FAO/Netherlands Partnership Programme (FNPP) – Honduras

Work Programme

Title of project:	**Support to the Operationalization of the Legal Forestry Framework and the National Forestry Programme (PRONAFOR)**
Project symbol:	**FNPP/GLO/003/NET**
Start date:	**January 2005**
End date:	**December 2007**
National counterpart organization:	**Secretariat of Agriculture and Livestock Farming (Secretaría de Agricultura y Ganaderia - SAG)**
Executing agency:	**Honduran Forestry Agenda (Agenda Forestal Hondureña - AFH)**
Budget:	**US$ 640,000**

1 Introduction

In Honduras, 87 percent of its total area is used for forestry activities with a high rate of deforestation. Most of the rural population is located in these areas. Despite the high level of poverty and the lack of a correct attention to a sustainable development of these areas, the country has tried to reap most of the benefits from forestry exploitation. In particular, by improving the institutional and legislative framework related to this field and by highlighting the important role of the local communities of these areas.

Even so, the aims have not been achieved; the forest resources and the conditions of the people involved in these activities have continued to weaken. During the last five years, efforts have been made by various subjects - in the public and private sectors - to define a policy and new legal instruments that would include institutional reforms, taking into consideration an increasing level of participation by the private sector and the local authorities in the process of a sustainable forest management. Even though, the Forestry and Protected Areas Policy has been implemented: the Forestry National Programme has been officially approved and launched as an integral part of the programmes sustaining the agro-forestry sector. From a juridical prospective, the forestry law proposal has not been approved yet by the National Congress. Therefore, the forestry legal framework currently in force, is still based on the Decree 85 - 71, the Decree Law 103 - 74 and their modifications introduced by the Agriculture Modernization Law (Decree 31 - 92) and other decrees.

Also not in a unified way, some laws related to the forest sector and with a direct impact on the conservation and the use of forest resources, have been recently approved. Among which, the Municipality Law (Decree 134 - 90), the Territorial regulation Law (Decree 180 - 03) and the Property Law (Decree 82 - 04). At the moment, the proposal of a law on water has not yet been approved.

In this project, the legal forestry framework includes the current forest legislation, complemented by the norms deriving from other "non-forestry" laws.

As a general outlook, most of the difficulties related to the continuing deterioration of forest resources and the loss of the opportunities to improving the national development are due to an incorrect implementation of the forestry legislation and a lack of coordination between various components of the forestry legal framework. This situation is caused, to a large extent, by the poor participation of the communities and the authorities as well as other local stakeholders, in formulating these standards and guarantying their correct application.

Honduras has a legal policy and various legal instruments to promote the decentralization and the citizen participation for developing the agri-food sector and to contribute to successfully carrying out the poverty reduction strategy. All these elements constitute a basis for supporting the development of national policies and for guiding the forest management.

In 1996, the National Government approved PLANFOR as a guide to promote the sustainable forestry development until 2025. In 2003, together with the creation of the agricultural dialogue committees, the emerging of the state policy and the obvious need to carry out PLANFOR reforms, a widely participative process to set up a strategic planning was set in motion. This process has culminated in 2005 with the formalization of the National Forestry Programme: PRONAFOR.

The previous experience indicates that it is advisable to validate the objectives of the forestry legal framework, the contents of PRONAFOR and their application at a local level, specifically through the communities and the municipal authorities. To ensure their applicability, proposals to improve the regulations and the strategic vision should emerge from this validation carried out on the basis of the productive and conservation process.

2 Background

The FAO/Netherlands Partnership Programme (FNPP) provides the opportunity for various stakeholders, in particular at a local level, to participate in validating the legal forestry framework and PRONAFOR. The FNPP supports in local pilot areas through legal proposals for its improvement and participative dynamics for its implementation.

For the above reason, the Secretariat of Agriculture and Livestock Farming (Secretaría de Agricultura y Ganaderia - SAG) accepted FAO's offer to start these processes and appointed the Honduran Forestry Agenda (Agenda Forestal Hondureña – AFH) as the project's executive body, which was formed for this purpose. On the other hand, within the philosophy of the project, to promote the complementing capacities between the international cooperation and the national bodies in order to achieve best results from these processes, GTZ and ACDI, through the PRORENA and PROMESAS programmes respectively, will collaborate to implement the project through a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). The MoU will be signed between FAO, PRORENA and PRO-MESAS and will outline the participation of these three cooperating bodies. This participation will be carried out in "work plans" between FAO and each of the above-mentioned programmes, where the roles, responsibilities and contributions of the parties shall be determined.

The International cooperating bodies and other local stakeholders have shown interest in participating in the project, where SAG has taken on the role of chairman of the facilitating council. The basis of the project planning and its major areas of action will be defined through meetings, taking into consideration the implementation of pilot activities in representative areas of the broadleaf and pine forests of national and municipal properties. Three pilot areas in which the project will concentrate its activities have been proposed: Gualaco and the Mancomunidad of the municipalities of the Sierra de Agalta, Olancho, in which FAO and PRORENA will cooperate with local stakeholders; the Mancomunidad de municipios del Centro de Atlántida (MAMUCA), in which FAO and PRO-MESAS will involve local players, and the Municipality of San Antonio, Comayagua, which will require the collaboration of the following local authorities and agroforest protection communities: Chagüite Grande and Quebrada Honda.

Throughout the process, the national framework on payment for environmental services, as well as the participation and orientation of the Association of Municipalities of Honduras (Asociación de Municipios de Honduras - AMHON), the Honduran Federation of Agroforestry Cooperatives (Federación de Cooperativas Agroforestales de Honduras - FEHCAFOR) and the Honduras Agroforestry Cooperative Marketing Association (Empresa de Transformación y Comercialización Agroforestal de Honduras) will be considered.

3 The Development objective

The aim is to contribute to the implementation of national strategies to combat poverty and the reduce environmental vulnerability through the use and conservation of forest resources and their environmental services.

This contribution is related to the management of forest resources, the conservation of biological diversity and wildlife management, as well as the production and marketing of wood and non-wood forest products – including filewood – environmental goods and services. As part of these, are included the Convention on the adaptation to the climate change and the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) under the Kyoto Protocol.

Through this, it is expected that the forest policy, its legal framework and PRONAFOR will contribute in a balanced and more effective way to the sustainable natural resources management, conservation of biological diversity and rural development.

4 The objective of the Project

The aim is to ensure that the legal framework, rules and regulations, including PRONAFOR, will assist rural communities to a greater extent, in developing a sustainable management, use and trade of forest resources.

In order to achieve this, it is necessary to implement methods with an active participation, training activities and strengthening of human resources that involve stakeholders from the municipalities and communities in the selected pilot areas.

5 Results

The participative processes that are carried out throughout the project, in particular in the pilot areas, should bring the following results:

5.1 Identification, in a participative way, of the elements contained within the forestry legal framework, its rules and regulations as well as those of PRONAFOR and similar frameworks, that hinder or promote the management and other forestry activities aimed to develop rural communities selected within pilot areas and in other areas of the country;

5.2 Creation and presentation to decision-makers, of specific proposals to the compliance of forestry rules and/or regulations that facilitate the management, use and trade of forest resources throughout the populations in the pilot areas, paying due regard to the marginalized or the weakest groups of the rural society;

5.3 Strengthening of the capacities of the “multisector-dialogue and consultation-bodies” formed by local stakeholders within the pilot areas towards their better understanding of the application of the forestry legal framework and the PRONAFOR, as well as to foster their effective participation in the formulation of forestry rules and/or regulations;

5.4 Formulation of proposals for alternative financing of forest management, taking into account the opportunities available for the rural development through the payment for environmental services such as CDM under the Kyoto Protocol and adaptation activities to climate change;

5.5 Development of basic elements for the formulation and implemention of strategies at pilot area levels to combat illegal logging and forest products trade as a basis for contributing to the national strategy;

5.6 Evaluation of forest resources in the pilot areas, covering a combination of biophysical and socio-economic variables with an emphasis on the management and utilization of resources, to complement the activities of the technical cooperation project, TCP/HON/3001, “Apoyo al inventario y evaluación nacional de bosques y árboles” (Support to the national inventory and evaluation of forests and trees);

5.7 Evaluation and systematization of the experiences acquired in the three pilot areas to promote their dissemination in other areas of the national territory and in countries

with similar situations, in collaboration with organizations such as the Central American Indigenous and Peasant Coordinator of Communal Agroforestry (Asosiación Coordinadora Indígena y Campesina de agroforestería comunitaria Centroamericana - ACICAFOC) and with regional processes such as the Central American Forestry Strategy (CAFS).

6 Activities and inputs

Most of the activities related directly to the legal forestry framework and PRONAFOR will be carried out in close cooperation with the staff of the State Forestry Authority - Honduran Forestry Development Corporation (Corporación Hondureña de Desarrollo Forestal - COHDEFOR), both at a central and municipal level. Other activities, in particular those related to the forests and the climate change concerning adaptation and mitigation, will be closely coordinated with the National Authorities appointed by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (Secretaría de Recursos Naturales y Ambiente - SERNA). These activities, which are related to the proposals that will emerge through the pilot projects on forestry rules or regulations, must be carried out by groups involved in the agroforestry field.

6.1.1 Before initiating the activities in the pilot areas, it will be necessary to carry out an assessment of the application of forestry legislation and regulations, as well as of some elements of PRONAFOR and similar frameworks, at a national and municipal level, taking into account the new forestry law. This includes a comparative analysis of the forestry legislation in force, similar laws and the new forest law proposal concerning the protected areas and the wildlife, with a view towards a better application in rural areas, in particular in the pilot areas.

6.1.2 It is necessary to develop and agree methodological guidelines to implement the project activities in the three pilot areas. It will be essential to specify the studies to be carried out in order to determine the baseline. The purpose consists in determining the level of the current forestry development in each of these areas, taking into consideration the management, utilization and protection of these resources. It is important as well to consider the participation standards of the communities and municipalities which are involved in the forest management. In this context, it is also necessary to identify the laws and regulations, that hinder or promote forest management. Finally, the baseline also includes the assessment of knowledge level of the National Forestry Programme and its application at a local level.

6.1.3 Subsequently, in each of the three pilot areas, the legal and normative problems, perceived by the communities related to forestry activities, will be identified, for example regarding forest management planes, based on previous experience by communities, local authorities and for those participating in the production chain in the different forest types.

6.2.1 Organize workshops for the formulation, in a participative way, of the proposals for improving the legal forestry framework, on the basis of the results reached through the precedent activities.

6.2.2 Gathering of the proposals emerged in the pilot areas and formulate them in juridical terms. In this context, a procedure regarding their presentation – in consultation with

the authorities, local organizations, national and international participants in the project – should be proposed in order to improve the legal forestry framework.

6.2.3 The proposals for improving the legal forestry framework will be presented to the decision-makers through an established process. This process will be supported by meetings and other activities carried out to streamline the decision-making activities in compliance with the proposals.

6.3.1 The success of the project depends on, *inter alia,* the capacities of communication and interaction among the different stakeholders in each pilot area. It is therefore important to carry out planned activities, taking into account the existing structures both at the national level and in different localities selected as pilot areas. This will require the development of alliances and agreements with organizations and local authorities, as well as with international development agencies, such as the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and the German Technical Cooperation (GTZ), considering their respective projects at the municipal level. The local organizations that should be involved in the project activities are, in particular, the Association of Townships of Honduras, (Asociación de Municipios de Honduras - AMHON), the Federation of Agroforestry Honduran cooperatives (Federación de Cooperativas Agroforestales de Honduras - FEHCAFOR) and Transformation and Agroforestry Trade Company of Honduras (Empresa de Transformación y Comercialización Agroforestal de Honduras - EMCAH). In addition, local authorities with whom alliances will be set up are: La Mancomunidad de Municipios del Centro de Atlántida (MAMUCA), Sierra de Agalta in Gualaco and the Municipality of Villa de San Antonio in Comayagua.

6.3.2 Active participation will be promoted in the project by the NGOs involved and other local stakeholders of civil society with experience in this sector at the municipal level aiming to develop, preserve and manage natural resources, in particular forest resources. This is the case of SOCODEVI, an international NGO with goals toward strengthening local economic activities and management of the natural resources in the MAMUCA territory.

6.4.1 Another specific matter consists in promoting alternative mechanisms to finance forest management, such as small-scale forest projects within the framework of the Clean Development Mechanism under the Kyoto Protocol, considering forestry activities as adaptation activities to the climate change. These forestry activities in the pilot areas, will benefit from the results reached at the national level with the “Forestry Project and Climate Change”. Given that the Kyoto Protocol has entered into force, practical instruments will be developed to facilitate the sharing of some of those benefits, as for example the carbon credits market. To this aim, Honduras must satisfy some requirements elaborated by the Secretariat of the Convention for Climate Change. One of these requirements is that the country elaborates and presents its definition of “forest” to the Secretariat, through its Designated National Authority (DNA). The project will provide technical support for developing this definition in compliance to the requirement of the UNFCCC Secretariat and with the participation of SERNA, AFE-COHDEFOR, NGOs, the Tropical Agriculture Research and Higher Education Center (CATIE), FAO and other stakeholders concerned.

6.4.2 Support for the formulation of small-scale CDM forest projects.

6.5.1 The project aims to covering some specific issues in supporting forestry development in rural communities. One of these is the governance, as it concerns the definition of the magnitude and characteristics of illegal logging as well as its socio-economical and environmental impact on the pilot areas. In particular by involving the participation of various public and private stakeholders that would be engaged in the activities related to the use and trade of forest products in the pilot areas.

6.5.2 To jointly carry out interactive processes with ACICAFOC to foster the mutual capacity building between local organizations, to improve the governance and to share the experience acquired by FNPP with the rest of Central America.

6.6.1 As described above, different field activities will be concentrated in forest resources within the three pilot areas. It will therefore be considered necessary to recognize the magnitude and the potential of these resources. For this reason, the project will include forestry activities as well as forest evaluations under the complementary activities of the technical cooperation project: TCP/HON/3001 “Support to the national inventory and evaluation of woods and forest”, which started at the end of 2004 and should be concluded by the end of 2006.

6.6.2 To this aim, a survey will be carried out on 14 sampling units in MAMUCA, in Gualaco and in Villa de San Antonio. The current forest resources will be evaluated on the basis of the methodology used by the TCP/HON/3001 project on national forestry evaluation and inventory.

6.7.1 Publish and disseminate the project’s results through documents and publications and through the Honduran Forestry Agenda (Agenda Forestal Hondureña - AFH) and project members’ web pages.

6.7.2 Disseminate the project results to national and international, governmental and non-governmental institutions, and in the pilot areas and publish the results and proposals of the project.

Logic Framework

FNPP/Honduras – Support to the Operationalization of the Forestry Legal Framework and of PRONAFOR

2005 – 2007

	Verification indicators	**Forms of verification**	**Assumptions**
Development objective: To contribute to the implementation of national strategies to combat poverty and to reduce environmental vulnerability through the use and conservation of forest resources and its environmental services.	The forest sector has greater recognition at the political level of the role played in poverty and vulnerability reduction.	Papers carried out on national strategies to combat poverty, food security, and development plans.	Enough consideration is given to the potential of the forest sector's contribution in the national strategy to combat poverty.
Project objective: That the legal framework, its rules and regulations - including PRONAFOR - will provide greater means to rural communities for achieving sustainable management, utilizing and trading of forest resources.	The communities place more trust in receiving direct benefits through forestry activities. The time for the preparation and the approval of the forest management plans is reduced.	Interviews with representatives of the pilot area communities. Comparison with the time needed to carry out a management plan approved before the project.	The competent national bodies are fulfilling their obligations derived from the national legislation and the international legal instruments in force, which are related to forest resources.
Results --- Activities	**Verification indicators**	**Forms of verification**	**Assumptions**
1. The participative identification of the elements - contained in the forestry legal framework, its rules and regulations, as well as in the PRONAFOR and similar frameworks - that hinder or promote the management and other forestry activities for the development of rural communities selected within pilot areas and other areas of the country.	Representatives of the communities in the pilot areas participate in identifying the elements, showing their common interest and supporting the process.	Interviews with the communities' representatives.	There is sufficient knowledge of the forestry legal framework and similar frameworks by the local communities and stakeholders involved.

Results --- Activities	**Verification indicators**	**Forms of verification**	**Assumptions**
1.1 The carrying out of an assessment study regarding the application of forest legislation and regulations, the PRONAFOR, and similar frameworks, taking into consideration the new forestry law.	Results of the assessment studies are presented and discussed in a workshop.	Report of the assessments studies; Workshop reports.	When the new forestry law is enforced, it should not differ greatly from the bill.
1.2 The development and the agreement on a methodological guideline for developing activities of the project and determining the baseline.	Knowledge is acquired of the methodological guideline and the baseline. They are used as subject matters for a discussion between the representatives in the pilot areas.	Expert reports; Workshop meetings; Utilization of the guide.	Members' activities in the pilot areas should be in harmony with the objectives planned by FNPP.
1.3 Identification of the legal and regulatory problems noted by the communities, for example, with forest management plans. .	Workshops are organized to discuss legal and regulatory problems.	Minutes of the workshop; Expert report.	It is necessary to have the cooperation of the officials responsible for the approval of the management plans.
2 The creation and presentation, before the decision-makers of specific proposals for the compliance of the forestry rules and regulations that facilitate the management, use and trade of the forest resources.	A working group discusses the proposals in a series of sessions that are presented at the decision-maker level.	Proposals papers; Meeting reports.	The stakeholders involved in particular local communities have actively participate in the process for the elaboration of the proposals.
2.1 The participative formulation of the proposals for improving the forestry legal framework and forest management, including the regulations of the social compensation that derives from the community management.	Representatives of pilot areas discuss together and agree on the subject matters regarding the legal framework that need to be changed.	Meeting reports; List of participants.	Participants in the formulation of proposals have been previously prepared and have the necessary documentation and a consistent knowledge of the issues considered.

Results --- Activities	**Verification indicators**	**Forms of verification**	**Assumptions**
2.2 Gathering of the proposals followed by their formulation in juridical terms, and proposal of the relative procedure for their presentation.	A legal expert gives his/her support in taking up the proposals again and reformulating them. Presentation of proposals in a technical workshop.	Legal expert report; Meeting reports.	There is a policy and institutional support to reach an agreement concerning the elaboration of the proposals.
2.3 Presentation of proposals for improving the forestry legal framework to the decision-makers through an established procedure.	A representative monitoring group formed should consider the proposals.	Reports of different coordinated meetings.	The proposals must be relevant and have the consensus of the main stakeholders.
3. Capacity building of the mulitsectoral bodies to discuss and collaborate for a better understanding of the application of the forestry legal framework and of the PRONAFOR, as well as their effective participation in the formulation of forestry regulations and/or rules.	Workshops are held in each pilot area. At least 5 people in each pilot area with necessary technical expertise should formulate proposals.	Meetings regarding the events; Training programmes; List of participants.	Multisector bodies recognize the importance and show sufficient interest in participating in the process. Decentralized institutions provide enough room for the participative events.
3.1 The development of alliances and agreements with local organizations and authorities.	Work topics of common interest are identified; Technical synergies and infrastructure are formed.	Letters or agreements of understanding signed by the parties.	It is necessary to involve potential partners from the beginning and to identify common aims between them.
3.2 The setting into motion of active participation of NGOs and other local stakeholders of the civil society in the project activities.	Local NGOs and organizations are invited to meetings and other events. Reports reflect the opinions of local stakeholders.	Reports of events; Mission reports.	NGOs recognize their important role in revising agreements on eco-management and other FNPP activities.

Results --- Activities	**Verification indicators**	**Forms of verification**	**Assumptions**
4. The formulation of proposals for alternative financing of the forest management through payment for enviornmental services.	Concrete proposals are presented to be considered and monitoried by SERNA and COHDEFOR.	Project Design Documents (PDD) or equivalent for payment for environmental services.	The dealers of potential projects show sufficient initiative and invest enough time and efforts during the formulation of proposals.
4.1 The creation of a definition of "forest" according to the UNFCCC Secretariat's requirements.	Experts in the subject meet to discuss options. Visit of external experts. The participation of SERNA and SAG.	Meeting reports; Mission reports.	Participants in the process should have sufficient knowledge regarding the meaning of the definition of "forest" within CDM.
4.2 Support in the formulation of small-scale forest projects CDM.	Participation of the representatives of the communities belonging to the areas selected. Documented land use and tenure.	Paper idea of the project; Field visits reports.	There are sufficient human and financial resources as well as an eligible site for the Clean Development Mechanism project.
5. The development of basic elements for the formulation and implementation of strategies to combat illegal logging and trade of forest products.	The stakeholders in the pilot areas put into practice the elements of the strategy to combat illegal logging and trade of forest products.	Interviews with the representatives of the Forest Administration and representatives of the communities participating in the forest management.	The municipalities have regulatory responsibilities on forest resources and capacities to put them into practice.
5.1 The definition of the magnitude and the characteristics of illegal logging, as well as its socio-economic and environmental impact on the pilot areas.	The results in the use and trade of wood, in socio-economic and in environment evaluations are presented by technicians.	Reports from different technicians.	Information systems concerning the logging licences and the documentation of wood transport should be available, also through control points.
5.2 The carrying out of interactive processes for the improvement of governance.	The analysis concerning the current state of governance is available to local stakeholders through workshops and working groups.	Agenda of the workshops; List of participants; Meeting reports.	There is an active participation of COHDEFOR and other stakeholders involved in this sector, in particular, NGOs and wood producers.

Results --- Activities	**Verification indicators**	**Forms of verification**	**Assumptions**
6. The evaluation of forest resources in the pilot areas.	Parameters of an inventory are understood, such as the cover, the wood volume /ha, tree density/ha, and species.	Available forest maps; Database with main indicators of the inventory.	The units are selected with their representatives in all the areas of evaluation.
6.1 Development of an agreement with the project TCP/HON/3001 to evaluate the existing forest resources.	Meetings are held between the two coordinators of the projects and FAO personnel.	Signed letter of agreement.	There are common aims and interests between the two projects.
6.2 The collecting of survey data from 14 sampling units in the pilot areas.	1 technician in forestry inventory. 1 SAG technician. 1 biometry technician.	Technical reports; Proceedings from formal and informal meetings.	The location of the sample units are agreed and the information is accessible at the local level.
7. The evaluation and systematization of the experiences acquired in the three pilot areas to promote their dissemination in other areas of the national territory and in countries with similar situations.	A series of papers published by the project are widely distributed. The Web page contains information of the project. There is a high level of participation in the national or regional events.	List of documents; Consultation to the Web page; Invitations to events; Distribution lists.	Experiences and results achieved can be duplicated in other regions and be endorsed by the Coordinator Committee of FNPP.
7.1 Publishing and dissemination of the results of the project's progress.	150 copies of each document are made, brochures are distributed and PowerPoint presentations are prepared.	Distribution lists of publications; Operational web page.	The previously edited and formatted documents are available on the Web page.
7.2 Carry out events to publish the results and proposals of the project.	Programmes/agendas. List of invitees. Invitations for participation. Visual materials.	Minutes of national or regional events of the forestry sector.	The papers and reports will be published; forums and events will be illustrated.