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CONFERENCE

Thirty-eighth Session

Rome, 15-22 June 2013

Presentation of the Edouard Saouma Award 2012-2013

Executive Summary

The Edouard Saouma Award pays tribute to Edouard Saouma, FAO Director-General from 1976 to 1993. The Award is presented biennially to a national or regional institution, which has implemented with particular efficiency a project funded by the Technical Cooperation Programme. The Award for 2012-2013 is being granted to the Kenya Forest Service, for their implementation of TCP/KEN/3204 - "Sustainable livelihood development in the Mau forest complex".

1. The Edouard Saouma Award, a biennial award conferred to a national or regional institution which has implemented with particular efficiency a project funded by the Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP), was established under FAO Conference Resolution 2/93.
2. The Award consists of: (i) a medal inscribed with the name of the recipient institution; (ii) a scroll describing its achievements; (iii) a cash prize of USD 25 000; (iv) travel to FAO headquarters in Rome by a representative of the winning institution to participate in the Award Ceremony and to receive the award on behalf of the institution.

Selection of the Winning Institution

3. The Edouard Saouma Award Selection Committee, chaired by the Director-General and comprising the Independent Chairperson of the Council, and the Chairpersons of the Programme and Finance Committees, selects the winning institution. The selection is made from a short-list drawn up by an Ad Hoc Interdepartmental Screening Committee, chaired by the Deputy Director-General and comprising the Assistant Directors-General of all the headquarters departments, the Legal Counsel and the Director of the Office for Communication, Partnerships and Advocacy as Secretary.
4. Nominations are submitted by national or regional institutions to FAO Representatives or UNDP Resident Representatives, for endorsement and eventual submission to the FAO department in charge of the project's backstopping.

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5. This year, the Award is conferred to the Kenya Forest Service.

Kenya Forest Service (KFS)

(TCP/KEN/3204 - “Sustainable livelihood development in the Mau forest complex”)

6. The TCP project was launched to facilitate increased adoption of sustainable livelihood activities by communities living adjacent to forests and protected areas. The project aimed to assist in the restoration of the ecological integrity of the area and also to bring together different ethnic groups to work under the umbrella of Community Forestry Associations (CFA), following a series of political and ethnic disputes which had exploded as part of the nationwide post-election violence in December 2007 and January 2008. The project’s main objective was to facilitate the development of ecologically friendly livelihoods and effective natural resource management (NRM) for the watershed through re-established, multi-ethnic CFAs.

7. The project focused on the integrated application of two FAO-developed tools - Farmer Field Schools (FFS) and RuralInvest, which succeeded in increasing the incomes of 700 forest-dependent poor households (3 500 people) and contributed to peace among opposing ethnic groups. Through increased productivity and diversification of production, the forest-adjacent communities have become more resilient to external socio-economic shocks, including climate change. This has reduced the over-reliance of communities on forestry resources and provided on-farm goods and services that would otherwise be obtained from the forest ecosystems. According to the District Forest Office, the number of illegal forest activities has significantly decreased within the project area.

8. The KFS Forest Conservation fund established under the project has demonstrated the potential for repaid RuralInvest loans to further support investments in forestry and contribute to long term growth of the national forest sector.

9. KFS took full responsibility for project implementation by allocating additional budget, assigning staff members to various project tasks and setting up and running a dedicated field office. The Service also created a Public-Private Partnership (PPP) with Equity Bank, to link beneficiaries to external financing for income generation activities and demonstrated high interest in the project through regular visits to project sites and FFS graduation ceremonies, providing appropriate seed sources to ensure quality products and introducing measures to link farmer producers to markets. KFS has demonstrated ownership of the FFS and RuralInvest tools and boldness in the piloting and adoption of new and effective technologies.

10. Based on the good results gained through this project, KFS and the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) have developed a **new EUR 2.3 million project**, “Innovative Approaches Towards Rehabilitating the Mau Forest Ecosystem” in the Northern Mau Forest to replicate the entire approach. KFS has also initiated discussions with donor communities to replicate the approach in other areas and the PPP developed with Equity Bank is also being used in KFS’s Support to Community Based Farm Forestry Enterprises in Semi-Arid Areas in Kenya, financed by the World Bank. The project has inspired the Government’s Policy and Vision 2030 objectives for enhancing public private partnerships in development initiatives. The project’s 12 FFS master trainers and 18 qualified farmer field facilitators have also become a centre of project sustainability.