradation.</p> <p>All these considerations will be incorporated in the design of a new global programme on Legal and Sustainable Wood (LSW). Building on experience from the FAO-EU FLEGT programme, this envisaged new programme will aim to support the strengthening of robust, cost-effective and inclusive systems that assure sustainable forest management, improved forest governance, and connect wood supply and demand for green growth, linking country support to national TOC and roadmaps.</p>		

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<p>Recommendation 2.</p> <p><i>To FAO</i></p> <p>Ensure sustainability of the results of this specific programme that will soon close, through a sustainability-strategy to increase collaboration within FAO, develop new initiatives, support to SPs and countries to develop their own sustainability plans (Conclusions 5, 7).</p> <p>With FLEGT III, the FAO-EU FLEGT programme comes to an end after three phases, and many outputs and outcomes have been achieved, at many levels (local, national, regional, global). As concluded by this evaluation, the programme's results are significant, distributed over many themes and promoted by many partners, and have generated some initial impact. However, without further support the sustainability of results is moderately unlikely. Because the future of the FLEGT-VPA process is currently uncertain, FAO will need to assume a diversified approach to achieve further sustainability of FLEGT-related activities and results at global level. Therefore, the FAO needs to develop a sustainability strategy with a series of actions, consisting of (among others):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Plan concrete collaboration with associated FAO efforts to address climate change mitigation and deforestation, increase legal and sustainable production and improve small producer livelihoods, which can embed 	Accepted	<p>As noted above, FAO is committed to developing new global programme/s to build on the results of the FAO-EU FLEGT Programme together with related initiatives to address legal and sustainable commodity production and trade. FAO also sees the value of regional approaches, which can connect country-level projects. In this process, the Programme PMU is leading FAO internal collaboration within the forestry division (FFF, REDD+, and FLRM), and with GEF and GCF projects.</p> <p>The ability of FAO to develop specific national, regional and global projects as recommended depends largely on funding opportunities that arise.</p> <p>The design of new programmes at global and regional level will use the experience in delivery of the FAO-EU FLEGT Programme to address their long-term sustainability. An internal assessment in 2021 captured specific actions to increase sustainability of project support to partners in beneficiary countries, and a number of Programme</p>	<p>The work of the FAO-EU FLEGT Programme is expected to have laid the foundations for continued improvements in target countries' forest sector. Support to legal reforms, systems development and capacity-building all contributed to the sustainability of different impacts achieved by the Programme.</p> <p>Furthermore, results of the FAO-EU FLEGT Programme align well with FAO's Programme Priority Areas (notably BP1 and BN5) and are strategically integrated in FAO work in support of global, regional and national efforts to reduce deforestation and mitigate climate change through improved forest policies and governance, stronger legal and sustainable value-chains related to forestry, agroforestry and agriculture products, and better livelihoods for small producers and forest dependent communities.</p> <p>In this context, FAO stands ready to scale up support to sustainable wood value chains - at country and global policy level – to reduce deforestation, achieve carbon neutrality and build more resilient bio-economies in response to the Ministerial Call on Sustainable Wood launched at the 2022 World Forestry Congress and within key</p>	Advancing	

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<p>results of FLEGT III programme, provide continuation and promote scaling. This should start with FAO's work in REDD+, UN-REDD and FFF (in areas where they coincide) but also connect other FAO initiatives such as Global Environment Facility (GEF) and Green Climate Fund (GCF) projects targeting forest management. The extended funding from SIDA to FAO is an adequate basis for the design of the sustainability-strategy.</p> <p>ii. FAO should develop a series of projects at national, regional and global level based on results of the FLEGT III, targeting consolidation and scaling and including capable SPs from the programme. Projects could be presented to the current donors (particularly EU delegations, UK forest programmes) or other donors.</p> <p>iii. FAO should provide technical support to SPs to develop their own sustainability strategy and provide connection to an eventual new global programme (see recommendation 1), and/or to other initiatives and potential donors. This should be linked to the final conversations/evaluations with the SPs at project termination.</p> <p>iv. Together with key programme partners, FAO should develop national-level exit-strategies targeting to sustain the implementation of current roadmaps. Among others, this should</p>		<p>partners have already demonstrated the ability to maintain work beyond their project life cycle.</p> <p>As a small grants programme designed to complement national forest governance processes, the FAO-EU FLEGT Programme was able to deliver flexible support to national stakeholders engaged in VPA countries, and selected non-VPA countries. FAO support was guided by country roadmaps or work plans that include action by other donor partners and national governments. The national plans will continue, to varying degrees, beyond the life of the FAO-EU FLEGT Programme, therefore individual exit strategies at this time are not considered the best use of remaining time and resources. Rather, FAO will use the available resources in 2022 to conduct limited, complementary studies as needed to connect the experience of national partners in the design of future support.</p>	<p>regional thematic strategies such as the EU Forest Partnerships.</p> <p>In addition, recognising the multiple linkages between agriculture and forestry, and that halting deforestation requires taking action beyond the forest sector, FAO supports inter-sectoral approaches such as with the EU Sustainable Cocoa Initiative aiming to halt deforestation and improve the living income for farmers through policy dialogue, capacity building of smallholders and farmers cooperatives, and the development of systems and standards for sustainability.</p> <p>Experience from the FLEGT Programme in MSMEs support and in designing and implementing systems and standards in the forest sector can bring significant lessons learned to ensure that countries develop systems for the cocoa sector - as well as for other land-use sectors - that are inclusive and appropriate to their context.</p> <p>All these engagements – implemented through existing and planned FAO initiatives and facilities such as SW4SW, REDD+, FFF, FLRM and the envisaged LSW Programme - will provide continuation to the FLEGT Programme work, ensuring the sustainability of its interventions and the</p>		

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target the sustainability of individual programme results with public and private, domestic and international funding.			scaling up of its achieved results and impacts even beyond the wood sector.		
<p>Recommendation 3. <i>To FAO-PMU</i></p> <p>Ensure application of gender equity and social inclusion monitoring and systematize lessons (Conclusion 4).</p> <p>The programme had a good gender and social inclusion vision and promoted this in most activities. Despite some emerging success stories of gender and social inclusion, the programme has not systematically monitored gender equity throughout, has provided limited evidence on women empowerment and has erratically mainstreamed other social inclusion aspects (youth, IP, poor people). At the same time, the programme has this wealth of insights and data. Therefore, it is recommended that the PMU complements the final reporting of the programme (see also recommendation 5) with complete GESI indicators, systematically monitored (incl. individual project reports and roadmap) and include data beyond female participation to cover inclusion and empowerment of women, youth, IP, small enterprises etc. Also, in addition to the ongoing country-level studies on gender (in Viet Nam, Honduras, Côte d'Ivoire), as part of capitalization the PMU could direct a specific study</p>	Accepted	<p>The PMU will ensure that all available M&E data as per Programme logframe is compiled and used to provide the best possible analysis of results and impact related to gender and livelihoods as part of Phase III final reporting. During 2022 FAO will design and at least one complementary study to further analyze Programme impact on gender, equity and empowerment, income generation and decent employment among women, youth, IP, forest-dependent communities and other vulnerable groups. These studies will be forward-looking and help identify possible actions in future programming.</p> <p>The studies will also suggest a more comprehensive and practical analytical framework for gender and inclusion and several SMART indicators and means of verification for effective monitoring of future FLEGT-related interventions.</p>	<p>Gender and livelihoods were integrated in the final report's impact analysis (see notes in recommendation 5 below), through Programme Logframe data (where available), studies and reports from grantees and partners, and lessons learnt from relevant projects.</p> <p>Although 3 key studies on gender mainstreaming (in Cote d'Ivoire, Honduras, and Vietnam) were published, due to lack of financial and human resources, the additional Programme-level study was not carried out. However, the design of a new programme on Legal and Sustainable Wood will capitalize on the lessons learnt and recommendations from the FAO-EU FLEGT Programme's impact analysis to further improve gender equity and social inclusion in its projects' design, including stronger transformative approaches and the use of GESI indicators.</p>	Advancing	

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on impact indicator 5, and include other traditionally marginalized societal groups.		They will build on the findings from lessons learnt including studies in Latin America that identify the importance of clarifying the context in which support is delivered, and therefore the expectations of impact that a project can have. In summary, FAO agrees that there is benefit in additional investment to review the Programme’s work with the aim of identifying GESI indicators that can be use in future support. However it is not feasible to retro-actively apply GESI indicators in the final reporting process as these are not sufficiently detailed in the existing logframe or design of intervention.			
<p>Recommendation 4. <i>To FAO-PMU</i></p> <p>Enhance knowledge management, communication and outreach to secure the programme’s legacy and provide a solid basis for any possible new global programme (Conclusions 7, 8).</p> <p>Given that with FLEGT III, the FAO-EU FLEGT programme comes to an end after three phases, the period until March 2022 will cover the last months of implementation of this programme. During the three phases of the Programme, many outputs and outcomes have been achieved, much</p>	Accepted	FAO will use the final Phase III reporting process to analyze which outreach activities and knowledge products worked best to raise awareness and improve practices. This analysis will identify practices and outputs that are worth replicating, and will orient the development of communication strategies for future FAO support to legal and sustainable production and trade of wood and other commodities. FAO does not	The Programme’s legacy was fully captured in a series of thematic publications: Transformational Change, and legality Compliance for MSMEs/Legal and Sustainable Forest Value chains (in collaboration with the UNREDD Programme)/Timber Traceability/Stakeholders Participation/Women in Timber trade; as well as a broader publication presenting Programme results and impacts reported in the terminal report.	Good	

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<p>knowledge gathered, many lessons learned and insights gained. To secure the Programme’s legacy, and provide a solid basis for any possible new programme, the FAO-PMT should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Design a knowledge management strategy (to be implemented by FAO) that ensures that data, publications, contacts, meeting minutes, etc. are stored permanently, transparently and accessibly. ii. Consider broadening the capitalization process, currently under implementation, with more thematic areas (e.g. strengthening research basis for FLEGT, IFM, South-South collaboration etc.). iii. c. Prepare a communication campaign of project results and lessons, targeting audience beyond the strict forest sector. Show the reach/engagement of the communication products/platforms (including statistics) and show examples of subsequent results (e.g. a good example the monitoring report from IFM in Indonesia that lead to corrective actions). 		<p>consider it value added to retro-actively develop a new knowledge management strategy at this point in Phase III.</p> <p>FAO completed an extensive process to document lessons learnt from the FAO-EU FLEGT Programme in the areas of private sector support, legal reform, and gender inclusion. The results were widely disseminated at the end of 2021, after the final evaluation process. Lessons learnt in timber traceability will be available by the end of Q2 2022. Complementary studies can be conducted in 2022 as funds allow.</p> <p>All published knowledge and communication products will be available on FAO and other websites such as the EU’s Capacity4dev platform. In 2022, the PMU will make use of global and regional events (WFC, International Day of Forests, Regional Forestry Commission meetings, etc.) to further present and share knowledge and communication products. During 2022, FAO will further disseminate all available</p>	<p>Complementary studies were not produced due to lack of financial and human resources.</p> <p>Communication products and outreach were presented exhaustively in the final report, and the Programme PMU made extensive use of global and regional events throughout 2022, including the World Forestry Congress, FAO’s Committee on Forestry and COP28, to highlight achievements, share success stories and lessons learnt, and disseminate key publications and tools. The Programme also organized a Forest Technical Network event in Q4 2023 on the theme of support to MSMEs to further disseminate lessons learned.</p>		

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		outputs from the FLEGT Programme through channels beyond NFO to reach a wide audience.			
<p>Recommendation 5. <i>To FAO-PMU</i></p> <p>Finalize reporting and systematization with the help of a monitoring specialist (Conclusion 8). The final months of such a complex programme imply many monitoring and reporting activities. The planned monitoring activities of indicators is incomplete and needs much additional work. Also, to capitalize on lessons learned and ensure the legacy of the current programme and possible development of a new programme, additional activities are recommended (see recommendation 4). Therefore, it is recommended to recruit a monitoring specialist to come with a solution for progress-monitoring (reporting) and the creation of targets for the outputs and outcomes that can value the achievements. Monitoring should also connect in retrospect, the achievements to the roadmaps and ToC, including an assessment of underlying assumptions as well as include attention to gender equity and social inclusion (see recommendation 3). This work could eventually be included in the programme extension supported by SIDA and possible further continuation of programme activities.</p>	Partially accepted	<p>Previous attempts to bring in external expertise to improve Programme M&E and reporting, both at the end of Phase II and mid-term evaluation of Phase III, was not conclusive. Therefore, FAO is developing a process using internal team members' skills and detailed knowledge of the Programme to capture impacts for final Phase III reporting at country and programme level. A monitoring specialist could be hired to help develop logframes for new projects and programmes as they are designed during 2022.</p> <p>It was agreed with the SC in 2019 not to include targets in the logframe. The retrospective creation of targets for outputs and outcomes is not recommended, as this could result in a subjective assessment or an inaccurate estimation of programme achievements.</p> <p>FAO will use the current logframe and available data to provide a cost-effective analysis of programme</p>	<p>Data for the Programme's logical framework was successfully collected by the PMU and presented in the final report, and although targets were absent, numerous successful outcomes and achievements were highlighted.</p> <p>Further, in an effort to analyze Programme impact, the PMU designed a specific TOC mapping 3 impact pathways, drawing upon available data (project reports, country & partner agencies) and closely linked to CIFOR's research on FLEGT Action Plan impact evidence gathering (an initiative sponsored by the Programme).</p> <p>This impact analysis yielded lessons on a number of areas and built a strong foundation for future interventions through the LSW Programme, including necessary improvements in impact monitoring from the onset of activities, inclusion of GESI indicators, and creating linkages, where applicable, with the now available FLEGT-AP Theory of Change.</p>	Advancing	

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		<p>outcomes and impacts, and will link Programme contributions to country roadmaps and ToC as part of the country level reporting. Specific attention will be paid to gender and social inclusion as an area of work that is acknowledged to need additional analysis, but within the scope of the data that the Programme has been able to collect.</p> <p>As noted above, FAO will conduct a study to further capture impact in this area.</p> <p>FAO conducted an experience capitalization exercise for the FAO-EU FLEGT Programme that looked at the thematic areas of MSME support, multi-stakeholder participation in policymaking, and gender. The results of this exercise will be used in both the final reporting for Phase III and FAO design of future work programming.</p>			

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