Minutes of the online meeting

The Economics of Ecosystem Restoration

First results of the piloting phase on costs, framework on data collection on benefits and outreach and communication

Thursday, 17 September 2020
16h00-18h00 Rome time

On July 2020, the first version of the TEER template for data collection on costs was shared with selected projects suggested by partners to be part of the piloting phase. Six projects responded to the questionnaire, providing also feedbacks that will be used to improve the final version.
In July 2020, the work package on benefits also started, under the lead of the World Resources Institute (WRI) and a first document on potential benefits variables from which information could be collected was prepared. This document builds on the information on context and baseline of the restoration interventions that are already included in the version of the data collection template that was used for the piloting phase.

This online meeting aimed to:

- present the first results and feedback received by project managers on the questionnaire for data collection on costs;
- to discuss further improvement of the questionnaire for data collection on costs
- present framework that will be used to develop the questionnaire for data collection on benefits;
- discuss outreach and communication of TEER with proposals of side event and participation to upcoming conferences.

Agenda

16h00 - 16h15 Participants join the call, welcome and technical instructions (moderator: V. Garavaglia, FAO)

16h15 - 16h20 Agenda and objectives of the online meeting (V. Garavaglia, FAO)

16h20 - 16h35 First results of the piloting phase on costs (B. Bodin, FAO/CBD)

16h35 - 16h50 Framework for data collection on benefits (H. Ding, WRI)

16h50 – 17h20 Discussion on the piloting phase on costs and framework on data collection on benefits (moderator: V. Garavaglia, FAO)

17h20 – 17h30 Outreach and communication of TEER: XV World Forestry Congress 2021 and other events (Nathanael Pingault, CIFOR)

17h30 – 17h40 Discussion on communication and outreach (moderator: V. Garavaglia, FAO)

17h40 – 17h55 Any other business (moderator: V. Garavaglia, FAO)

17h55-18h00 Conclusions and closure (C. Besacier, FAO)

Participants

	Name and surname	**Organization**
1	Gotor, Elisabetta	Bioversity International
2	Kettle, Christopher	Bioversity International
3	Kozicka, Marta	Bioversity International and CIAT

4	Pingault, Nathanael	Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR)
5	Moolenar , Simon	Commonland
6	Janishevski, Lisa	Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)
7	Finegold, Yelena	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)
8	Aga, Yoshihiko	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)
9	Walji, Khalil	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)
10	Besacier, Christophe	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)
11	De Ridder, Benjamin	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)
12	Garavaglia, Valentina	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)
13	Iweins, Mathilde	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)
14	Marchetta, Caterina	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)
15	Parfondry, Marc	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)
16	Kimba, Goubour	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)
17	Chnais, Elias	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)
18	Ferro, Giacomo	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)
19	Bodin, Blaise	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) – Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)
20	Crouzeilles, Renato	International Institute for Sustainability (IIS)
21	Res, Leander	International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN)
22	Ruckelshaus, Mary	NatCap project, Stanford University
23	Walder, Bethanie	Society for Ecological Restoration
24	Bas, Louman	Tropenbos International
25	Muñoz, Pablo	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)
26	Chazdon, Robin	University of Connecticut
27	Xavier hatchondo	Weforest
28	Cohen, Rachel	WeForest
29	Harrison, Rhett	World Agroforestry Centre
30	Batmanian, Garo	World Bank
31	Finisdore, John	The Institute for Development of Environmental-Economic Accounting (IDEEA Group)
32	Ding, Helen	World Resources Institute (WRI)

Summary of the discussion

Following a short introduction on the TEER initiative, a presentation on the first results of the piloting phase on costs initiated in July 2020 was given. The presentation was the opportunity to show the potential of data collected through the TEER framework and the type of information that can be extracted.

The presentation was also the opportunity to recall how the framework for data collection on costs was built and organized. This allowed to set up the scene for the following presentation, that was showing the first steps of the work implemented by the World Resource Institute on selecting the variables to build the framework for data collection on benefits.

The two presentations were then followed by a Q&A session. Comments made by partners were addressed by the speakers and are here below grouped into various points:

- Modelling benefits: Following the piloting phase, it is now clear how project managers will complete the framework for data collection on costs, but how this can be done for benefits and mostly for social (and environmental) benefits? Will project managers be expected to provide, for example, information on how restoration is impacting health? Or will they rely on national data and database?
    - The way the typology of benefits will be addressed is not easy and it is still under discussion, but for sure the project managers are the best placed to provide information on the results that a restoration effort is producing on the ground and related to financial benefits (for example at what price a product, which is the result of a restoration intervention, is sold at the local market) and social benefits (such as job created through restoration projects). In case the project manager won't have this kind of information, the objective is to collaborate with projects like NatCap that work with modelling tools for environmental benefits. We may need to provide the project managers with an estimation of financial benefits based on modelling and ask them for validation or amendment. Modelling will be anyway needed in the framework for data collection to assess those benefits that are produced in the long term. A working group on benefits modelling can serve to further discuss with partners options in that regard. Finally, regarding the health benefits, we are looking at variables such as increase number of hospitals, the ratio of patient and doctor, etc. at the intervention unit level, where revenues generated from restoration projects maybe reinvested in the local communities. This information can be gathered by project managers.

Bioversity International noted that they are developing a numerical model that simulates a one-hectare FLR project in order to explore the dynamics of the cost-benefit ratio of quality planting material, in terms of genetic diversity and site adaptation, over the period of 20 years. The model quantifies the impact of the use of quality planting material on the health of the plantation and its consequent economic value. Literature and data collected from projects in Peru were used to parametrize the model. A case study of a *Prosopis pallida* plantation in the dry forest of the north of Peru shows no relevant additional costs, but significant additional benefits of the use of quality planting material. This result holds both for an intensive commercial plantation and a conservation project that entails almost zero maintenance. Further collaboration will be established with WRI to explore the potential for integration in the benefits work package. Another way to proceed could be to collect raw data through the frameworks for data collection and use it to calibrate such models. Both options will be further discussed.

- **Monitoring benefits**: an open question that needs to be addressed is how benefits can be recorded periodically. Can a monitoring system be set up specifically for that? Projects last for some years and when the funding is over there is usually no monitoring on the long term. In addition, from a project level, this information is not always requested to project managers, but it could be incorporated. Further discussion with partners is needed.
- **Data consistency and complexity**: the basic data to be collected will come from the efforts of the project managers, so it must be ensured that the level of complexity of the questionnaires remains acceptable. The level of complexity must be the same in both questionnaires on costs and benefits. The benefits typology should be the same (consistency) for all land uses, as done for the cost typology. This will allow to compare different restoration interventions in different land uses.
- **Connecting restoration interventions and the benefits they generate**. The initiative currently does not clarify how the interventions reported in the questionnaire for data

collection on costs lead to specific benefits. Could keeping track of the projects that provide information on costs and benefits be used to develop a narrative of dedicated case studies?

  - The overall objective of TEER is to provide an average cost per hectare for specific restoration interventions in different contexts. In the current version of the framework for data collection on costs many details are requested on the type of interventions, but a question could be added on which were the most successful for restoration. This could be also linked to the benefits, but it is unclear if the project manager will be able to provide these details.
    The boxes where the project manager types comments and additional information can be helpful in case the aim will be to create a lesson learnt or case study on a project. When the database will be ready and populated, the user interested in a specific context will be able to extract more detailed information (not only costs and benefits). In this case, to address the problem of anonymity of the data, the respondent to the questionnaires on costs and benefits will be asked to provide more information on the project (and acknowledge to share it).

- **Collaborations with other initiatives**, like SEEA: potential collaborations with IDEEA Group (Australia) and Wageningen University (The Netherlands) are being established to ensure that the TEER benefit collection framework is aligned with the SEEA work led by the UN Statistic Bureau at international level and is aligned also to the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration. Contacts and collaborations with more institutions are being/will be established.
- **Outreach and communication:**
  - FAO and CIFOR will apply for a side event on the TEER to the next XV World Forestry Congress by 5 Oct 2020. Institutions interested to participate in the organization should contact the TEER Secretariat for further exchanges;
  - A peer-reviewed article on the methodology for data collection on costs and benefits will be prepared and submitted by end of 2020 to a scientific journal;
  - A webpage dedicated to the TEER will be opened in the FAO FLRM website to provide information to users/potential partners that would have more information about TEER. An independent webpage will be developed in the future, as soon as funding will be available;
  - Resource mobilization would need to be further implemented. Any opportunity that partners would suggest is welcome.